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EDITORIAL

Debating Turkey's Grand Strategy

This special issue on Turkey's grand strategy is the outcome of a one-day workshop organized in Ankara on February 25, 2020 by the Center for Strategic Research (SAM), Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey, which was attended by a group of distinguished Turkish scholars from leading international relations departments in Turkey.

The participants of the workshop discussed the various dimensions of Turkey's grand strategy in connection with the country's long-term political, economic and military objectives and presented their own proposals as to how the main pillars of such a grand strategy could be determined. Considering that grand strategy is broadly defined as "the calculated relationship of means to large ends," it is quite important to reconsider this concept in light of Turkey's own foreign policy means and ends particularly at a time when we are approaching the 100th anniversary of the foundation of the Republic.

The authors who contributed to this issue were asked to define the main parameters of a grand strategy suited to the actual and potential core interests and threats faced by Turkey in contemporary regional and global politics. In order to stimulate the widest possible academic discussion on the subject, which has so far remained largely underexplored in the literature on Turkish foreign policy, the authors were given a great degree of flexibility and freedom while articulating their ideas.

Even though the articles of this special issue do not represent the official views of SAM or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, we believe they are all valuable contributions to the academic literature on Turkey's grand strategy. We also hope they are going to stimulate further academic debate both in Turkey and abroad on this very important subject.

Finally, we would like to thank Dr. Şener Aktürk, who kindly agreed to compile this special issue, as well as the four distinguished scholars who contributed to the special issue with their remarkable and thought-provoking pieces on Turkey's grand strategy.

ARTICLE

Turkey's Grand Strategy as the Third Power: A Realist Proposal

Şener AKTÜRK *

Abstract

This article proposes a grand strategy for Turkey that is based on neorealist assumptions. While Turkey's immediate neighbors, with the partial exception of Iran, do not pose a conventional, existential threat to Turkey in terms of their latent or military power, the "periphery" of Turkey's immediate neighbors includes half a dozen regional powers that have the military or economic capacity to threaten Turkey's neighbors or Turkey itself. Thus, Turkey should adopt a "neighborly core doctrine" to keep great powers' military forces out of its immediate neighborhood and, if possible, should seek integration with its immediate neighbors through bilateral or multilateral economic, political and security initiatives. The urgency of this imperative is underlined by the fact that four of Turkey's eight neighbors have been occupied by the great powers or their proxies since the end of the Cold War. Turkey's position has to be that of the "third power", buttressing the independence and territorial integrity of the countries in its neighborhood that are being partitioned and destroyed in proxy wars between the two major rival alliances. Among Turkey's immediate neighbors, Bulgaria, Georgia and Syria are critical as Turkey's gateways to the West, East and South, respectively. Turkey's historically rooted and overwhelmingly amicable ties with more than a dozen countries across Eastern Europe, the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia are highlighted for their positive significance in this grand strategy.

Keywords

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Introduction

Scholarly discussions of Turkey's grand strategy have been extremely rare,[1] despite Turkey's increasing foreign policy activism since the end of the Cold War, and particularly since the turn of the 21st century. There may be several reasons for this lacuna in the scholarship on Turkish foreign policy. First, some scholars argue that "only a superpower (in practice, solely the U.S.), or minimally a great power (extending the list to China and Russia), has the sufficient institutional and material resources to formulate and implement a grand strategy," and therefore, other than these three great powers, no country, including Turkey, can have a grand strategy.[2] This opinion is very much contested, as recent scholarship on the grand strategies of regional powers, including Iran, Israel and Saudi Arabia, which have smaller economies and/or populations than Turkey, demonstrates.[3] A second reason for the scarcity of works on Turkish grand strategy might be the assumption that Turkey simply follows a subordinate role within the U.S. grand strategy, and therefore does not have a distinct grand strategy worthy of scholarly analysis. Third, some may think that either there is no agreement on Turkey's national interests domestically or that there is no (or has never been any) intention or initiative to formulate and pursue a grand strategy in Turkey, and therefore this topic is not worthy of scholarly investigation. The current article disagrees with these presumptions against the formulation and scholarly study of a Turkish grand strategy, and furthermore, in tune with the constructive and prescriptive spirit of this special issue, proposes a grand strategy for Turkey that is broadly Realist in its outlines.

Grand strategy, according to one of the most prolific scholars on the subject, is "the calculated relationship of means to large ends."[4] In both foreign policy and military strategy, officials and officers entrusted with a specific area or "theater of operations" may be prone to what General George Marshall called "theateritis, the tendency of military commanders to look only at the needs of their own theater of operation, and not at the requirements of fighting the war as a whole."[5] A kind of "theateritis" is arguably one of the biggest challenges of foreign policy making in a country whose geopolitical environment is in flux, as has been the case with Turkey since the end of the Cold War. Each civil servant and military officer is expected to be focused on and responsible for a specific geographic or thematic area, whereas the calculated, holistic relationship of the means to the largest ends in Turkey's foreign policy is rarely if ever discussed.

How can one initiate a debate on different conceptions of grand strategy? Writing on "China's search for a grand strategy," Wang Jisi argues that, "[a]ny country's grand strategy must answer at least three questions: What are the nation's core interests? What external forces threaten them? And what can the national leadership do to safeguard them?"[6] Therefore, a conception of national grand strategy, whether in the U.S., China or Turkey, should start with the definition of the nation's core interests, and continue with the prima-

ry threats to these interests and a grand strategy to defend against such threats in a hierarchical fashion. A grand strategy should outline a "hierarchy" of national interests or objectives, proceeding from the primary and secondary to tertiary and lesser interests, and an accompanying hierarchy of threats against such national interests or objectives.

My Argument for a Realist Grand Strategy: Turkey as the *Third Power* in the Balkans, Caucasus, the Middle East and North Africa

A successful grand strategy depends on a factual assessment of Turkey's material and non-material sources of power in relation to its immediate neighbors, followed by the non-neighboring regional powers, both conceived within the context of the global distribution of power. Based on such an assessment, I argue that Turkey is the most powerful country among its neighbors, and therefore, with the notable exception of Iran, none of Turkey's immediate neighbors have the latent or actual capability to challenge Turkey alone, and none of them, including Iran, is likely to prevail in a one-to-one military contest against Turkey. In short, Turkey inhabits a relatively secure geopolitical environment if one focuses solely on the conventional capabilities of its immediate neighbors. However, Turkey faces numerous unconventional security threats such as various forms of terrorism, organized crime and outbreaks of infectious diseases and the like that flourish in situations of state breakdown. Bearing in mind both the relative insignificance of the conventional threat capacity of its neighbors and the numerous threats that emanate from state collapse, the primary goal of Turkish grand strategy must be to preserve this status quo by protecting its neighbors against the military aggression of any revisionist states. However, both the potential and actual threat that Turkey faces is the military aggression of outside great powers that seek to destabilize, permanently occupy, dismember and even partition and annex Turkey's immediate neighbors, a threat that, even in the short term, often leads to state breakdown and the proliferation of massive, unconventional security threats such as terrorism. *If a great power permanently occupies or annexes all or a part of the territories of any of Turkey's neighbors, thus becoming the de facto or even de jure immediate neighbor of Turkey, then Turkey's national security will be deeply compromised and threatened. The highest priority of Turkish grand strategy should be to prevent the occupation of its neighbors by any of the great powers, including, most*

A successful grand strategy depends on a factual assessment of Turkey's material and non-material sources of power in relation to its immediate neighbors, followed by the non-neighboring regional powers, both conceived within the context of the global distribution of power.

importantly, Russia and the U.S., among others. Unfortunately for Turkey and catastrophically for its neighbors, outside great powers have indeed occupied significant territories of several of Turkey's neighbors, seemingly on a permanent basis. Relatedly, Turkey's position has to be that of the "third power" buttressing the independence and territorial integrity of the countries in its neighborhood that are being partitioned and destroyed in proxy wars between the two major rival alliances. France and Iran are among the prominent actors that employed a similar strategy for much of the last century in pursuit of expanding their autonomy by weaving together webs of alliances that were viable, albeit limited alternatives to the largest two rival alliances forged by the leading great powers in competition at the time.

Turkish Grand Strategy as the *Third Power* in Comparative Perspective: French Strategy of *Grandeur* under De Gaulle, Iran's *Third Policy,* and Israel's Early Alliance with France

There is at least one major structural reason against and one in favor of Turkey pursuing a grand strategy of "third power" as I propose and briefly outline in this article. Turkey's GDP is only one-third the size of that of France according to the official exchange rate, and Turkey does not have any nuclear power plants, let alone nuclear weapons, whereas France generates the majority of its electricity from nuclear power plants and is one of the five states that officially has nuclear weapons. On the other hand, in terms of Power Purchasing Parity (PPP), the Turkish economy is three-quarters the size of the French economy, and the Turkish population is slightly larger than that of France. Second, it has been convincingly argued that the current world order is multipolar rather than unipolar or bipolar, which is a structural change that should make it easier for "third powers" to flourish.[7]

The French grand strategy of *grandeur* during the Fifth Republic under president Charles De Gaulle is similar to my grand strategic proposal for Turkey in this article.[8] It also appears somewhat similar to the Iranian grand strategy of the "Third Policy" in the early 20th century, when Iran sought to escape the overwhelming pressures of the British Empire and the Soviet Union by seeking an alliance with Germany. Similarly, Israel in its initial decades sought French, rather than American or Soviet, assistance in building its nuclear capability, and the critical Israeli-French alliance also resembles a "third policy" in a Cold War context.

A Turkish grand strategy would have to resemble the French strategy of *grandeur* rather than the Iranian "Third Policy" for two main reasons. First, similar to France and unlike Iran, Turkey is deeply and justifiably enmeshed in Western security alliances (i.e., NATO) and political economic integration schemes (e.g., European Customs Union membership since 1996 and EU membership negotiations since 2005) and thus Turkey is not equidistant from the Russian-Iranian and North Atlantic alliances. Second, similar to France

and unlike Iran or Israel, Turkey would not be seeking a "third great power patron" such as Germany or France as a way out of a bipolar superpower competition, but would rather seek to establish itself as a pivotal power, and not necessarily as the leading power, within a network of regional powers that can withstand pressures from the two rival (U.S.-led vs. Russian-led) alliances.

Latent and Actual Power: Economic and Military Capabilities

There are many measures of national power, but leading neorealist scholars such as John Mearsheimer distinguish between latent (potential) and military power.[9] "Latent power refers to the socioeconomic ingredients that go into building military power; it is largely based on a state's wealth and the overall size of its population."[10] The reasoning behind such a distinction and linkage between the two forms of power is the assumption that latent (socioeconomic) power can be converted to military power if and when needed. The neorealism of the current proposal is inherent in my implicit assumptions of an anarchic world order where survival is the primary motivation of states, and where "states can never be certain about other states' intentions," thus leading states to interpret the military capacity of any nearby entity as potentially offensive and threatening in the future, regardless of their expressed intentions at present.[11] These assumptions underpin and shape the broad outlines of the strategy summarized in this article. The emphasis on soft power found in the latter part of the article may be criticized as being incompatible with these neorealist assumptions, but I consider these elements of soft power as useful resources and facilitators in building and mobilizing latent (socioeconomic) and military power.

All states, including regional or middle powers such as Turkey, are expected to ally with the less powerful great power against the more powerful great power: "Because power is a means and not an end, states prefer to join the weaker of two coalitions," according to Waltz.[12] Of course this general proposition does not solve the security dilemma of a country such as Turkey, which faces coalitions of global and regional powers, such as the U.S.-Saudi Arabia-Israel axis against the Russia-Iran axis, where the globally more powerful U.S.-led coalition may be less committed and thus less powerful than the Russia-led coalition in a specific military theater such as Syria, which precisely has been the case since Russia's direct military intervention in the Syrian Civil War in September 2015. Thus, the "geographic proximity" of the rival great powers seems to be of paramount significance, "[b]ecause the ability to project power declines with distance,"[13] as Stephen Walt argues in his study of alliances in the Middle East. This is also a well-known geopolitical insight from centuries of late Ottoman and Turkish foreign policy; even though Russia was almost never the number one great power in the international system, it was always the primary great power that the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic balanced against due to its geographic proximity, often through alliance with great powers with more offensive capabilities, such as the British Empire and

the U.S. Thus, it makes the most sense to begin an assessment of Turkey's geopolitical environment from a comparative overview of its economic and military capacity and that of its immediate neighbors.

Economic and Military Balance between Turkey and its Neighbors

Turkey's economy is twice the size of the largest economy among its neighbors, namely that of Iran, and Turkey's defense budget is roughly one-and-a-half times Iran's defense budget (Table 1). The population of Iran is about five percent larger than the population of Turkey. Leaving aside Iran, all of Turkey's other neighbors have economies that are at most one-fourth of the Turkish economy, defense budgets at most one-third of Turkey's, and populations that are at most one-half of Turkey's. Most importantly, Turkey is ranked as the 9th polity in terms of military strength globally, while its closest neighbors, Iran and Greece, are ranked 14th and 28th, respectively. In other words, Turkey is the only country in the top 10 in terms of military strength among its neighbors, while Iran is Turkey's only neighbor in the top 20, and Greece is the only other neighbor in the top 30. Nonetheless, it should be noted that three of Turkey's eight neighbors, namely, Armenia, Bulgaria and Iran, already have nuclear power plants, whereas Turkey does not, and that the existence of a nuclear power plant might serve as a deterrent in an actual military conflict, although it does not automatically augment their military strength. Overall, with the notable exception of Iran, Turkey's demographic, economic and military strengths are unrivalled among its immediate neighbors.

	GDP / PPP (billion USD)[14]	Population (million)[15]	Defense Budget (2018, million USD)[16]	Military Strength Ranking (2019)[17]
Turkey	**851.5 / 2,186**	**81.2**	**18,967**	**9th**
Greece	200.7 / 299	10.7	5,227	28th
Bulgaria	56.9 / 154	7.1	1,095	49th (+nuclear power)
Georgia	15.2 / 40	4.0	316	85th
Armenia	11.5 / 28	3.0	608	96th (+nuclear power)
Azerbaijan	40.7 / 172	10.0	1,708	52nd
Iran	430.7 / 1,640	83.0	13,194	14th (+nuclear power)
Iraq	192.4 / 649	40.2	6,318	53rd
Syria	24.6 / 50	19.5	N/A	N/A

Table 1: Economic and Military Balance of Power between Turkey and its Neighbors

The first principle of Turkish grand strategy must follow from Turkey's nearly unrivalled demographic, economic and military strength among its neighbors:

Turkey must support and secure the existence and territorial integrity of its current neighbors. In other words, Turkey should be vehemently against any revisionist outside power, especially any outside great power, that seeks to occupy, annex, dismember or permanently place its military in all or part of any of Turkey's neighbors. In short, Turkey's neighbors should remain sovereign and indivisible and should not be occupied by any great power (e.g., France, Russia, the U.S.). This strategy would make Turkey a status quo power par excellence; a guardian of the internationally recognized entities and their borders. Beyond the legal and moral reasons that mandate such a stance, Turkey should favor this position because its neighbors serve as a buffer zone between Turkey and far more capable and potentially hostile great powers, as will be reviewed in the next section. Conversely, if and when any of Turkey's neighbors face foreign occupation and imminent dismemberment (e.g., Syria, Iraq, Georgia or Azerbaijan), which amounts to the destruction of Turkey's buffer zone, then Turkey must intervene to secure a buffer zone for itself, which is arguably what Turkey has been doing in response to the Russian, Iranian and American occupation of roughly 90 percent of Syria. An observation in support of this argument is that Turkey's direct military intervention in Syria only came *after* the direct military interventions of global and regional great powers such as Russia, Iran, and the U.S. Such buffer zones can be evacuated if and when the negotiated reconstitution of the occupied or dismembered neighbor states and de facto entities becomes politically viable.

Economic and Military Balance between Turkey and the Regional Powers

A distinctive characteristic of Turkey's geopolitical environment becomes apparent as soon as we turn to examine what could be considered the second ring, shell or layer around Turkey's neighbors, namely, the rather close regional powers that are often neighbors of Turkey's neighbors. In a nutshell, in stark contrast to Turkey's immediate neighbors, there are up to six regional powers with significant economic, demographic or military strength within 700 kilometers of Turkey's borders (Table 2). More specifically, while among Turkey's neighbors there is only one state in the top 20 (Iran), and one in the top 30 (Greece) in terms of military strength, when we turn to regional powers within 700 kilometers of Turkey's borders, we find that there is one global great power (and former super power), Russia, ranked 2nd globally in terms of military strength, three other states within the top 20, namely, Italy (11th), Egypt (12th) and Israel (17th) and two other states within the top 30, namely Saudi Arabia (25th) and Ukraine (29th).

The first principle of Turkish grand strategy must follow from Turkey's nearly unrivalled demographic, economic and military strength among its neighbors: Turkey must support and secure the existence and territorial integrity of its current neighbors.

Table 2: Balance of Power between Turkey and the Regional Powers within 700 km[18]

	GDP / PPP (billion USD)[19]	Population (million)[20]	Defense Budget (2018, million USD)[21]	Military Strength Ranking (2019)[22]
Turkey	**851.5 / 2,186**	**81.2**	**18,967**	**9th**
Iran (neighbor)	430.7/ 1,640	83.0	13,194	14th (+nuclear power)
Russia[23]	1,578 / 4,016	142.1	61,388	2nd (+nuclear weapons)
Israel[24]	350.7 / 317	8.4	15,947	17th (+nuclear weapons)
Ukraine[25]	112.1 / 370	44.0	4,750	29th (+nuclear power)
Egypt[26]	236.5 / 1,204	99.4	3,110	12th
S. Arabia[27]	686.7 / 1,775	33.1	67,555	25th
Italy[28]	1,939 / 2,317	62.3	27,808	11th (+ nuclear power)

Note: Regional powers are listed according to their distance from Turkey (refer to the endnotes for details).

The geographical distribution of the significant rival powers in Turkey's neighborhood is also noteworthy. Turkey's only potential rival among its immediate neighbors, Iran, is located to the east of Turkey, where there is no other rival power for over a thousand kilometers, in part because of Iran's sheer size. In contrast, there are significant regional powers within 700 kilometers but not immediately neighboring Turkey in all the other directions, including North (Russia, and Ukraine), West (Italy) and South (Israel, Egypt and Saudi Arabia), including at least two powers with nuclear weapons (Russia and Israel) and another two powers with nuclear power plants (Italy and Ukraine) that could enable them to produce nuclear weapons in short order. In fact, the remaining two powers (Egypt and Saudi Arabia) are also reputed to have (or have had) ambitions for a nuclear power plant. In short, while the first ring of immediate neighbors around Turkey have considerably smaller economic and military capabilities, the second ring of regional powers that can be described as "neighbors of neighbors", include many states with economic or military capabilities that rival or far surpass those of Turkey.

Turkey Should Secure a "Neighborly Core" as Opposed to a "Periphery Doctrine"

Israel, a country that faced almost exactly the opposite of Turkey's security dilemma, namely, significantly larger and more populous neighbors with which it was at war many times, adopted what is known as the "Periphery Doctrine", formulated by its founding leader and first Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion. In a nutshell, the Israeli "Periphery Doctrine" meant that in order to maximize security against its Arab neighbors with which it was at war (e.g., Egypt, Syria), Israel would seek alliances with the non-Arab neighbors of its Arab neighbors, such as Iran, Turkey and Ethiopia, as well as the non-Arab

While the first ring of immediate neighbors around Turkey have considerably smaller economic and military capabilities, the second ring of regional powers that can be described as "neighbors of neighbors", include many states with economic or military capabilities that rival or far surpass those of Turkey.

minorities dispersed across the Middle East.[29] Israel's growing relationship with Greece, Cyprus, Azerbaijan and South Sudan can be seen as an extension of the Periphery Doctrine.[30] Furthermore, Trita Parsi intriguingly argues that Israel's collaborative dealings with Iran continued even after the Islamic Revolution and at the peak of anti-Israeli discourse in Iran's official rhetoric, demonstrating the resilience of Israeli grand strategy despite ideological rhetoric to the contrary.[31]

The balance of power and the balance of threats in Turkey's immediate geopolitical environment should motivate Turkey to adopt almost the opposite of Israel's periphery doctrine. *While Turkey's immediate neighbors, with the partial exception of Iran, do not pose a conventional, existential military challenge to Turkey in terms of their latent or military power, the "periphery" of Turkey's immediate neighbors includes up to half a dozen regional powers that have the military or economic capacity to threaten Turkey's neighbors or Turkey itself, which they have often done in the past. Thus, Turkey should adopt a "neighborly core doctrine" to keep great powers' military forces out of its immediate neighbors, and if possible, should seek integration with its immediate neighbors through bilateral or multilateral economic, political, and security organizations. The urgency of this imperative is underlined by the fact that four of Turkey's eight immediate neighbors have been occupied by the great powers or their proxies since the end of the Cold War.* Admittedly, a strategy to prevent great powers' occupation of Turkey's immediate neighbors has high strategic costs, both diplomatic and political/economic, but the primary contention of this proposal is that the alternatives, namely, great powers' occupation of Turkey's neighbors, come with much greater costs and potentially existential threats.

Balance of Power between the Global Great Powers and Turkey's Relative Position

The global balance of military and economic power at present indicates a multipolar world order. While the U.S. has the largest defense budget and the largest economy in terms of official exchange rates, the size of the Chinese economy in terms of PPP is already significantly larger than that of the U.S. Likewise, the size of the Indian economy in terms of PPP is already half that of the U.S. Moreover, Russia has slightly more nuclear weapons than the U.S., which is a legacy of the arms race during the Cold War. China, Russia and the U.S. are often considered the three great powers that are capable of projecting power across the world, at least in theory, but one should also remember

that both France and the UK, the two most powerful colonial empires of the 19th century, continue to execute military interventions far away from their core nation-states in Western Europe, as the Falklands War and numerous French military interventions in West Africa demonstrate. Thus, it is reasonable to think of at least three (China, Russia and the U.S.), and up to six (with the addition of France, India and the UK) great powers as the nodes of an emerging, multipolar world order. Turkey's ranking among the top 10 countries in the world in terms of military strength is seemingly surprising in the sense that Turkey has by far the smallest economy and is the only country without nuclear weapons or even nuclear power plants among this group (see Table 3 below).

> **Turkey's ranking among the top 10 countries in the world in terms of military strength is seemingly surprising in the sense that Turkey has by far the smallest economy and is the only country without nuclear weapons or even nuclear power plants among this group.**

	GDP / PPP (billion USD)[32]	Population (million)[33]	Defense Budget (2018, million USD)[34]	Military Strength Ranking (2019)[35]
U.S.	19,490 / 19,490	329.3	648,798	1st (+ nuclear weapons)
Russia	1,578 / 4,016	142.1	61,388	2nd (+ nuclear weapons)
China	12,010 / 25,360	1,384.7	249,997	3rd (+ nuclear weapons)
India	2,602 / 9,474	1,296.8	66,510	4th (+ nuclear weapons)
France	2,588 / 2,856	67.3	63,800	5th (+ nuclear weapons)
Japan	4,873 / 5,443	126.2	46,618	6th (+ nuclear power)
South Korea	1,540 / 2,035	51.4	43,070	7th (+ nuclear power)
UK	2,628 / 2,925	65.1	49,997	8th (+ nuclear weapons)
Turkey	**851.5 / 2,186**	**81.2**	**18,967**	**9th**
Germany	3,701 / 4,199	80.5	49,471	10th (+ nuclear power)

Table 3: Balance of Power between the Global Great Powers and Turkey's Relative Position

Balance of Threats for Turkey

The balance of power approach within Neorealism, associated with Kenneth Waltz,[36] has been critically refined by Stephen Walt, who emphasizes that states balance against threats rather than against power alone.[37] Therefore, the

previous discussion of the economic and military capabilities of Turkey's immediate neighbors and regional powers within a close range may be criticized for not taking into account the actual military threats that have materialized there.

Multiple great powers have occupied most or part of at least three of Turkey's immediate neighbors in the last two decades, in addition to interstate and intrastate wars that they enabled and supported through their proxies in several countries in Turkey's neighborhood. These interventions by great powers and their violent consequences constitute Turkey's main external threat, as briefly discussed in the next section.

Turkey's External Threats: Foreign Occupation and Partition of Turkey's Neighbors

It is indeed an astounding geopolitical development that three of Turkey's eight immediate neighbors (Table 1) have been the targets of military incursions and long-lasting and still continuing military occupations by great powers between 2003 and 2015, whereas another, fourth neighbor has been the target of a military occupation for over a quarter century, with the explicit and massive support of another great power. Equally remarkably, not just one or two but four major great powers, namely, France, Russia, the UK and the U.S., recently had or still have military forces occupying Turkey's neighbors.

Russian, Iranian, American and French Joint Occupation of Syria

Mass protests against authoritarian dictators that have been ruling numerous Middle Eastern and North African countries for many decades began with a rather swift success in removing the autocrats in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya, with mass protests spreading to many other Arab countries in a world-historical development popularly known as the Arab Spring. Although the protesters included a vast array of dissident groups, Islamic political movements constituted the backbone of the opposition to secular military dictatorships or Baathist one-party regimes in Egypt, Libya, Syria and Tunisia.[38] While many Western countries, including France, the UK and the U.S. initially supported the opposition to the authoritarian regimes in Egypt and Syria, they gradually withdrew their support and went as far as embracing if not abetting the military coup against Mohamad Morsi. These same countries also withdrew their support from the Free Syrian Army and the Syrian opposition in general; instead, France and the U.S. lent their massive support to the Kurdish socialist YPG and SDF.[39] To crush a very popular uprising that was gradually defeating the Baathist Assad regime, the Russian military intervened and occupied most of Western Syria starting in September 2015. Russia and Iran together occupied the majority of Syria, including all of its major cities except for Idlib. Millions of mostly Sunni Muslim Syrians have been forcibly displaced from the territories that are jointly occupied by Russia and Iran. Likewise, the U.S. and France occupied almost a third of Syria, including all the territories to

the east of the Euphrates river up until late 2019, also displacing thousands of Syrians, including Arabs, Kurds and Turkmen, who primarily fled to Turkey.[40] As such, the very popular movement seeking to overthrow the Assad regime has been jointly suppressed by four major foreign powers, primarily Russia and Iran, but also the U.S. and France to a lesser extent. Among the significant regional powers, Turkey alone has remained consistently supportive of the popular opposition in Egypt and the popular opposition in Syria to the present day, even conducting three major cross-border military operations together with the Free Syrian Army/Syrian National Army against Daesh/ISIS and the YPG-SDF in Syria in 2016, 2017 and 2019.[41] A Gallup International survey in the Hasakah and Raqqa provinces that are still under YPG-SDF control showed that 57% of Syrians, including 64% of Arabs and 23% of Kurds support Turkey's military intervention against the French-U.S.-supported YPG-SDF.[42] Both the Assad-regime and the YPG-SDF rely on tiny ideological minorities within already small ethnic sectarian minorities, and yet they nominally control almost 90 percent of Syria due to the active and overwhelming support of the Russian, Iranian, French and U.S. militaries. Both the Assad-regime and the YPG-SDF are not only potentially but also actually hostile and threatening vis-a-vis Turkey. Thus, the removal of the Russian, Iranian, French and U.S. militaries from Syria, which would almost certainly lead to the collapse of the Assad-regime and the YPG-SDF against the Syrian National Army, is in Turkey's objective interest.

American and Iranian Occupation of Iraq

The U.S. occupation of Iraq in early 2003 was a watershed moment not just for Turkey but for the entire Middle East. Among other momentous developments, the U.S. occupation unleashed a process that led to the Iranian takeover of Iraq and the radical marginalization of millions of Sunni Arabs, which in turn led to the rise of Daesh/ISIS, which primarily exploited the ever-deepening resentment of Sunni Arabs in this process. The U.S. occupation also paved the way for the disintegration of Iraq into a Shiite Arab South-Center and a Sunni Kurdish North, with unrepresented Sunni Arab masses in the middle. During the time of this article's composition, the U.S. assassinated General Qassem Suleimani, commander of "the Quds Force", as the Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps' special operations forces are known, and described as "the most powerful operative in the Middle East."[43] This assassination could have escalated U.S.-Iranian tensions as many feared, but it is more likely to succeed in deterring Iran from entirely claiming Iraq at the expense of the withdrawing U.S. forces as some predicted.[44] Nonetheless, this assassination does not change but rather highlights the status of Iraq as being under the joint occupation of Iran and the U.S. 17 years after the Second Iraq War.

Russian Occupation of Georgia and Ukraine

Russian military presence in Georgia's autonomous regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, both of which Russia recognized as independent republics after the Five Day War between Russia and Georgia in August 2008, is another potential threat for Turkey that is often overlooked.[45] *The importance of an independent Georgia for Turkey's national security and grand strategy cannot be overstated.* Georgia is the only state that stands between Russia, a global great power with a gigantic military, and Turkey. This situation is made even more acute by the centuries-long history of military conflicts between Russia and the Ottoman Empire. Second, somewhat similarly and with only a slightly lower level of immediate threat, Russia's occupation and annexation of Ukrainian Crimea in 2014 resulted in Russian hegemony of the Black Sea, making Russia the most significant potential naval threat for Turkey once again.[46] While less threatening than Russia's military presence in occupied Crimea, Abkhazia and South Ossetia, the Russian-backed insurgency in Donetsk and Luhansk in Eastern Ukraine is another potential threat, as it destabilizes and jeopardizes the territorial integrity of Ukraine, which is a natural ally of Turkey. Thus, Turkey should also continue to support the sovereign statehood and territorial integrity of Georgia and Ukraine, both of which have been compromised by Russia's military interventions since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, but especially since 2008-2014.

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Russian-supported Armenian Occupation of Azerbaijan

Armenia's occupation of a significant portion of Azerbaijan with Russia's support and the tacit agreement of some Western and regional powers, such as France and Iran, constituted another potential threat for Turkey among its immediate neighbors at the time of this article's writing in early 2020. As this article was in the final stages of editing and proofreading, Azerbaijan, with the explicit and critical support of Turkey, succeeded in liberating more than half of its territories that were under Armenian occupation in and around Nagorno Karabakh. Turkey has been and should continue to be vocal in demanding the right of return of approximately one million Azerbaijanis who were forcibly displaced by the Armenian occupation to their prewar homes. Ideally, not only should the displaced Azerbaijanis be able to go back to their prewar homes and claim their properties and civil and political rights, but their lands should also be returned to Azerbaijan. Furthermore, Turkey should be far more vocal in favor of the right of return of millions of Syrians, hundreds

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of thousands of Bosnian Muslims, Crimean Tatars and Meshketians to their prewar homes. Such calls would highlight and amplify the moral high ground on which Turkey already stands with regard to the critical issue of refugees, as will be revisited later in this article as an aspect of Turkey's soft power.

The Primary Goal: To Keep Great Powers' Militaries out of Turkey's Neighbors

The preceding, brief overview of the military and economic capabilities of the global great powers makes one point abundantly clear: any of these great powers' occupation of or indefinite military presence in any of Turkey's immediate neighbors would pose a potentially overwhelming security threat for Turkey. This is not at all an improbable scenario either, but rather what has happened more than twice in the last two decades. The U.S. and the UK occupied Iraq starting in 2003, followed by the Russian occupation of parts of Georgia (2008), Ukraine (2014) and Syria (2015), the latter also being occupied in part by the U.S. and France. Most importantly, the top two great powers in the world, the U.S. and Russia, actively occupy significant parts of three of Turkey's immediate neighbors (Georgia, Iraq and Syria) at present, and one can also add Russia's occupation of nearby Ukraine to this list. The military occupation of four countries in Turkey's immediate neighborhood by global great powers not only poses a direct security threat for Turkey-these occupations also indirectly threaten Turkey as they amount to the almost imminent territorial dismemberment of these neighbors. Therefore, the top priority of the Turkish grand strategy should be the withdrawal of the U.S. and

Russian military from Turkey's neighbors including and especially Syria, but also Georgia, Iraq and Ukraine, even though the latter is not an immediate territorial neighbor but a maritime neighbor of Turkey across the Black Sea.

Maintaining an Active Forward Presence in Neighbors under Occupation

Turkey should mobilize its hard and soft power to prevent the foreign occupation or dismemberment of its neighbors, but these occupations might still take place despite Turkey's strenuous efforts to prevent them, as happened in the case of the U.S. occupation of Iraq in 2003. In such cases, as the second-best strategy, Turkey should maintain a forward presence beyond its borders in its immediate neighbors under occupation until the popular sovereignty and territorial integrity of these neighbors are secured. This is how the current Turkish policy on Syria can and should be framed: Turkey has to maintain a zone of "free Syria" in accordance with its responsibility to protect Syrians in a territory where they can exercise popular sovereignty and self-government free from Russian, Iranian, French and American occupation forces, which unfortunately rule over almost ninety percent of Syria at present.[47]

Turkey's Main Internal Threats: Domestic Terrorism and its External Sponsors

Turkey's main internal threat for many decades has been terrorism, and the two most destructive terrorist organizations have been the Gülenists (FETÖ) and the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). The Gülenists sought to capture the unelected components of the state (the bureaucracy, the judiciary, the military and the police), a process that culminated in the failed coup attempt of July 15, 2016.[48] Due to their capture of important levers of state power, the type of destruction caused by the Gülenists makes them more similar to the Stasi in the Communist German Democratic Republic or the National Socialist German Workers' Party (NSDAP, popularly known as the Nazis) in Germany, as organizations ensconced within the state rather than non-state actors as typical terrorist organizations tend to be. Therefore, the lustration of Gülenists from Turkish state institutions has some parallels with post-Communist lustration in much of East-Central Europe and Germany. Both the PKK and the Gülenists originated in the 1970s and flourished in the 1980s, and in the geopolitical context of a bipolar world order during the Cold War, the PKK and the Gülenists benefitted from the support of the Soviet Union and the U.S., respectively. Nonetheless, following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the PKK increasingly relied on Western European and Middle Eastern (e.g., Syrian) sponsors. Turkey's primary goal as part of its grand strategy has to be to compel the external sponsors of anti-Turkish terrorist organizations such as FETÖ and the PKK to discontinue their support, and, if possible, extradite leading terrorists to Turkey.

Components of Turkey's Soft Power: Democratic Legitimacy and Representation, Islam, Toleration and Sovereignty

My inclusion of soft power as another component of "latent power" deviates somewhat from mainstream neorealism. This difference stems from my broader interpretation of the "rationality" of states, one of the five assumptions of neorealism.[49] I assume that states' rationality goes beyond material sources of power, and that soft power is a form of non-material latent power that can be converted to military power. Soft power, originally conceptualized by Joseph Nye,[50] is increasingly recognized as a component of grand strategy. Although the definition of soft power is contested, as the concept has been expanded and redefined in ways that go beyond Nye's

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original formulation, "the power of attraction", being a "role model" or being seen as a "benign influence" in world politics can be counted among its various definitions. Moreover, soft power is often multifaceted, and some great powers such as Russia might have five different types of seemingly contradictory forms of soft power.[51]

Turkey's Competitive Democratic Legacy

Turkey enjoys various forms of soft power as a result of both structural and agentic factors. Turkey has one of the longest traditions of competitive multiparty democracy stretching back to the Ottoman parliaments of 1908, if not even earlier to 1876. There are very few polities in the world that can claim to have had multiparty elections for more than a hundred years as Turkey has. Even more uniquely, however, late Ottoman Empire had a roughly decade-long and very precious experience of popular legitimacy and parliamentary representation of a religiously diverse population, including numerous Orthodox Christian, Jewish and Muslim members of parliament and even ministers of different religious faiths.[52]

In contrast, it took the House of Commons, the British parliament, roughly 140 years after the Glorious Revolution to accept any members of the Catholic faith, namely, Christians of a different sect than the mostly Anglican Protestants who had long monopolized the British legislature. It took 170 years after the Glorious Revolution for Britain to accept its first member of parliament belonging to a non-Christian religion, namely, Jewish Lord Lionel Rothschild in 1858. The scenario is similar in the other long-standing Western democracies, where it took four to five decades for France[53] and the U.S.[54] to have their first non-Christian, namely Jewish, members of the national parliament. In contrast to these Western democracies, Ottoman parliaments, and even the first four decades of national parliaments in the Republic of Turkey, always boasted multiple Christian and Jewish members alongside a Muslim majority. The ethnic and linguistic diversity of parliamentary representation was equally pronounced with Albanian, Arab, Armenian, Bulgarian, Circassian, Greek, Jewish, Kurdish, Laz, Vlach and other members. The Ottoman parliaments represented the Ottoman people "from İşkodra [Shkoder in present-day Albania] to Basra [in Iraq]" as the common way to depict the Ottoman homeland during the Constitutional Era maintained. The reflection of this Ottoman and Turkish legacy of a competitive, multiparty electoral system of representation is that many of Turkey's neighbors, and even neighbors of its neighbors (i.e., Albania, Jordan, Lebanon, North Macedonia, etc.), had elected representatives in the Ottoman imperial parliament that in part legitimated a political community extending from present-day Albania and Bulgaria in the North to Kuwait, Libya and Yemen in the South. This heritage of democratic inclusiveness endows Turkey with a kind of soft power capacity for spearheading regional cooperation and integration schemes covering these areas and beyond.

Turkey's Potential to Become "the Missing Muslim-majority Great Power"

Equally importantly, "the absence of Middle Eastern great powers," as critically noted by Ian Lustick,[55] and the broader phenomenon of "the absence of a Muslim great power" worldwide, endows Turkey, an otherwise "middle power" or "regional power", with the soft power of being perhaps the most likely Muslim great power. As Richard Falk critically observed decades ago, the "Muslim world comprises more than one billion adherents spread across more than forty-five countries, yet no permanent member of the [UN] Security Council is part of the Islamic world, and in most proposals for UN reform, calls for the expansion of the Security Council usually do not propose rectification."[56] Turkey is the Muslim country ranked highest in terms of military strength (Table 1), and is also the Muslim country with the highest GDP in the world. On the other hand, Turkey is not even among the top five Muslim countries in terms of population[57] or GDP per capita and, unlike Pakistan and Iran, Turkey does not have nuclear weapons or even a nuclear power plant. Nonetheless, Turkey's economic and military strength, combined with its historical status as the seat of the last great Islamic empire and the Caliphate, are crucial material and symbolic resources for its potential to become the "missing Muslim great power" in the world.

The lack of a Muslim-majority great power has many deleterious consequences for the approximately one and a half billion Muslims around the world, as they do not have a geopolitical patron to effectively intervene when Muslims are the targets of mass persecution.[58] Examples of such persecution against Muslims include genocidal mass killing (e.g., Bosnia and Myanmar), mass internment (e.g., China), deprivation of citizenship (e.g., India) and prohibition from immigration (e.g., the "Muslim Ban" in the U.S.), all of which have taken place with disturbing frequency since the end of the Cold War. In contrast to the lack of a Muslim-majority great power, there is at least one major great power from all of the other major religious and sectarian traditions, including Protestant Christianity (e.g., the U.S. and the UK), Catholic Christianity (e.g., France, Brazil), Orthodox Christianity (Russia), Confucianism (China) and Hinduism (India). All five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) are non-Muslim, as Richard Falk notes, and even those considered as potential new members in a possible reform to extend UNSC membership, such as Brazil, Germany, India and Japan, are also non-Muslim.

In addition to these structural and historical reasons such as the lack of a Muslim-majority great power and Turkey's long history of competitive multiparty elections, there are also more agentic factors that augment Turkey's soft power, such as its toleration of both Muslim and secular ways of life historically and at present, as well as Turkey's recently more prominent assertive and defiant stance vis-a-vis non-Muslim great powers in defending its sovereignty. There

are many, mostly non-Muslim countries where people persecuted in Muslim-majority countries seek refuge, and there are other mostly Muslim-majority countries where persecuted Muslim minorities seek refuge. Turkey is almost unique among Muslim-majority polities, however, in receiving and welcoming in significant numbers both mostly Muslim people persecuted by European and American governments (e.g., France, Germany, Greece, Russia, Serbia, and even the U.S.) as well as welcoming even more numerous people of different ideological, political, religious or non-religious backgrounds who are persecuted by Asian, African and Muslim-majority governments (e.g., China, Egypt, Iran, and Syria, among others). Turkey's status as being a prominent safe haven for many people persecuted around the world is a crucial component of its soft power. Being a "safe haven" for Muslims fleeing persecution is a constitutive part of Turkey's national identity and founding as a modern nation-state, similar to the founding of Pakistan and Algeria,[59] and also similar to the function of Israel as a safe haven for the Jewish people.[60] Thus, components of soft power and grand strategy at large are often related to and broadly consistent with the contours of national identity.

There are several Muslim-majority democracies around the world, some of which also boast a relatively sizeable economy and a reputation for being tolerant of both Muslim and secular ways of life, but none of them have had more than a century of competitive multiparty elections as Turkey has. Furthermore, Turkey is almost unique among this rather small subset of sizeable Muslim democratic polities for being defiant of Western and non-Western great powers as the recent crises between Turkey and Russia, Turkey and France and Turkey and the U.S. over Syria, Cyprus, Libya, Israel-Palestine and Egypt demonstrate. Similarly, and especially after the failure of the coup attempt of July 15, 2016, Turkey increasingly carved out a reputation and identity as a "democracy without or even in spite of Western powers' interventions" rather than a "democracy because of or thanks to the Western powers' interventions," as its image was characterized during the Cold War.[61] All of these factors separately but even more importantly together endow Turkey with significant soft power among Muslim majorities and Muslim minorities around the world.

Turkey's Gateways to the West, East and South: Bulgaria, Georgia and Syria

All of Turkey's neighbors, with the partial exception of Iran, are potential allies with which Turkey should seek bilateral and multilateral cooperation and economic and even political integration. This integration may take the form of a Customs Union as Turkey already has with its European neighbors, or even a political union as Turkey pursued with its applications and candidacy for the EU. Such integration may also take the form of removal of visas and

free movement of goods, services, and people that Turkey pursued with some countries on a bilateral basis. Turkey initiated or joined several such cooperation schemes in the Balkans, the Caucasus, Central Asia, and the Near East in the past. Nonetheless, for various historical, structural and agentic reasons, several of Turkey's neighbors are particularly valuable and appropriate as Turkey's gateways to the Balkans, the Caucasus and the Near East, corresponding to the geographic directions of West, East and South, respectively. In a nutshell, Bulgaria more than Greece, Georgia more than Armenia and Syria more than Iraq or Iran, provide better opportunities as Turkey's three key potential allies and gateways to these three respective regions.

Bulgaria does not have any significant outstanding disputes with Turkey. Bulgaria also has the largest Turkish minority in the Balkans, a minority that has been peacefully integrated into Bulgarian politics with a political party that is the third largest and often the kingmaker in the formation of coalition governments. Furthermore, Bulgaria is along the main highway that connects Turkey through Edirne to the rest of Europe and, as such, already serves as Turkey's gateway to Europe in a rather literal sense. In addition to these political, demographic and geographic advantages, despite its very recent problems with North Macedonia, Bulgaria has significantly more congenial relations with most Western Balkan countries compared to Greece, Turkey's only other European neighbor; thus, Bulgaria is a more natural bridge connecting Turkey to friendly Western Balkan countries such as Albania, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Bulgaria's very recent crisis with North Macedonia that erupted during the proofreading of this article does not change this general evaluation because Greece cannot be considered to have better relations with North Macedonia than Bulgaria since Greece also had a decades-long crisis with North Macedonia. Thus, a strong partnership with Bulgaria would open up the Western Balkans for regional cooperation and integration for Turkey.

Georgia is perhaps Turkey's most important, albeit vulnerable neighbor in terms of a realist grand strategy, as it is the only country between Russia and Turkey, and is also the country that connects Turkey to another critical ally, Azerbaijan, and through Azerbaijan across the Caspian Sea to Turkmenistan and the rest of Central Asia. Yet Georgia is already partially occupied by the Russian military (i.e., Abkhazia and South Ossetia), and the rest of the country has been living under the shadow of a potential Russian invasion since at least the Five Day War of 2008, if not before. The Kars-Tbilisi-Baku pipeline and railroad are both critically significant in connecting Turkey to Azerbaijan and the Caspian basin through Georgia. Moreover,

All of Turkey's neighbors, with the partial exception of Iran, are potential allies with which Turkey should seek bilateral and multilateral cooperation and economic and even political integration.

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as in the case of Bulgaria, Georgia also has a sizeable Muslim minority that is an integral part of the fabric of Georgian society, concentrated in the Autonomous Republic of Adjara with its capital city of Batumi just north of the Turkish border, and with an oversized Muslim Georgian diaspora dispersed throughout Turkey. In short, for geographic, demographic, cultural, historic and economic reasons, Georgia is well-suited as Turkey's gateway to the Caucasus and Eurasia.

Syria has many advantages similar to those Bulgaria and Georgia enjoy in their relationship to Turkey, with its many demographic groups (Arabs, Kurds, Turkmen, etc.) related across the Syrian-Turkish border, and with Turkey's main transportation route to the Near East, historically and at present, running from Gaziantep through Aleppo down to Damascus and beyond, reaching into Israel, Palestine, Jordan and Hejaz. Unlike the popular democratic regimes in Bulgaria and Georgia, where the Turkish/Muslim minorities serve as a demographic facilitator or conduit of closer cooperation with Turkey, the situation in Syria is almost exactly the opposite on both accounts. The Assad regime in power in Damascus is an ideological minority dictatorship that has perpetrated genocidal warfare and demographic engineering against the majority of the Syrian people, including the massacre of half a million people and the forced exodus of approximately thirteen million Syrians, and the Assad regime is openly hostile to Turkey. Up to four million Syrians who sought refuge in Turkey, and several million who live in northwest Syria under the protection of the Turkish Armed Forces (TAF) and the Turkish-supported Syrian National Army (SNA), as well as many others who live beyond these zones but welcome TAF-SNA's interventions in Syria, demonstrate that a majority of Syrians are indeed sympathetic to Turkey, but the regime in power in Damascus is not. As a result, Turkey's gateway to the Near East has been blocked since 2011, or rather limited to the territories of Northwestern Syria free of Assad-regime control, which can also be conceptualized as "Free Syria."[62]

In the absence of a sustainable resolution to the Syrian conflict, the secondary alternative gateway from Turkey to the Middle East could be through the Iraqi Kurdistan Regional Government (IKRG) or Northern Iraq more broadly. The IKRG and Turkey have cooperated intensely since the early 2000s, if not even earlier, despite the limited crisis over the KRG's unilateral referendum for independence in 2017. Turkey's historically rooted and overwhelmingly amicable ties with both Azerbaijan and the Kurdish Regional Government in Iraq are also critical and have multiple significances for its grand strategy.

Building a Network of Third Powers and Buffer States: From Finland to Qatar and from Algeria to Pakistan

Turkey is not at all alone in being a regional power or a middle power being pressured by the rival American-, Russian-, or Chinese-led alliances. Across Eastern Europe, from Finland and Poland by the Baltic Sea down to Ukraine

and Bulgaria by the Black Sea, a large number of small and middle-sized countries are facing the double pressure if not also the destabilizing influence of the competition between Euro-American and Russia-centric alliances. Arguably, Georgia, Ukraine, Iraq and Syria have been disintegrating or have been partitioned as a result of the competitive pressures of these two sets of rival alliances. Similarly, from the Middle East and North Africa to South Asia, countries such as Algeria, Pakistan and Yemen are facing the simultaneous pressures of rival alliance systems.

Qatar, which sought to navigate a middle course between Saudi-American and Russian-Iranian axes, or Algeria and Libya, which potentially or actually face the destructive consequences of Emirati-French-Egyptian or Russian sponsorship of mass intrastate warfare, could be brought together by Turkey as part of a network of third powers.

Turkey has an interest in preserving the sovereign existence and territorial integrity of these countries situated at the fault lines of conflict between different alliances. This situation presents an opportunity for Turkey to build a network of similarly vulnerable third powers and buffer states in between the rival global alliance networks. The well-known Turkish-Qatari and Turkish-Pakistani alliances can be considered already existing applications of this approach, but for the "third power" approach to become the organizing principle of Turkish grand strategy, there would need to be many other bilateral and multilateral cooperation schemes bringing together Turkey and regional powers that are disaffected by the competitive meddling of European, American-Emirati-Israeli, Russian-Iranian and Sinocentric alliances in their affairs.

In Eastern Europe, the 'Three Seas Initiative,'[63] also known as the Baltic, Adriatic, Black Sea Initiative,[64] which brings together 12 member states of the EU stretching from Estonia and Poland in the North to Slovenia and Croatia in the Southwest and Bulgaria and Romania in the Southeast, could be a good example of "third power" networking that Turkey should consider at least informally joining or cooperating with as a candidate rather than a member of the EU. In general, the geography in between these three seas,[65] populated by mostly small and middle-sized states occupied more than twice in the last century by rival great powers, is fertile ground to establish such a network of "third powers."

EU membership has been an official goal and also a somewhat popular aspiration for much of the Turkish public, elites and masses alike, going back almost 60 years to the Ankara Agreement of 1963 establishing an association between the European Economic Community and Turkey. Despite the seeming incompatibilities between EU membership and historically rooted and popular supranational visions such as Pan-Turkism and Pan-Islamism, approximately half of the Turkish public was supportive of EU membership when it was a salient topic and a real possibility in the early 2000s.[66] The EU membership of all of the Balkan countries as a whole, including Turkey, is in Turkey's interest;

following the same logic, all Balkan countries including Turkey remaining outside of the EU could also be in Turkey's interest if they could be brought together in another regional integration scheme. The guiding principle should be to keep as many, and ideally all, Balkan countries including Turkey in one and the same regional integration scheme. In other words, it is against Turkey's interest for some Balkan countries to join the EU in the absence of Turkey, as has unfortunately happened, thus erecting rather challenging borders and geopolitical hierarchies separating and alienating some Balkan countries from each other and from Turkey. The alternative to all Balkan countries including Turkey being EU members could be alternative integration schemes that bring together Turkey and the non-EU member Balkan states. Turkey's historically rooted and amicable ties with Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro and North Macedonia are important resources for such regional integration initiatives.

Conclusion

There are obvious challenges for a middle-sized country such as Turkey seeking to build an alternative alliance network instead of joining either one of the two largest alliance networks spearheaded by the great powers. However, relying only on one or the other of these two alliance networks would amount to potentially self-destructive "bandwagoning" in my opinion, since both of these two largest alliance networks, spearheaded by Russia and the U.S., have engaged in numerous adversarial and threatening actions that have harmed Turkey's national security over the last couple of decades, especially in very recent years.[67] Bandwagoning is a particularly disadvantageous strategy that neorealists strongly warn against.

In conclusion, this article proposes a grand strategy for Turkey that is broadly

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based on neorealist assumptions. While Turkey's immediate neighbors, with the partial exception of Iran, do not pose a conventional, existential military challenge to Turkey in terms of their latent or actual power, the "periphery" of Turkey's immediate neighbors includes up to half a dozen regional powers that have the military or economic capacity to threaten Turkey's neighbors or Turkey itself, which they have done in the recent past. Thus, Turkey should adopt a "neighborly core doctrine" to keep the great powers' military forc-

es out of the sovereign territory of its immediate neighbors, and if possible, should seek integration with its immediate neighbors through bilateral or multilateral economic, political and security initiatives. The urgency of this imperative is underlined by the fact that four of Turkey's eight neighbors have been occupied by the great powers or their proxies since the end of the Cold War. Among Turkey's immediate neighbors, Bulgaria, Georgia and Syria are critical as Turkey's gateways to the West, East and South, respectively. Turkey's historically rooted and overwhelmingly amicable ties with more than a dozen countries across Eastern Europe, the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia are highlighted for their positive significance in this grand strategy.

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17 "2019 Military Strength Ranking," *Global Fire Power*, https://www.globalfirepower.com/countries-listing.asp (Accessed January 12, 2020).

18 The distance between Sinop İnceburun and Cape Anamur on Turkey's Black Sea coast is approximately 700 kilometers.

19 GDP in official exchange rates, rounded to the nearest decimal point. Power Purchasing Parity (PPP) rounded to the nearest integer. Both figures are 2017 estimates. See "The World Factbook."

20 Rounded to the nearest decimal point. See ibid.

21 "SIPRI Military Expenditure Database."

22 "2019 Military Strength Ranking."

23 The distance between Trabzon in Turkey and Sochi in Russia is approximately 320 km.

24 The distance between Samandağ in Turkey and Nahariyya in Israel is approximately 350 km.

25 The distance between the Cape of Kefken in Turkey and the mouth of the Danube in Ukraine is approximately 450 km.

26 The distance between Kaş in Turkey and Alexandria in Egypt is approximately 550 km.

27 The distance between Nizip in Turkey and Turaif in Saudi Arabia is approximately 600 km.

28 The distance between Çeşme in Turkey and Otranto in Italy is approximately 700 km.

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ARTICLE

Turkey's Grand Strategy in the Context of Global and Regional Challenges

Meltem MÜFTÜLER BAÇ [*]

Abstract

Global governance is undergoing a systemic transformation involving alterations in states' military, economic and demographic capabilities. This global restructuring is coupled with the emergence of new challenges and increasing uncertainty over what the global order will look like in the next 50 years. It is within this rapidly transforming global environment that Turkey has adopted an active foreign policy. Turkey's foreign policy is changing in response to the global restructuring and the new challenges it entails, and is partly driven by its aspirations to be recognized as a regional power and global player. Turkey's emphasis on national survival, assertive policy implementation and autonomous foreign policy choices all add up to demonstrate that Turkey is developing a new grand strategy in the international arena. This paper aims to assess Turkey's grand strategy in the light of these global challenges by looking at the developments in its global capabilities and foreign policy endeavors.

Keywords

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Introduction

On December 22, 2018, when Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan claimed, "We are putting together an epic story in Turkish foreign policy, unprecedented in modern history,"[1] he was referring to the formulation of a more assertive, visible, autonomous presence in the international system. Turkish foreign policy is one of many contrasts.[2] In the Cold War years, Turkey was a committed participant in the Western alliance, with an integral place in the European order. It was a founding member of the Council of Europe in 1949, joined the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) when it was first set up as the OECC in 1948 and became a NATO member in 1952. In the Cold War years, Turkish foreign policy choices followed American and European preferences, and Turkey was a reliable ally in many ways. Similarly, in the post-Cold War era, Turkey played a critical role in the 1990-91 Gulf War, an active role in the Western Balkans and the newly independent former Soviet republics, and assumed new roles in support of the Western world in the post-9/11 dynamics.[3] Today, this seems to be no longer the case, partly because the global order has become increasingly complex, and uncertainty prevails in unprecedented levels.

What will global governance structures look like in 50 years? What key issues will global governance structures be dealing with that we are unable to foresee today? Will the role of states be the same or radically different in coping with critical issues? Which states will be the key players, and which of today's main players will lose their importance and perhaps lose their dominance? In other words, what kind of a future are we looking at in global governance dynamics? These questions automatically bring forth possible avenues of inquiry for Turkey's new role in the changing global order, as well as the need to identify Turkey's grand strategy.

In recent years, Turkey has increasingly followed a proactive foreign policy, characterized by rapprochement with Iran, friendly relations with Russia and engagement with less-developed countries in Asia and Africa.[4] At the same time, it is engaged in a tug of war in the Middle East with other regional powers, and is caught between the U.S. and Russia in the contest over the future of the region.[5] Turkish foreign policy has changed drastically in the last decades, moving away from its traditional pro-Western, pro-European stance, and leading to question marks over its foreign policy orientation.[6] There is a major transformation evident in Turkish foreign policy choices, with a possible move away from the Euro-Atlantic vision.[7] Yet, despite such a move, Turkey still plays an important role in global dynamics through its engagement in its neighborhood.[8] Parallel to the shift in Turkish foreign policy, it needs to

be noted that the Western alliance itself is suffering from internal division,[9] and that the EU and the U.S. have held increasingly diverging positions on multiple international issues.[10] In the absence of a unified Western front, Turkey's foreign policy choices, driven by its material interests, likewise seem to be more diversified.

Given its strategic location and the sheer size of its economy- the 6th largest in Europe and 16th in the G-20, even with the latest economic crisis, Turkey remains a significant partner for the U.S. and the EU. At the same time, Turkey frequently attempts to revise the status quo on a number of international issues by working bilaterally and multilaterally on many geographic fronts.[11] Turkey's revisionist policy is tied to its aspirations to be recognized as a regional power and a global player,[12] in particular with regard to its former territories under the Ottoman Empire and drawing upon its ethnic, religious and linguistic ties.[13] Its emphasis on national survival, assertive policy implementation and autonomous foreign policy choices all add up to demonstrate a different Turkey in the international arena, indicating its grand strategy as formulated in recent years. In other words, Turkey is developing a strategic vision for an ever more turbulent, tumultuous global order increasingly characterized by multi-polarity.

Parallel to its global and regional aspirations, Turkey is suffering from the consequences of international crises, such as a volatile relationship with the U.S., a collapse of state authority in its neighbors and increased instability along its southern borders.[14] While Turkey has always constituted a unique example of a country of contrasts-Muslim but secular, economically developed yet democratically struggling, of Europe but not yet in Europe, Middle Eastern yet not fully in the Middle East-the multiple layers of complexities in the Turkish political system have never been so profound, nor more visible. It is these complexities that underline Turkey's new challenges and motivate a new global strategy.

This is why, in 2016, President Erdoğan claimed "it was time for Turkey to openly think about alternatives, suggesting, for example, joining the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)"[15] and also developing new ties with Russia-both clearly radical steps that do not sit comfortably with Turkish foreign policy's traditional orientations. This search for alternatives might be related to the sense of alienation from the Western world that has taken root in Turkey, especially given the perceived lack of empathy from its European[16] and American partners in terms of the multiple foreign and domestic challenges it has found itself facing since 2016.[17]

Most importantly, Turkey has recently begun to assert itself in both global and regional politics. It has found itself in a renewed tug of war between the Western world and the Middle East. Turkish foreign policy choices since 2010 already indicate a sharp pull away from the Western world, yet without severing its ties in the Western alliance.[18] Its relations with the Middle Eastern countries are, however, not without significant problems of their own. Turkey finds itself under multiple pressures from its Middle Eastern neighbors, coupled with heightened tensions in global politics. This begs the question as to whether Turkey has a new grand strategy in its foreign policy and what the basic pillars of this strategy would be.

> **Turkey aims to enhance its national security and protect its territorial integrity, while also striving to be recognized as a regional and global player.**

Turkey aims to enhance its national security and protect its territorial integrity, while also striving to be recognized as a regional and global player.[19] Its key ambitions seem to revolve around recognition as an international player-the desire to receive a higher degree of visibility while maintaining sustained economic growth and protection from external threats. The main purpose of this paper is to demonstrate how Turkey responds to ongoing global transformation with its grand strategy, in particular by identifying the dilemmas it faces arising from this transformation. To do so, first the paper identifies the main processes underway leading to global transformation; second, it provides a comparison of the main pillars of global restructuring vis-à-vis Turkey's position, assessed in line with this restructuring. Third, it analyzes different trajectories for Turkish foreign policy as formulated according to its grand strategy. This paper's key contribution lies precisely in this aspect: it offers an assessment of the contours of global transformation at large, and examines how Turkey's grand strategy is altering in response to and perhaps contributing to this global transformation.

Global Governance: Transforming the Old, Bringing in the New

Grand strategy refers to a country's ability to utilize its limited military, economic, political and diplomatic resources for the realization of its key national interests in its foreign policy.[20] However, when international actors shape their global strategies, they do so within the contours of global governance and systemic dynamics.[21] The international system is shaped by the power distri-

bution among major players,[22] and reflects to a large extent the main political preferences of the dominant powers.[23] Global governance has evolved under the hegemonic leadership of the Western world, in particular the U.S., in the post-WWII period in the form of a liberal international order.[24] However, in recent decades, there has been a dissolution of the Western alliance, with the U.S. and European countries going in different directions, as well as a rise of authoritarian systems in multiple countries in the world, including even the former champions of liberal democracy.[25] What needs to be stressed significantly is that there are major challenges to a convergence of interests between the European countries and the U.S. as well as Turkey in both security and economic arenas.

Current global developments are leading to both increased question marks and a restructuring of the post-WWII global order.[26] The global restructuring underway encompasses multiple pillars ranging from economic-financial,[27] to political and security as well as normative concerns.[28] While increasingly culturally visible, the main axis around which such global restructuring seems to be revolving also brings forth questions about the legitimacy and supremacy of the American-Western European dominated international institutions.[29] As emerging powers question both the status quo and the ongoing power balances, a struggle for influence between traditional and emerging powers becomes inevitable.

Accordingly, there are multiple assumptions on which this paper on Turkish grand strategy is based; first, there is a need for an academic assessment of how the bipolar international order has transformed, first into a unipolar system[30] and later on into a multipolar system,[31] and second, this academic assessment has to involve a reconceptualization of Turkey's interactions with multiple international actors, along with its role and position in the international system, in particular with its transatlantic partners. Finally, this reconceptualization of Turkish foreign policy has to bring forth a solid foundation for the generation of new policy options. Therefore, this paper also aims to understand Turkey's standing in the newly emerging global order along with its possible trajectories in the new order.[32] This task brings forth questions about the multilateral institutions that Turkey joined in the Cold War era,[33] and which shaped its relative position in the multilateral order.[34] It is in the anarchical order that states like Turkey strive to survive. As there is no such thing as a world government or a central political authority at the global level, multilateral institutions emerge with the ultimate aim of reducing uncertainty by creating international rules[35] and generating information on the costs and benefits of violating these rules.[36] Yet, the creation of these rules and possible sanctions

on the free riders that break these rules depend upon the presence of a handful of powerful actors that choose to cooperate to enforce them.[37] Global governance relies on this cooperation,[38] mostly driven by a convergence of interests between these powerful actors. This is precisely what has happened in the post-WWII order. However, in today's complex international environment, the powerful actors of the past no longer hold onto their positions, and there is a lack of convergence of interests among today's powerful actors. It is within this milieu that Turkey is seeking a niche for itself.

A related inquiry examines the possible role that Turkey might play as a global and/or regional leader, which seems to be the main motivation of Turkish political leaders in recent years. While there is a striving for such a leadership role, it remains to be seen whether Turkey could play such a role in the international system with other players such as Brazil, China, India or even Iran, aspiring to similar leadership positions. Turkey argues that the current international institutional constellations-shaped by European and American power dynamics in the post-WWII period-do not reflect the current power balances. It is for this reason that President Erdoğan proposes that the 'world is greater than five', implying that it is high time for reform in the UN. There is a need for reformulating these institutions' decision-making dynamics in line with the current distribution of power that does not seem to hold sway in the international system yet. As the emerging powers demand systemic alterations, an integral part of such global restructuring would clearly involve changes in the voting procedures in multilateral institutions such as the permanent membership rights and veto power of the great powers-the U.S., UK, Russia, France and China-in the UN Security Council. According to Müftüler-Baç and Peterson, "the rise of new powers such as China, India, Russia and Brazil means that key stakeholders now contest the rules that have emerged and are sufficiently powerful to challenge existing constellations of global governance."[39]

> **In today's complex international environment, the powerful actors of the past no longer hold onto their positions, and there is a lack of convergence of interests among today's powerful actors. It is within this milieu that Turkey is seeking a niche for itself.**

There seems to be, therefore, a pressing need for a restructuring of global governance that might lead to possible adaptations in international trade, international financial rules, mobility of capital, economic security, foreign aid, international norms, migration governance as well as international security governance structures. Parallel to this restructuring underway, the increasing visibility of emerging powers in international relations is currently seen as a

challenge to more traditional powers.[40] It is within this context that Turkish grand strategy needs to be assessed. While it was easier to predict Turkish foreign policy in both the Cold War and post-Cold War era, it has now become increasingly difficult to do so, given the multiple layers of complexity in the international system. This is why it remains critical to assess how Turkey's grand strategy will take shape in this global transformation.[41]

Subsequently, the ongoing transformation in global dynamics with regard to military, economic and demographic capabilities play an important role in determining the context within which Turkish foreign policy is taking shape.[42] This analysis would form the basis for capturing the relative position that Turkey holds within the international system. An analysis of capabilities, in turn, would enable an assessment of how the Turkish grand strategy rests on challenging the hegemonic roles of the U.S. and the European powers in global governance structures. Finally, it remains to be seen whether there are common denominators between Turkey and other emerging powers in questioning the current global and regional power balances.

Parallel to the challenges posed by global transformation, the former leaders of the global order, the U.S. and the European great powers no longer dominate global dynamics in terms of their military, economic and demographic capabilities.[43] This, in turn, has translated into the loss of their ability to shape global governance architecture, along with increased questions about their ability to respond to global needs on a larger scale. For example, between 1990 and 2010, the economic capabilities of the emerging powers were less than ½ of the combined European and American economic capabilities, yet by 2018, they had reached twice their size. Similarly, there is an increasing gap among the traditional powers and emerging countries with regard to their population sizes. While in the early 20th century, the populations of the European countries made up around ¼ of the whole global population, today this has shrunk to about 1/8th of the global population. According to UN projections, by 2030, the combined populations of the U.S. and the European continent will reach 887 million out of a total global population of 7.556 billion, and by 2050, they will constitute around 918 million out of a global population of 8.876 billion.[44] While population growth is not necessarily a source of global power, the shrinking population of the former great powers is an important concern in global dynamics. These changing population dynamics matter in determining the key concerns in global governance, where so-called third world concerns of economic growth, eradication of poverty and climate change would become central issues to be dealt with. A similar transformation can be seen in military capabilities, with the U.S. and the European powers

facing significant challenges to their military superiority. However, one major difference is that while the traditional great powers in Europe are losing ground in all aspects of power-economic, military and demographic-the U.S. does not seem to be doing so. This trend might lead to a situation where the U.S. could develop new alliances across the board, rather than remaining tied to the increasingly redundant European powers.

While there is no consensus on the exact configurations of the emerging global dynamics in international relations (IR) literature, there is also a lack of consistency in terms of identifying the key changes and/or global challenges among different IR traditions.[45] Despite the fact that different scenarios are being floated to predict the outcomes of global restructuring, there is a consensus that the current global order is no longer tenable and/or sustainable.[46] Based on these different theoretical formulations, the paper proposes the following scenarios for Turkish grand strategy:

- *Hypothesis 1:* The liberal international order that encompasses Turkey within the U.S.-dominated Western order will expand by taking in new members, and the Turkish grand strategy will be reformulated as one of harmony/ cooperation with its global partners.

This hypothesis takes into account the fact that global transformation enables the incorporation of emerging powers into mainstream power structures, granted that they do not question or challenge the rules of the existing multilateral institutions.[47] In other words, there are more great powers in the loop, perhaps replacing the former great powers, so there is turnover at the top, but the new powers do not challenge the basic pillars of the Western-dominated hegemonic order. However, there are already some emerging powers-for example Iran-that do actually question the American-dominated order, and the rules set up under this hegemony, ranging from nonproliferation to financial constraints. Given this contestation by some emerging powers, there seems to be a need for a competing view which forms the 2nd hypothesis in this paper.

- *Hypothesis 2:* There are challenges to the Western-dominated liberal international order from the rising powers. Turkey, identifying with this group, moves further away from its traditional allies in the West and looks for new allies.

This hypothesis draws upon the logic that, as a result of the global power transition, a new global order might be evolving. It is within this new global order that Turkey is looking for a role for itself, and it is far from certain that it will remain with its previous partners, most importantly the European countries. Given the stalling of the accession process with the EU, and the increasingly

transactional character of Turkey-EU relations, Turkey's role in the Western order seems to be questioned.[48] The 2nd hypothesis foresees a possible convergence of interests between Turkey and other emerging powers, yet this is far from certain, which brings forth the 3rd proposition of the paper.

- *Hypothesis 3:* Turkey is moving away from its former partners in the U.S. and Europe, but is not developing new cooperation patterns with emerging powers, either. As a result, Turkey's grand strategy is pushing Turkey further into international isolation in global governance constellations.

While this is a possible scenario, it seems more plausible that Turkey is looking to build a network of similar-minded states, with which it could act as a block. Thus, a possible final hypothesis would be:

- *Hypothesis 4:* Turkey seeks to establish a network of similar-minded middle powers with which it could act together to balance out the American, Russian and Chinese-driven coalitions.

These hypotheses differ from each other in their contemplation of the trajectories of international restructuring, as well as the possible paths of a Turkish trajectory. Yet, despite the differences in these trajectories, it is beyond doubt that Turkey's grand strategy is being reformulated. In that respect, the paper relies on an intersection between neorealism,[49] and neoliberal institutionalism to assess the validity of these hypotheses.[50] It is also possible that none of these hypothesis could point to Turkey's future trajectories, while still indicating a mix and match of possible routes. For example, Turkey might act together with its traditional allies in some policies, but could build coalitions with emerging powers on others. In addition, what sets Turkey apart is its cultural appeal that draws upon its imperialistic roots, and its cultural, religious, historical and linguistic ties with its neighbors in the region. The culture-based dimension of Turkey's grand strategy plays an important role in setting it apart from other emerging powers. The increased emphasis on Turkey's obligations to its former territories under the Ottoman Empire, or that Turkey represents the interests of the underdog in such venues as the UN draws from this culturally driven rhetoric.

What sets Turkey apart is its cultural appeal that draws upon its imperialistic roots, and its cultural, religious, historical and linguistic ties with its neighbors in the region.

Turkey's Position in Global and Regional Power Dynamics

In the global order shaped in the aftermath of WWII in 1945, the newly established international institutions formed the cornerstone of the liberal international order. The UN, the Council of Europe, the OECD, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) reflected the global balance of power.[51]

The powers that had the largest share of the global economic pie-the U.S. and the former colonial powers in Europe-also had the most significant shares in both voting weights and representation in these multilateral institutions. The multilateral order between 1945 and 2003 revolved around these players.[52] Yet, as stated above, the current economic and military distribution of power no longer resembles what existed in 1945.[53] The multilateral institutions (UN, the Bretton Woods system, the international trade regime) established under the co-leadership of the U.S. and the European powers in the past are now increasingly questioned, and there are also demands for governance tools to correspond to newly emerging needs. Turkey finds itself playing a new role in this global transformation, and has some potential to play a new global role in response. Yet, it is not yet clear what kind of a role Turkey is evolving toward; it is essential to assess the Turkish grand strategy precisely for this reason.

The tables below provide a detailed ranking and comparison of the military, economic and demographic dimensions of the ongoing global transformation. The tables clearly demonstrate that there is a global restructuring underway. Nonetheless, it is not clear what kind of a new global order is emerging. Table 1 demonstrates the ongoing transformation in military power and military spending.

Rank	Country	Firepower	Military Spending in billion USD (Rank)
1	U.S.	0.0615	716 (1)
2	Russia	0.0639	44 (8)
3	China	0.0673	224 (2)
4	India	0.1065	55.2 (4)
5	France	0.1584	40.5 (9)
6	Japan	0.1707	47 (7)
7	South Korea	0.1761	38.3 (10)
8	United Kingdom	0.1797	47.5 (6)
9	Turkey	0.2089	8.6 (25)
10	Germany	0.2097	49.1 (5)
11	Italy	0.2277	29.2 (12)
12	Egypt	0.2283	4.4 (45)
13	Brazil	0.2487	29.3 (11)
14	Iran	0.2606	6.3 (33)
15	Pakistan	0.2798	7 (28)
16	Indonesia	0.2804	6.9 (30)
17	Israel	0.2964	19.6 (15)
18	North Korea	0.3274	7.5 (26)
19	Australia	0.3277	26.3 (13)
25	Saudi Arabia	0.4286	70 (3)

Table 1: Military Power and Spending, 2019
Source: *Global Fire Power*, 2019, https://www.globalfirepower.com/countries-listing.asp.

While Turkey ranks in the top ten of the most powerful militaries in the world, its current military spending does not correlate to its power. For example, in 2018 Turkey ranked 22nd in the world with \$10.2 billion in military spending, but it declined in 2019 to 25th. Despite this decline in its military spending compared to its competitors in the region, Turkey consistently ranks among the top 20 of the world's most powerful militaries. However, as demonstrated in Table 1, military spending among newly emerging players, such as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), is on the rise. This finding indicates that regional and global balances might change in the near future. Saudi Arabia in particular deserves special mention, precisely because it has the 3rd largest military spending in the world, bypassing all the

major powers in Europe as well as Russia. Given the competition between regional players in the Middle East, Turkey, Iran and Saudi Arabia, the latter's increased military spending indicates the possibility of an even fiercer power competition looming on the horizon. The military ranking shown in Table 1 provides empirical proof for Hypothesis 1 in terms of the magnitude of global transformation with new powers entering the game of international politics. However, as security interests among the major players continue to diverge, the alterations in global rankings might indicate a rising potential for future discord. Despite the American hegemonic military presence, smaller players might find the opportunity to wage war and create havoc in the world. Thus, in an attempt to answer the opening questions of the paper in terms of what the future of global governance might look like, one possible answer might turn out to be a higher degree of insecurity. The American decision to withdraw from Syria in October 2019, its stated aim to reduce its troops globally and its declining support to NATO might add up to a situation in which, in the absence of the American security umbrella, both the Middle East and the European continent become less safe. It is precisely this possibility that Turkey is trying to prepare for through its development of new technology and the creation of safe zones in its southern periphery. With increased question marks over the role of NATO along with the American commitment to collective defense, security governance might be mostly a national endeavor. While it is beyond the premises of this paper to delve further into the Syrian conflict, the evolving security dynamics following the American withdrawal and Turkish intervention in the North demonstrate how Turkish grand strategy is directly shaped by security concerns and regional dynamics.

These alterations in military power are taking place simultaneously with and parallel to the transformation in global economic balances. For example, while the U.S. and the European powers had ¾ of the global economic pie between 1945 and 1970, their share has constantly declined over the last three decades. These changing economic balances form the basis of trade wars, crises in international capital flows and economic tugs of war. There is also significant uncertainty over what kind of a new financial/trade system might emerge, and which rules would be altered in the future. Table 2 demonstrates the economic changes at the global level, along with projections for 2021.

Country	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
U.S.	17,348.08	17,947.00	18,558.13	19,284.99	20,145.05	21,016.06	21,873.55	22,765.72
China	10,430.71	10,982.83	11,383.03	12,263.43	13,338.23	14,605.29	16,144.04	17,762.01
Japan	4,596.16	4,123.26	4,412.60	4,513.75	4,562.21	4,675.79	4,800.06	4,895.42
Germany	3,874.44	3,357.61	3,467.78	3,591.69	3,697.31	3,821.51	3,958.72	4,065.95
India	2,042.56	2,090.71	2,288.72	2,487.94	2,724.76	3,006.95	3,315.36	3,660.21
UK	2,991.69	2,849.35	2,760.96	2,885.48	2,999.29	3,123.27	3,256.30	3,373.92
France	2,833.69	2,421.56	2,464.79	2,537.92	2,609.06	2,700.05	2,804.26	2,894.99
Italy	2,141.94	1,815.76	1,848.69	1,901.67	1,943.30	1,994.45	2,050.82	2,091.57
Brazil	2,417.16	1,772.59	1,534.78	1,556.44	1,608.74	1,677.46	1,749.35	1,828.64
Canada	1,783.78	1,552.39	1,462.33	1,530.70	1,595.50	1,666.61	1,740.00	1,803.87
South Korea	1,410.38	1,376.87	1,321.20	1,379.32	1,434.95	1,498.76	1,566.40	1,628.61
Russia	2,029.62	1,324.73	1,132.74	1,267.55	1,355.36	1,447.13	1,530.61	1,607.95
Australia	1,441.95	1,223.89	1,200.78	1,262.34	1,330.25	1,398.73	1,468.69	1,535.84
Spain	1,383.54	1,199.72	1,242.36	1,291.36	1,332.04	1,379.81	1,433.49	1,476.05
Mexico	1,297.85	1,144.33	1,082.43	1,166.60	1,228.49	1,299.64	1,380.69	1,467.42
Indonesia	890.60	858.95	936.96	1,024.00	1,109.96	1,193.19	1,291.66	1,427.88
Turkey	798.33	733.64	751.19	791.24	833.86	882.91	935.34	985.64
Holland	880.72	738.42	762.52	794.25	821.10	851.38	885.10	914.28
Saudi Arabia	753.83	653.22	618.27	659.66	699.64	741.40	778.26	813.00
Nigeria	574.00	490.21	537.97	620.95	682.77	710.28	734.70	759.42

Table 2: The Largest 20 Economies in the World and IMF projections (in million USD)

As Table 2 demonstrates, Turkey, along with India, Brazil and Mexico, is among the top 20 of the world's largest economies, yet the global economic rules are set based on the preferences of the U.S. and the European powers. Even though the G-20 emerged in 2003 to allow for the more effective participation of these newly emerging powers in the global economic order, the dominant rules are still those set by the post-1945 institutions. As American hegemonic leadership in economic governance is not likely to alter in the near future, there is not much possibility of a change in these governance patterns. Yet, the European powers-with the possible exception of Germany-do not seem to be playing a central role in global economics any more. Economic reconfigurations globally will lead to the formations of new economic coalitions, especially among the emerging powers. The 2008 economic crisis already created a permanent loss of confidence in Western-dominated liberal capitalism and alternative models of economic development have been put forward, most notably by China.

Turkey's role in this new economic balance needs to take into account that it will need to forge new economic ties with other emerging powers, but also with countries in Africa, such as Nigeria, which might be transformed into the economic powerhouses of the future. The changes in Turkish trade patterns over time also reflect this alteration of economic power, with Turkish trade increasingly directed toward other markets, rather than remaining bound to its traditional European trade partners. Table 3 demonstrates these changing patterns for Turkish trade.

Turkey's role in this new economic balance needs to take into account that it will need to forge new economic ties with other emerging powers, but also with countries in Africa, such as Nigeria, which might be transformed into the economic powerhouses of the future.

Rank	Country	Total exports (2009-2018)	% in Total exports
1	Germany	126,075,767	9.6
2	United Kingdom	91,659,536	5.8
3	Iraq	86,716,048	5.0
4	Italy	72,980,092	5.8
5	U.S.	59,151,968	3.2
6	France	57,638,614	6.1
7	UAE	50,141,960	2.8
8	Spain	46,814,638	2.8
9	Russia	44,853,657	3.1
10	Iran	40,940,646	2.0
11	Netherlands	33,442,254	2.1
12	Egypt	29,058,085	2.5
13	Saudi Arabia	28,679,682	1.7
14	Romania	28,292,809	2.2
15	Israel	26,879,447	1.5
16	Belgium	26,288,040	1.8
17	China	26,222,595	1.6
18	Poland	22,295,495	1.3
19	Bulgaria	19,734,407	1.4
20	Greece	15,591,231	1.6

Table 3: Turkish Exports by Country (2009-2018), in thousand USD
Source: *Republic of Turkey Ministry of Trade*, https://www.trade.gov.tr/

What needs to be noted here is that Turkish trade has become increasingly varied,[54] yet the main pillars of economic governance, such as reliance on the American dollar as the key currency for trade, have remained unchanged. It is also partly for this reason that President Erdoğan stressed "Turkey's willingness to trade with its top trade partners like China and Russia in local currencies instead of the U.S. dollar"[55] in order to reduce dependence on the American dollar.

Table 3 demonstrates that Turkey has multiple trade partners that no longer consist predominately of the European countries, and is increasingly diversifying its trade partners. For example, over time, countries like Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Egypt and Iraq have become more prominent as Turkey's trade partners. This points to the possibility that Turkey's economic and military position in the region will play a critical role in determining its grand strategy at the regional level.

Finally, demographic capabilities play a new role in altering global balances as a third pillar of governance transformation. It is possible that trade wars, military competition and demands for global representation will be affected by the changing global demographic balances. Table 4 demonstrates the global demographic balances and the changes expected in the near future.

Country	World Bank 2018 Population Data	World Bank 2030 Population Projection	Country	World Bank 2030 Population Projection
China	1,386,395,000	1,410,343,000	India	1,512,985,000
India	1,339,180,127	1,512,985,000	China	1,410,343,000
U.S.	325,719,178	355,695,000	U.S.	355,695,000
Indonesia	263,991,379	295,595,000	Indonesia	295,595,000
Brazil	209,288,278	225,472,000	Nigeria	264,068,000
Pakistan	197,015,955	244,248,000	Pakistan	244,248,000
Nigeria	190,886,311	264,068,000	Brazil	225,472,000
Bangladesh	164,669,751	185,585,000	Bangladesh	185,585,000
Russia	144,495,044	139,540,000	Mexico	147,540,000
Mexico	129,163,276	147,540,000	Ethiopia	139,620,000
Japan	126,785,797	120,238,000	Russia	139,540,000
Ethiopia	104,957,438	139,620,000	Philippines	125,372,000
Philippines	104,918,090	125,372,000	Congo	120,443,000
Egypt	97,553,151	119,746,000	Japan	120,238,000
Vietnam	95,540,800	106,284,000	Egypt	119,746,000
Germany	82,695,000	81,418,000	Vietnam	106,284,000
Congo	81,339,988	120,443,000	Iran	88,863,000
Iran	81,162,788	88,863,000	Turkey	88,417,000
Turkey	80,745,020	88,417,000	Tanzania	83,702,000
Thailand	69,037,513	69,626,000	Germany	81,418,000

Table 4: The Most Populous Countries in the World

It is the changes in demographic balance that need to be stressed as a key element of global transformation. While some of the most populous countries are economically well off, such as the U.S. and Germany, most of the populous countries are emerging powers and a substantial group are relatively poor, among them Bangladesh. As seen in Table 4, among the European powers, only Germany remains in the top 20 of the most populous countries. By 2030, Germany is expected to move out of this ranking. The bottom line is that emerging powers and developing countries will have a much higher share of the global population. Another significant finding here involves the proportional representation of African countries in global demographic dy-

namics. African countries, with the possible exception of Nigeria, are not expected to become global economic players; the fact that their populations are predicted to grow significantly, but without corresponding economic growth, carries potential risks for both regional and global instability. This prediction means that there is a need to develop new policies for the African continent. It might be precisely why Turkey's grand strategy is taking these changing dynamics into account; Turkey is investing in Africa both economically and diplomatically, and is much more involved there compared to the European powers or the U.S.

In short, these changing global dynamics-military, economic and demographic-provide new challenges for Turkey's foreign policy, and its grand strategy seems to be emerging in response to these challenges of global transformation. This is precisely why Turkish grand strategy focuses on increased demand for changes in global governance, in particular changes to the voting patterns and the exclusivity of permanent membership in the UN for only five great powers, and changes to the voting weights in the IMF. Turkey's recent call for abandoning overreliance on the American dollar as the main currency for international trade and its questioning of the objectivity of international economic institutions all fit into a larger pattern of challenging the rules of the game as dictated by the U.S. and the European countries. Turkish demands for altering the governance procedures in the UN with a reform on the voting system in the Security Council, the central role played by the U.S. dollar in international trade as well as a greater voice in all international matters are clearly part of the Turkish grand strategy. These demands also provide empirical support for the paper's second hypothesis about Turkey moving away from its traditional partners. Given the stall in the Turkish accession negotiations with the EU,[56] Turkey's growing distance from its traditional allies in the West is to be understood as a strategy to develop new ties and cooperation arrangements. The post-2016 developments in Turkish-EU relations have already demonstrated how and to what extent Turkey's future with the European countries will be shaped by the frozen accession process. As the EU is not prioritizing future enlargement at the moment, its relations with Turkey have suffered significantly. The 2015 refugee deal and the increasingly transactional relationship between Turkey and the EU indicate that a future scenario of Turkish membership in the EU is unlikely. Given the central role that Turkey's possible accession to the EU had played in shaping its alliance with the European countries, the deteriorating relationship between Turkey and the EU points to a possible falsification of Hypothesis 1. However, the litmus test for Turkish grand strategy, as well as its relations with the great powers, may be the challenges it faced in Syria.

The changes in Turkey's foreign policy demonstrate that its role in the Middle East region has evolved from a soft power that utilized mostly economic and diplomatic tools into a more belligerent, hard power ready to use its military capabilities. Such changes have brought into the forefront that Turkish grand strategy is creating visible divergences with the European states and the EU. Yet, despite such divergences, a cooperation between these parties is essential for stability in the Middle East and the protection of their mutual security interests. The crisis over Syria demonstrated the divergences in threat perceptions between Turkey and the EU, as well as the potential responses on how to deal with these threats for the promotion of regional stability. An analysis of global balances also include a comparison of Turkey's capabilities with those of the countries in its immediate vicinity. A possible conclusion here is that, with the exception of Iran and Saudi Arabia, and to a lesser extent Egypt, regional dynamics indicate that Turkey's relative standing in the region accords it a great power status. Turkey's military capabilities, field tested in Syria, play an important role in underlining its regional power status. On October 9, 2019, Turkey launched a military operation in Northern Syria that led to new question marks over Turkey's role in the Middle East, as well as its role in the region as a major power. With the stated aim of stabilizing Turkey's borders with Syria, the military operation had the potential to upset Turkey's relations with its European allies, the U.S., Russia and Iran. Nonetheless, given the perceived threats to Turkish border security coming from Syria, and the pressing need to enable the Syrian refugees in Turkey to safely return to their homes, the Turkish government endorsed the military action. Turkey's actions had a significant impact on its relations, especially with the EU; its reaction was swift, with the EU's High Representative Federica Mogherini summarizing the EU's position on the Turkish operation:

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Turkey has always been in this a key partner for the European Union and a critically important actor in the Syrian crisis and in the region. But Turkey's legitimate security concerns should be addressed through political and diplomatic means, not military action, in accordance with international humanitarian law. We urge all to always ensure the protection of civilians and unhindered, safe and sustainable humanitarian access throughout Syria.[57]

President Erdoğan responded, declaring: "If the EU labels this operation as an invasion, we will open the Turkish borders and allow the Syrian refugees to flood into the European territories."[58] These statements from various Turkish and EU officials demonstrate the critical importance of border security, failed states, Kurdish autonomy, terrorism and Syrian refugees as the main issues that shape Turkey's policy in the Middle East, its relations with the EU as well as the future of regional order/dynamics. At the same time, both the military operation and the subsequent European reactions provide an empirical verification for the paper's second hypothesis that Turkey's foreign policy choices have led to its further divergence from the traditional powers, its allies under the umbrella of the Western alliance.

The following questions are critical in finding a rationale for maintaining cooperation while enabling Turkey to play a larger role in regional stability: 1) What are the main pillars of Turkish foreign policy in the Middle East? 2) How does the Turkish role in the region bring the country into possible conflict with both global and regional players? 3) Is it feasible for the EU to bypass Turkey in advancing its interests in the Middle East? All of these questions could be assessed via an in-depth analysis of a Turkish grand strategy that revolves around Turkey's possible role as a military actor, but also as an economic and humanitarian player, that takes into account the growing tensions in the region. Therefore, while on the one hand, Turkey aimed to stabilize its southern borders with Syria with its military endeavors, on the other hand, it relied on use of force as a deterrent for the future, signaling its intention to use force if threatened. The Turkish use of force in Northern Syria, therefore, is a robust illustration of Turkey's grand strategy of using its capabilities in spite of opposition from its allies and the major powers. It provides significant empirical support for Hypothesis 3, that Turkish grand strategy involves risking global alienation when its own security interests require immediate action, which might involve military responses in some cases.

Conclusion

The paper has demonstrated the power shifts at the global level that have had a significant impact on the basic premises of the liberal international order as established in the post-WWII order. As the traditional powers find themselves challenged by emerging players such as Turkey, one could argue that emerging multipolarity in global security governance constellations has created new opportunities for powers such as China and Russia, enabling them to expand their foreign policy influence over developing states and present

them with an alternative model. Among other emerging players, Turkey has enjoyed increased global visibility due to its geographical location, military and economic capabilities and its pronounced cultural ties with its former territories under the Ottoman Empire. Turkey's present capabilities indicate that it is among the key global players with robust sources of power. Most notably, as most of the major conflicts are emerging in Turkey's immediate vicinity, Turkish foreign policy is adjusting to these challenges by following a more assertive, independent line, one that is also based on the tools that its enhanced capabilities bring.

This paper assessed the formulation of a grand strategy in Turkey in response to these global challenges, and its foreign policy in terms of the changing global landscape and its own global aspirations. In particular, Turkey's global aspirations are tied to its capabilities; both militarily and economically, Turkey occupies a central place in global dynamics. In terms of its global aspirations, Turkey increasingly relies on tools of economic interdependence, trade and foreign direct investment. Among these tools, humanitarian aid has put Turkey on the global map as an aspirant player with a different role to play compared to traditional powers and donors. While the paper did not focus on these tools and Turkey's humanitarian aid, it needs to be noted that these are part and parcel of the Turkish grand strategy. Turkey's grand strategy is partly based on building a basis for further strengthening its power and concrete capabilities. The global transformation has changed the Turkish role from a reliable ally of the Western powers into a more assertive, visible global player, precisely due to its enhanced presence in global power constellations. Yet different trajectories for Turkey's role in global governance are possible, and it is still not fully clear where Turkey's grand strategy will lead. However, what is relatively clear is that the Cold War and post-Cold War dynamics based on a convergence of security interests between the U.S., Europe and Turkey no longer hold true in the same magnitude. Similarly, the global order is going through a transformation that requires greater cooperation among the great powers in dealing with the new challenges of nuclear proliferation, migration, environmental degradation and-unexpectedly-a new public health crisis with the coronavirus pandemic. There is, however, a lack of political will and action among the great powers-traditional and emerging-in formulating clear responses to deal

> **Among other emerging players, Turkey has enjoyed increased global visibility due to its geographical location, military and economic capabilities and its pronounced cultural ties with its former territories under the Ottoman Empire.**

with these challenges. Turkey's grand strategy sets it apart from other similar players in terms of its readiness to deal with the migration crisis and in addressing communication challenges between the Western world and the Middle Eastern countries. However, Turkey needs to be better integrated into the global governance structures to have its voice heard. This seems to be the key challenge facing Turkey; in an increasingly complex, uncertain and anarchic international order, its place in the world, the powers with which it allies and the threats it faces are highly ambiguous. In an increasingly complex global order, Turkey's grand strategy might involve the design of a strategic vision that builds on establishing multiple new partnerships with major powers, as well as middle players, on the basis of common material interests.

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ARTICLE

Grand Strategizing in and for Turkish Foreign Policy: Lessons Learned from History, Geography and Practice

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Abstract

Although there is no commonly agreed upon definition of grand strategy in the literature, most analyses of the concept include efforts of states to develop long-term plans, programs and policies to achieve their national interests, utilizing the nation's resources and tools, including their economic, political, military, psychological and moral resources. Turkey has experience in developing a grand strategy in this context, albeit without specifically referring to the exercise as such. This paper looks at the expertise and historical precursors of Turkey's grand strategy experience to identify indicators for its future grand strategizing efforts. In this context, balancing major powers, the primacy of geography, economic development, Western connection, the impact of the international system, a sense of greatness and a wish for regional supremacy are identified as inputs of Turkey's past grand strategies. Moving from these bases, particulars of what could be identified as an "internationalist" grand strategy alternative for Turkey is offered.

Keywords

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Introduction: Grand Strategy in General

The popularity of grand strategy literature has increased since the end of the Cold War as many decision makers started to look for the next "long telegram" by X.[1] Although most academicians and policy makers seem to have lost their ability to look beyond the "containment policy" of the U.S. during the Cold War as a model for grand strategy, journalists and policy commentators all over the world love to articulate grandiose policy options almost daily, such that most people confuse them with grand strategy. Nevertheless, while not usually referred to as such in official policy documents until recently, grand strategy terminology has existed in academic writing since the 1920s.

One of the problem with the grand strategy literature is that it includes a plethora of definitions and addresses diverse aspects of political life. In general, grand strategy could be described as "the highest level of… statecraft that establishes how states… prioritize and mobilize [their] military, diplomatic, political, economic, and other sources of power to ensure what they perceive as their national interests."[2] The "grand" in the concept do not mean to be "grandiose" or "ambitious," but rather denotes an encompassing effort to manage of all a state's resources "for the preservation and enhancement of the nation's long-term interests."[3] As most of the literature links up with scientific realism and at least implicitly refers to a reality "that exists independently of the mind of the observer,"[4] grand strategic analyses are in general based on the unit (i.e. the state) level rather than individual or the system.

Although the originator of the concept, Liddell Hart, used the term "higher strategy" instead of grand strategy and described something closer to the narrower notion of military strategy,[5] the grand strategy concept as we use it today refers to a "national strategy" beyond war that aims at utilizing all of the political, economic, diplomatic, psychological and military resources of a state to achieve its national interests/goals.[6] In this sense, Gaddis's definition of grand strategy as "the calculated relationship of means to large ends" seems more apt for our purposes in this paper.[7]

If we accept Clausewitz's famous dictum of war as "the continuation of politics by other means,"[8] then war becomes a function of a much wider concept of politics. Even Hart goes beyond the simple conduct of war when he advises students of strategy that grand strategy "should both calculate and develop the military, economic, and moral resources of the nation," regulating "the distribution of power… between the military and industry" and should apply "financial, diplomatic, commercial, and ethical pressure to weaken opponents' will."[9] In any case, the range of instruments modern states employ in pursing their national interests are extensive and, in addition to military force, "include alliance building, diplomacy, economic policy, financial incentives, intelligence, public diplomacy, and the mobilization of the nation's political will."[10]

Grand strategy obviously refers to something larger than "policy," which is normally directed to a specific and narrow end, or "foreign policy," which more generally insinuates the end result of a collection of individual policies that may or may not aim at a coherent result. The difference between "strategy" and grand strategy on the other hand is essentially one of scale and the vantage point from which we look at issues. Grand strategy is much more general, deals with greater problems, aims wider and usually extends beyond the foreseeable future.

According to Silove, grand strategy has three separate meanings: A deliberate, detailed plan; An organizing principle, used to guide policy actions; A pattern in state behavior.[11] Silove refers to "grand plans, grand principles, grand behavior" without linking them or creating a hierarchy among them. Nevertheless, the following linkage could be offered:

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Figure 1: Grand Strategic Stages and Linkages Between Them

Behavior ⇨ Principles ⇨ Plans ⇨ Implementation
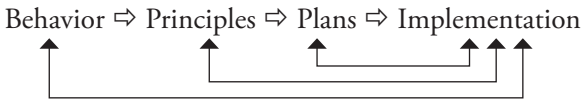
Grand strategy as a plan, following the Clausewitz-Hart-Kennedy tradition, is a detailed, deliberate and well-thought-out written plan. Examples include the *U.S. National Security Strategy Document,* prepared by the National Security Council of the U.S. on the bases of the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986, which requires the document to "address US interests, goals, and objectives; the policies, worldwide commitments, and capabilities required to meet those objectives; and the use of elements of national power to achieve those goals."[12] Similarly, Russia's *National Security Strategy Act*, regularly released by the Presidential Office, defines "the Russian Federation's national interests and strategic national priorities, objectives, tasks, and measures in the sphere of domestic and foreign policy aimed at strengthening the Russian Federation's national interests." Turkey's equivalent document is called the *National Security Policy Document*, which is prepared by the National Security Council (*Milli Güvenlik Kurulu* or MGK) every five years and revised when necessary. Although it is a secret document and thus its details are not known, there have been various leaks over the years, and its legal framework requires it to identify security threats Turkey is facing and provide policy recommendations to governments.[13]

Grand strategy as an organizing principle means "an organizing or overarching principle or set of principles," but no detailed blueprint (in terms of a written plan) on how to achieve them is necessary. It could be defined as "overarching guide, a framework, set of ideas or all-encompassing foreign policy doctrines."[14] Examples include the "containment strategy" of the U.S. that guided most of its foreign policy during the Cold War and to which almost all of its leaders have expressly subscribed.

Grand strategy as a pattern of behavior also does not necessarily need to be attached to an existing plan or even an organizing principle, but may be a pattern that emerges "as consistency in behavior" over time. This is more in line with Luttwak's assertation that "patterns emerge as a result of strategic cultures."[15] Obviously, many issues impact the emergence of a country's strategic culture, including its "geography, climate, natural resources, history, political structure, defense organization, myths, key texts, transnational norms, generational change, and technology,"[16] as well as "an integrated system of symbols (e.g. argumentation structures, languages, analogies, metaphors) which acts to establish pervasive and long-lasting strategic preferences by formulating concepts of the role and efficacy of military force in interstate political affairs."[17] Examples include Turkey's "Western-leaning" foreign policy during much of the Cold War as a result of the ideational linkages of its leadership, systemic influences and regional security evaluations.

There is of course no requirement that any country's grand strategy has to be defined in terms of one of the above-mentioned alternatives. A grand strategy could very well be stimulated and shaped by any combination of the three, such as the overall U.S. early Cold War grand strategy as a combination of a grand principle (containment), a grand plan (NSC-68) and a grand behavior (Korean War, etc.).[18] In any case, the characteristics of a grand strategy, according to Silove, are its "long-term approach," its "holistic methodology" covering all areas of statesmanship, i.e. military, diplomatic and economic, and its "concern with state's priorities," thus its hierarchy of interests in terms of value and preferences.[19] In this sense, the main aims of a grand strategy for any state under normal circumstances, in order of importance, appear to be survival, sovereignty, territorial integrity, security, relative power position in the world, economic development, etc. There is of course no scientific yardstick to judge a grand strategy's success except that it maintains a country's existence and possibly its relative power position within the international system.

Inherent in most of the definitions is that "the roots of grand strategy formulation are deeper than [the] calculations of contemporary policymakers."[20] Thus, it could refer to a set of ideas rather than a written document, a clearly articulated principle, or even a clear pattern observable in longer periods, that nevertheless guides the actions of a country's leadership. Thus, Luttwak's assertion that "all states have a grand strategy, whether they know it or not"[21] becomes important, as it refers to grand strategy as something beyond the ar-

ticulations of any decision maker. The study of grand strategy in the Luttwak tradition will thus include looking at its sources and evolution, not only the end result.

Grand strategy from this perspective is something that develops over the course of a state's existence, yet is not necessarily formulated by a particular leadership at any given time. Although Luttwak accepts that grand strategy is the "employment of the state's resources, including military strength, diplomacy, and intelligence," the relative importance of these and the ability of leaders to utilize them at any given time change and are usually constrained by such factors as the geography of the state, the history of the nation, the ideational connections of the leadership, the distribution of power in the international system and among the regional powers, etc. As Luttwak aptly puts it, "grand strategy is simply the level at which knowledge and persuasion, or in modern terms intelligence and diplomacy interact with military strength to determine outcomes in a world of other states with their own grand strategies."[22]

Finally, we should be reminded that grand strategy does not amount to a "wish list" of the leaders of a country, which cannot be expected to be realized within reason. Although the literature on grand strategy does not prescribe that grand strategies have to be successful in their execution in order to be classified as a "grand strategy," nevertheless, as Holmes relays from the Greek storyteller Aesop, "it is easy to propose impossible remedies."[23] Hence, while defining grand strategy as "the art of combining diplomatic, cultural, economic, and military tools of influence to [successfully] accomplish national goals broadly construed,"[24] any attempt at grand strategizing should at least attempt at a modicum of reality, reasonability, and possibility. After all, if it is not the "art of the possible," it will then be the subject of fictional literature rather than strategic studies or international relations.

Grand Strategizing in Turkey

Although most of the activities of states in the international arena consist of day-to-day reactions to other countries' moves, states also try to implement coherent and unified long-term strategies to achieve their national interests. While some countries publish or declare their national strategies openly, most of them either avoid it as a principle or just simply do not do it. Nevertheless, through actions and statements made by decision makers, it is possible to discern the various strategies of any country in its foreign policy.

Foreign policy strategies or doctrines of countries normally reflect the perceptions of decision makers about international and domestic developments, their views on their country's place in the world, a summary of what is perceived as the national interests of the country and the ways to achieve them-thus an attempt at grand strategizing. These strategies could either be elaborate analyses with supporting expert opinions, or short explanations of the

views of decision makers in either oral or written format. What is important is that they reflect the contemporary understanding of a given country of its international relations, inform practitioners and observers about its priorities, and determines the general context of day-to-day diplomacy.

Turkey has never published a full-scale official grand strategy or doctrine paper in the academic sense of the concept, although various versions of the unpublished and secret *National Security Policy Document* contain indications of such a strategy. Similarly, the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of National Defense do not have traditions of sharing their policy directions and, more importantly, their overall policy frameworks with the public, though the latter used to publish a "white book" dealing with the country's security and military strategies.[25] Moreover, as Turkey on occasion in the past had ministers with less than three months in office, it has been difficult for some of them and even sometimes for governments as a whole to articulate their different policy visions before they were ousted. Even with the longer serving ministers, prime ministers or presidents, it has not been a regular Turkish state practice to prepare or declare doctrines/strategies beforehand in the fields of foreign and security policy.

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Although these practices make it difficult to determine and/or denote Turkey's various strategies or doctrines in its international relations, it is possible with a certain simplification and academic largesse to identify certain stratagems, schemes, tactics, policies and in a more general sense the grand strategies of various governments and/or ministers from their statements, actions and academic analyses.

In this context, Turkey, at least since it created the *National Security Council* in 1933, has had a tradition and experience of producing and revising a "National Security Policy Document" (NSPD) that contains an analysis of the internal and external threats facing the country, as well as the general principles for the country's foreign and security policies, and an attached "National Security Strategy Paper" that outlines available resources, possible strategies and implementation guidelines. Although the NSPD is a secret document and occasional leaks do not provide us enough material to assess its details, it is quite clear that it represents a "grand strategy as a plan" per Silove's categorization.

One could safely assume that it consists of such details, at least in its "strategy" attachment, as to which national resources should be utilized in what ways to achieve the country's national interests as they are perceived-by the government and/or the bureaucratic mechanism that prepared it-at the time

of its preparation. It is again safe to assume that the institutions that prepare such a document would follow up with implementation processes. In any case, since it is entrusted to the governments to implement the recommendations of the NSPD after its adaptation by the National Security Council, which is chaired by the President of the country and made up of government ministers and other state officers,[26] we can safely assume that most of its policy recommendations have been followed through on. Whether the elected governments were pressured by appointed bureaucrats (civil and military) over the years to adopt their versions of the NSPD and have sometimes ignored its premises does not detract from the importance of the existence of such a document. Although it is very difficult to asses the validity of such arguments until various versions of the NSPD are published and researchers get a chance to compare their guidance with the actual policy implementations of various governments, it would still be safe to assume that there has been a wider consensus over the diverse components of Turkish national interests among the political and bureaucratic elites until very recently, and that most of the prescriptions of the NSPD reflected this.

Moreover, the fact that the NSPD has been revised several times over the years does not disqualify it as a "grand strategy document," since we cannot think of "un-changeability" as a character of a grand strategy document that is supposed to relate to changing circumstances. Also, we should not be deterred by public discussions over the years regarding its "value," "quality" or "success" when determining whether the NSPD denotes grand strategizing, since none of these features are necessary components of a grand strategy.[27]

In terms of "grand strategy as an organizing principle," certain alternatives qualify for grand strategy in Silove's characterization. Prime among them is Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's dictum of "peace at home, peace in the world,"[28] recognizing the vital connection between the two and the fact that steady international relations were needed for the internal stability necessary for the planned domestic reforms and economic development of the country after the devastation of the earlier war years.[29] Although most of the governments since then have announced their adherence to the principle and have frequently repeated it, its main usage as a doctrine should properly be situated in the interwar period (1919-1939).

> **The impact of Atatürk's historical legacy on the governing elite of the Republic, though inevitably varied over time, cannot be denied.**

The impact of Atatürk's historical legacy on the governing elite of the Republic, though inevitably varied over time, cannot be denied. As such, his political preferences, representing a break with the past and his renunciation of the three grand ideas of the Ottoman Empire (namely, Pan-Ottomanism, Pan-Islamism and Pan-Turanism) with principles of Republicanism, Secularism and

Nationalism, respectively, have had important implications for the ideational ecosystem of Turkish decision makers for most of the 20ᵗʰ century.[30] The fact that his ideas have been re-invented and/or re-imagined several times, have been partly discarded along the way and have even at times been fervently opposed, do not diminish their importance for modern Turkish political culture. As such, any attempt to design a grand strategy for Turkey should reassess their current value and meaning for the majority of the country and its decision makers.

A more recent example in this milieu would be the "zero problems with neighbors" principle of former Foreign Minister and Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu, whose thinking has influenced the strategizing of Turkey's international relations in the last 20 years.[31] Although his roles in the government ended in May 2016 and his "zero problems" principle was set aside in favor of an "order builder" model in Turkey's neighborhood even before that,[32] it is arguable that the imagination of Turkey at the center of a new world order in its neighborhood, either by means of soft power, i.e. "zero problems," or hard power, i.e. "order builder," still affects Turkey's foreign and security policy thinking.

Finally, regarding "grand strategy as pattern of behavior," several of the Republic of Turkey's patterns of conduct have already achieved such consistency over the years and survived several government changes that they would by now be qualified as parts of a grand strategy. The emergence of some of these patterns even predates the establishment of the Republic, such as balancing off of the major powers in international affairs and benefitting from the competition among them, and pragmatism based on realism. To these one can add multi-dimensionality in international relations, Westernism (*Batıcılık*), especially during the early Cold War period, and the region-based foreign policy of later years, especially the 1970s, 1990s and 2000s.

Historical Precursors for Turkey's Future Grand Strategy

Balancing Major Powers in International Relations

Until the late 17ᵗʰ century, the foreign relations of the Ottoman Empire, the predecessor of modern Turkey, were characterized by a military-offensive approach.[33] When the Empire started to crumble, its main policy line became the preservation of the *status quo* by playing dominant powers against each other, aiming to slow down the loss of territory.[34] The unavoidable decline of the Empire and its weaker position vis-à-vis the greater powers of the time, made the concept of "balancing" and its corollary, "playing one power against another," indispensable components of its strategic behavior, which were inherited by Turkey.[35]

The very pragmatic approach taken during most of the Ottoman Empire's existence in its last 100 years or so required a realistic reading of international developments, the intentions of various countries and their abilities. As students of this remarkable maneuvering, the founding leaders of the Republic were apt to adopt a similar approach, which over the years became one of the longest-serving Turkish strategies. As such, it should still be considered as one of the cornerstones of any Turkish grand strategy of today and for the future.

Several examples from the Turkish War of Independence, the Second World War, the Cold War period and recent years could easily be listed for this pattern of behavior. For example, the power distribution among the different actors and their rapidly differing outlooks in international relations during the interwar period (1919-1939) perfectly allowed the usage of such tactics.

Thus, Turkey instrumentalized both the rivalries among the Allied Powers-splitting France and Italy from Britain-and the differences between them and the Soviet Union. Playing Allied Powers one against another allowed Turkey, after the evacuation of the Italians from Antalya and the French from Adana Vilayet and Aintab Sanjak on October 20, 1921, to concentrate on the Greek forces in the West, the only remaining ally of Great Britain still on the war-path.

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Similarly, the support the Ankara Government received from the Soviet Union in terms of arms and financial assistance was another balancing factor against the occupying forces. As the Soviet Union became the first state to recognize the National Pact and the Ankara Government in March 1921, the relationship and its balancing component continued until the end of WWII. It also made a comeback in the late 1960s after a period of Western-dependency in foreign policy, and in the 2010s following changes in the international system.

Similarly, Turkey played to the fears of the *status quo* powers, i.e. the UK and France, from the revisionism of Germany and Italy from the mid-1930s on. One of the successful foreign policy move of this period, i.e. the annexation of Alexandretta (Hatay) province in 1939, was the result of such a policy. During the 1930s and later in WWII, Turkey played not only two but three groups of states to each other: (1) Britain and France (and later the U.S.), (2) Germany and Italy and (3) the USSR. As a small power with a weak economy and military, Turkey had to establish a balanced relationship between them. While Turkey's priority at this time was to establish good relations with the first group, its policy toward the second group was mainly to keep its distance in order to protect the country from their possible expansionist policies, and its friendship and close relations with the USSR was utilized as a counterweight to both the first and second groups.

During most of the Cold War, with the exception of the Western-dependency period during the 1950s, Turkey still played to the differences between the Western and Eastern Blocs and benefited from their global competition. As a result, while receiving 3,256 million USD worth of military and economic aid from the U.S. between 1947 and 1961, Turkey also became one of the biggest recipients of the Soviet economic and development aid program in the world outside the Eastern Bloc countries during the Cold War.[36] A similar balancing attempt has taken place since the early 2000s, as Turkey's policy vis-a-vis the Russian Federation has evolved from that of competition during the 1990s in Eurasia to cooperative engagement in the 2000s.[37] As Turkey moved toward a more region-centered and active foreign policy, Russia's countering effect against the weight of the U.S., especially in the Middle Eastern and the wider Black Sea context, has become more important.

The Primacy of Geography

Although Turkey has undergone profound changes since the 1920s, the strategic value of its location has not changed much, even if its relative importance to other states has varied over time. With the location come diverse threats to the country's security, leading to *Sèvres-phobia*, a fear that the "external world and their internal collaborators are [continuously] trying to weaken and divide Turkey."[38] As a result, Turkey's policy making is influenced by the public perception that the international arena remains hostile, that foreign countries, including Turkey's allies, continue to threaten Turkey and that it needs to stand alone rather than joining with other countries.[39]

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Turkey, thanks to its geo-strategic location, has been able to play a larger role in world politics than its size, population, economic strength and military power would indicate.[40] It is historically located on one of the most coveted pieces of territory on the globe-one that controls major routes between the economically developed lands of Europe and the energy-rich lands of the Middle East and the Caspian Basin. This particular geography, branding Turkey as a Balkan, Mediterranean, Eurasian and Middle Eastern country all at the same time, also makes it susceptible to changes in its neighborhood. The strategic position of the Anatolian peninsula and the possession of the Turkish Straits entails political and military advantages as well as major security concerns. Thus, while Turkey's multidimensional geography could be utilized for political and economic benefit, it could also become a source of weakness, given the number and configuration of its neighbors.

While controlling the only seaway linking the Black Sea with the Mediterranean, and thus the lifeline of the country situated on the northern shores of

the Black Sea, provided a resource for the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Turkey that could not be duplicated in manpower, it has also brought both states into constant conflict with the Russians since the 17th century. While the historic hostility between the Russians and the Turks has been at the heart of Turkish-Soviet relations for many years, having a superpower neighbor has also had its effects on Turkish foreign policy. It was the Soviets' refusal to extend the 1925 Treaty of Friendship and Neutrality in March 1945 that pushed Turkey to seek protection from the emerging Western alliance. This historical legacy of confrontation turned into a competition after the end of the Cold War that was managed with some tension during most of the 1990s. The dangers of competition and the possibility of facing the renewed Russian power on its northeastern border after 2008, as well as the benefits derived from enhanced economic and energy cooperation, induced Turkey to seek friendlier relations with its northern neighbor. The real effects of the current reality of dealing with Russia on two fronts (North and South) will need to be assessed in the longer term.

Similarly, most of the challenges Turkey is facing in its neighborhood, such as civil wars in Iraq and Syria, a divided Cyprus, dissonance with the Armenians, inability to reconcile with the Kurds and opposition by some EU countries to Turkey's full membership, are all products of the country's long-term historical existence in this geography. Many of Turkey's current disputes with its neighbors can be traced back to the Ottoman centuries. In fact, some of Turkey's contemporary relations, such as its convoluted relationship with Greece or its "competitive cooperation" with Russia, can only be explained with references to history and geography.

The fact that Turkey's neighborhood has witnessed several conflicts in recent decades (the Iran-Iraq War between 1980 and 1988, the Gulf War of 1990-91, the U.S. occupation of Iraq in 2003 and the ensuing civil war, the Syrian civil war since 2011 and the rise and fall of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (DAESH) in the Middle East, the Nagorno-Karabakh War and the internal Georgian conflicts in the Caucasus throughout the 1990s, as well as the Russian-Georgian conflict of 2008 and the annexation of Crimea by Russia in 2014 in Eurasia, the wars of the dissolution of former Yugoslavia throughout the 1990s in Europe) and the fact that most of them attracted international involvement highlight the importance and the value of Turkey's geography. While Turkey managed to stay out of most of these conflicts, increased international interest in these conflicts and rising PKK terrorism as well as its regional connections have led to increased Turkish involvement in regional crises.

As the post-Cold War era opened up, Turkey found opportunities in its neighborhood as well as important security concerns. While the West in general enjoyed the peace dividend that the end of the Soviet threat delivered, Turkey found itself surrounded with traditional security challenges in terms of inter-

state warfare, civil wars and rising terrorism. These forced Turkey to continue to invest in its military and at the same time opt for new openings in its international relations, especially utilizing its historical, cultural, ethnic and linguistic connections in its neighborhoods. Moreover, while the end of the Cold War signified a new beginning in international relations, it also indicated to Turkey that it could no longer follow its traditional Cold War policies. While the abandonment of the Communist regime and attempts to democratize Russia and other newly independent states improved the possibility of global cooperation transcending the enmities of the Cold War, the absence of clearly defined mechanisms for preventing regional conflicts, instability within the new states and tensions between them increased the risks of interstate clashes and civil wars around Turkey. As the end of the Cold War diminished the importance of East-West division, regional identities and concerns increased in importance in determining the course of international relations. At this juncture, Turkey appeared as a model to various regions, including Central Asia, the Caucasus, and the Middle East, and its connection to these regions forced it to become more concerned with its neighborhoods and develop regional policies.

The dramatic changes in the international system thus challenged Turkey's traditional policy of isolating itself from regional politics and forced its active participation in regional issues. These changes also induced Turkey to reevaluate its geography and add regional components to its foreign policy, which necessitated a renewed emphasis on its multidimensional setting and its role in bridging different cultures and geographies. With this understanding of Turkey as a European, Eurasian and Middle Eastern country without relapsing to dichotomies, Turkey had to embrace its new positioning with multiple identities and historical assets. This reimagining of its geography should be one of the key elements in designing a grand strategy for 21st century Turkey.

Western Connection

Though Turkish imperial history ended with the collapse of the Ottoman Empire at the end of World War I, and the Turkish Republic bore little resemblance to its forerunner, it was established in the heart of the Empire's geopolitical territory and retained most of its ruling elite with their top-down reform approach. As they carried out radical reforms to transform the country into a secular state, they also provided the basis of one of the fundamental features of Turkish foreign policy during most of the 20th century, namely its Western orientation.[41]

At times, this went too far; the Westernism (*Batıcılık*) in Turkish foreign policy during the 1950s and early 1960s in later years resulted in Turkey's isolation from most of the world. An apt example of this policy is Turkey's involvement in the establishment of the Baghdad Pact of 1955, which did not add to Turkey's security after its membership in NATO in 1952, but was concieved as buttressing Western (the U.S.'s in this case) interests in the Middle

East. While Turkey's foreign policy has become more balanced since the mid-1960s, it nevertheless remained firmly within the Western camp during the Cold War. Since the end of the Cold War, however, Turkey's foreign relations have been dominated by a search for alternative connections and attempts to widen its relations and outlook.

While Turkey benefitted from closer relations with the US in the immediate post-Cold War era, the U.S. insistence on playing a direct, ordering role in Turkey's neighborhood in the post 9/11 era, i.e. in the Caucasus, the Black Sea and especially the Levant, has resulted in divergences in interests and security perceptions.

Similarly, Turkey's European vocation in the 1990s and 2000s, accentuated with its full membership bid and subsequent negotiations, helped Turkey's democratic transition and created an accelerating impact on its regional standing and relationships. Though it came to a halt in recent years, this aspect of Turkey's European negotiation process should not be passed over in any attempt to develop a grand strategy. Simply put, Turkey without its European-and indeed Western-connections would just be another country in the Middle East. Similarly, Turkey's "value" to Europe and the West in general emerges, among other sources, from its significance in the Middle East and Eurasia.

Impact of the International System

WWII was an important watershed for Turkey's foreign and security policies, as well as its domestic development. Although its political and economic alignment with the West after the war could be seen as a natural outcome of its desire to modernize (which at the time meant Westernization), its dependence on the West went too far, indicating a clear reversal from its earlier policies. While pre-war Turkey had adopted the institutions and the values of the West to accelerate modernization, this did not imply dependency on the West either militarily or economically. The tilt in the post-war years was very pronounced; the reason for this can be found in the changing international system.

As the international system rapidly evolved into a bipolar structure after 1945, it forced Turkey to choose a side, since "a policy of neutrality was not very realistic or possible for a country like Turkey, a middle-range power situated in such a geopolitically important area."[42] Moreover, while the Soviet Union emerged as one of the superpowers, "meeting the Soviet threat" became a priority for Turkish decision makers.[43] Turkey's move toward a multi-party system at the end of the war also contributed to its willingness to seek closer links with Western democracies.[44] Finally, the fact that the U.S. was the only country in the post-war world capable of lending money limited Turkey's choices for economic aid.[45]

The Cold War, while encouraging Turkey's dependency on the West, also sus-

tained unquestioning Western military, political, and economic support. So long as Turkey felt the Soviet threat and the U.S. was committed to its defense and economic development, there was no reason to question its dependency. However, as the 1960s saw a softening of inter-block tensions and the aid received from the U.S. started to decline, Turkey felt the need for a more complex and multidimensional configuration for its foreign policy. Moreover, the rising economic consciousness of the Global South introduced new actors to the world stage, such as the 'Group of 77' and the 'Non-Aligned Movement', which opened up new avenues for smaller members of the alliance systems to explore.

Following the changes in regional contexts during the 1990s, the international system has been moving from a bipolar world toward a multipolar system with a unipolar moment in between. Two major developments that occurred ten years apart dramatically affected international politics: the 9/11 attacks on the U.S. and the Arab uprisings from 2011 onward. Largely due to these incidents, and in part due to China's impressive economic growth, the primacy of Western actors in international politics has been challenged. The U.S. intervention in Afghanistan after the 9/11 attacks and in Iraq in 2003 not only destabilized the Middle East but also weakened the U.S. claim for unipolarity. Finally, while the global financial crisis of 2008 brought a sense of decline in the U.S. and the EU faced several problems, including the Eurozone crisis, the rise of nationalism, the failure of its migration policy and Brexit, China has gradually increased its power and Russia its political clout in world politics.[46]

> **Turkey concentrated on Central Asia and the Caucasus during the 1990s; the Balkans and the Black Sea were added during the 2000s, and its main focus finally came to rest on the Middle East during the 2010s.**

Eventually, when Turkey was confronted with disturbances in its neighborhood as a result of the September 2001 terror attacks and then the Arab uprisings since 2011, it had to adapt to changing circumstances in the international system and focus on its neighborhoods. Thus, Turkey concentrated on Central Asia and the Caucasus during the 1990s; the Balkans and the Black Sea were added during the 2000s, and its main focus finally came to rest on the Middle East during the 2010s. While there were both security/strategic and ideological/political reasons for this shift, the underlying change in the international system played an important, determining role.

Sense of Greatness and Wish for Regional Supremacy

A sense of greatness, based on belonging to a nation that had created a world empire, is still a point of reference for most Turks. Imperial grandeur and regional influence are aspects of their heritage that ordinary Turks still respond

to and take pride in. Thus, it is frustrating for them to see other powers meddling in the affairs of their neighborhood, which explains in large part their sensitivity toward international involvement there.

Moreover, almost all of the parties across the political spectrum, despite their cultural, economic, social and political differences, support an active and domineering international position for Turkey in its neighborhoods. This is evident from the policies followed by the various governments with different political strands towards Turkey's near abroad when confronted with crises or opportunities to expand. It was the Republican People's Party of the one-party system that annexed Hatay, while the left-of-center Republican People's Party and moderate-Islamist National Salvation Party coalition conducted the Cyprus Peace Operation in 1974. It was the center-right liberal Motherland Party that send Turkish soldiers repeatedly

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across the Iraqi border in the late 1980s and 1990s, while the coalition of the social-democrat Democratic Left Party, nationalist-right Nationalist Action Party and Motherland Party created semi-permanent military bases in Iraq and, finally, the right-of-center Justice and Development Party that oversaw the expansion of Turkey's international use of its military might from Qatar to Libya in the 2010s.

It is clear from recent history that whenever Turkey felt strong enough to play a regional role and the focus of the global hegemon of the time had moved elsewhere, Turkey stirred to acquire a greater role in its neighborhood. Although Turkey followed a non-interventionist, somewhat isolationist and *pro-status quo* role during most of the post-WWII era, this was mostly due to its economic inability to expand its muscles, the threat it perceived from its nuclear neighbor and the restraints exacted by the bipolar world system from regional middle powers rather than Turkey's innate preference. In fact, Turkey was very much active in its neighborhood prior to the emergence of the bipolar world-taking an active stance in creating the Balkan Entente of 1934, the Saadabad Pact of 1937 and even the Balkan Pact of 1953. While the ensuing Cold War and tightening of bipolarity from the late 1950s onward prevented Turkey from being active in its surrounding area, it expanded its muscles immediately once the Cold War was over, and moved aggressively to carve out an area of influence in the Caucasus and Central Asia, where the regional great power Russia was not able to reassert its control and the global hegemon was not interested enough to establish its dominance. This continued until the former imperial power Russia staged a comeback and the current hegemon moved to establish its dominance over the Black Sea, the Caucasus and the Middle East after 9/11. The same could be argued regarding the Balkans until the EU decided to expand and incorporate most of it within its midst.

As the older divisions of East and West were left behind and the world increasingly witnessed the rising influences of neo-conservatism, neo-liberalism and neo-fundamentalism, Turkey witnessed the growing influence of its formerly underprivileged classes from Anatolia in the 1990s and 2000s.[47] In international relations, with their growing economic power and political influence, they supported Turkey's openings to new regions and created inroads, especially in the wider Middle East. This was accompanied by Turkey's new policy initiatives, such as abolishing visas, creating free trade zones, establishing high-level cooperation councils and joint cabinet meetings, and extensive political, economic and social openings to the region.

Having friendly relations with all its neighbors, and becoming a facilitator in solving regional problems were seen as essential steps at this time for Turkey to become a regional leader that might also be able to play a global role. However, both the resilience of some of Turkey's conflicts with its neighbors, which resisted solution, and the unexpected uprisings in the Middle East and North Africa from 2011 onward, severely curtailed these attempts. In the end, the position Turkey took during the Syrian Civil War and related developments such as the return of "great power geopolitical rivalries" to the Middle East forced Turkey's hand to end its new neighborhood policy by 2013. Although the Syrian Civil War and the threats perceived from the accompanying rise of DAESH, increased PKK militancy, sectarian rivalries, proxy warfare and widespread refugee movements forced Turkey to further interventionism in its neighborhood, this time the emphasis was on a defensive posture rather than an expansion of influence. These developments not only affected Turkey's regional relations, but also its global standing.

Economic Development

Increasing the wealth of the nation by effecting industrial development has always been one of the fundamental undertakings of Republican Turkey. The second part of Atatürk's declaration of "peace at home, peace in the world" in fact included his strong adherence to "his thoughts towards [the] national welfare and development" of the country.[48] Accordingly, Turkey experimented with different development models during the interwar period. In addition to international security and domestic political considerations, Turkey's economic needs at the end of WWII necessitated a Western-leaning posture. Although Turkey, by the end of 1946, had gold and foreign exchange reserves amounting to around $262 million, this was mainly due to the favorable prices that the fighting powers offered for Turkey's agricultural products and raw materials such as chromium. Moreover, at the end of the war, Turkish officials, who were now considering the possibility of war with the Soviet Union, did not want to use these reserves, and therefore tried to utilize international loans in order to enable Turkey to maintain a large army. Since the only country in the post-war world capable of lending money to Turkey was the U.S., its formal links with the West started to take shape when Turkey began to receive

American aid through the Truman Doctrine (1947) and the Marshall Plan (1948). It is important to note that Turkey joined the Organization for European Economic Cooperation in 1948, four years before it joined NATO.

The urgency of Turkey's economic needs and dependency on Western aid continued during most of the Cold War. Thus, in addition to remodeling Turkey's political life and security mechanisms, its Western connection also created long-term economic dependency patterns that substantially impacted its later policy options. In the end, Turkey's need for foreign aid became an integral part of its foreign as well as domestic policy. This long-standing dependency on foreign assistance inevitably affected Turkey's grand strategic posture during the Cold War.

Eventually, a combination of economic, social, political and international changes prompted Turkey to reconsider its alignments repeatedly during the inter-coup period (1960-1980), and Turkey decidedly moved to develop better political and economic relations with the nonaligned states and the Eastern Bloc countries in the 1970s. The development aid extended by the Soviet Union toward Turkey's industrialization efforts paved the way for this change of heart.

It was yet another developmental necessity and the demands of a growing population that forced Turkey to open up its closed economy and further integrate with the global economy in the 1980s. From then on, the needs of the growing middle classes and the expanding economy became important inputs for Turkey's international connections, which prompted President Turgut Özal to articulate his "Economy First" principle, putting it however briefly in front of security and foreign policies. In a similar fashion, Turkey's openings toward its neighboring regions during the 1990s and 2000s had much to do with the needs of its growing economy, the demands of the middle classes and the aspirations of a young and increasingly educated population. Thus, any attempt at developing an alternative grand strategy for Turkey needs to situate its development goals and the economic welfare of Turkish citizens at its core.

Conclusion: Building Blocks of an Internationalist Grand Strategy for Turkey

Even though Turkey's foreign relations seem at times like a hodgepodge of reactions to external events rather than elements of a long-term design, a broader perspective could provide the outlines of a general framework (i.e. grand strategy as pattern of behavior), conditioned by its geography and history, the ideational desires of its ruling elites and the limitations of the international system. Even a rudimentary analysis presents a complex mixture of factors affecting Turkey's foreign and security policy strategies and the multilayered approaches it adopts in practice.

While the age-old discussion over the "eastern ideal" and the "western ideal" regarding the exact nature of the country during the 19th century seems just as lively today, with alternative anchorages on the West, Eurasia and the Middle East, well-delineated near-consensus positions could still be formulated for Turkey's grand strategy based on the country's hard-learned experiences and a tradition that has created a set of relatively inflexible principles. Some of these experiences have created a continuum lasting more than a century in Turkey's foreign and security policies.

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Looking from a distance, one can discern, with some simplification, the interplay of several variables that have shaped the course of Turkey's grand strategy during most of the 20th century and could very well be used for a future strategizing exercise. An amalgamation of the impacts of Turkey's geography, historical experience and cultural/ideational inclinations (i.e. structural variables), as well as the economic needs of its citizens, the effects of the international system, domestic political alterations and the personalities of decision makers (i.e. conjunctural variables) could be employed to develop an alternative grand strategy for the future. Such a grand strategy should at the least encompass the following:

A multi-faceted foreign policy concept, linking Turkey with its various neighborhoods and accounting for its simultaneously coexisting identities, i.e. European, Middle Eastern and Eurasian. It has become clear by now that Turkey cannot ignore developments in any of its neighborhoods under any circumstances, as they invariably impact Turkey. The regionalization of foreign, security, cultural and economic policies are realities of the current era, and Turkey is uniquely situated both geographically and culturally to benefit from developing interconnected regional policies. Healthier relations in any of its regions strengthens Turkey's position in its other regions and vice versa.

A sustainable, long-term program for economic development, prioritizing its demands over the political, social, cultural and security (less than and up to the level of survival) aspects of decision making. In today's world, more so than any other time in history, economic development and strength in terms of technological advances, growth rates and stability of production easily translate into political and military strength, thus becoming the main components of the security of a state. Despite its recent development, Turkey is

still a middle power with limited economic recourses at its disposal, in need of continuous foreign direct investment and international borrowing to grow its economy, and dependent on good political relations to expand its markets. Although highly educated, its now slightly aging population and continuing brain drain, as well as its limited access to cheap energy resources continue to impair its economic development and welfare, and curb its ability to project power abroad and provide for its security.

Creating **an enduring, practical, and viable balance** between its relations with major international and regional powers based on peaceful coexistence, positive agendas and mutually beneficial cooperation programs, while duly benefitting from and allocating its due place to Turkey's transatlantic connection. Turkey simply cannot afford to endanger its membership in any way in the historically most successful alliance system ever. Apart from contributing to Turkey's hardcore security interests, NATO membership also allows Turkey in the current international context to seek closer and balanced relations with non-NATO countries. Without this connection, Turkey's cooperation with Russia, for example, could very well become overbearing in a rather short run.

Creating **a co-centric circle of multilateral cooperation institutions and initiatives,** starting from its immediate neighborhood and widening internationally, benefitting from Turkey's multitude of identities and ability to connect with several sub-regions of the world. In this context, several trilateral connections (such as Turkey-Bulgaria-Romania, Turkey-Afghanistan-Pakistan, Turkey-Azerbaijan-Georgia, Turkey-Iraq-Syria, etc.) could easily be imagined in the first circle, together with wider regional economic, political and cultural institutions in the second circle (such as BSEC, the Levant 5, the Caucasus Stability Initiative, the Balkans Cooperation Area, etc.), which would then be surrounded with wider global initiatives and connections in the third circle (such as connections with Qatar in the Gulf, Somalia in the Horn of Africa, Libya in the Central Mediterranean, Bosnia Herzegovina in Central Europe, China in East Asia, and membership in NATO, OSCE, the UN, etc.). These could cater first and foremost to Turkey's regional standing and desire to peacefully carve out an influence area, as Turkey's experience in creating such multilateral partnerships and its extensive connections to the wider world allow Turkey to easily play such a role, and naturally elevate it to a leading position without much effort and without unnecessary confrontations.

To achieve these results and an ultimate grand strategy combining these components, Turkey needs to continue with the process of **reconciliation with its history,** redefining it from a more positive perspective both to its citizens and neighboring peoples, as well as the **recalibration of its geography** with its ability to connect to wider areas, and a **redefinition of its identity** to honor its multi-hyphenated lineage, including hitherto underprivileged sectors of its society such as ethnic and religious minorities, women, Anatolian peasants, etc., which will allow it to assuage some of its identificational uncertainties,

political polarization, cultural divisions and psychological fears, and thus support its national security *vis-a-vis* the rapidly changing world. At the same time, a conscious attempt has to be made to counter the currently very pronounced public tendency to "go it alone" or "stand alone" in the international area, as this is no longer possible or even feasible for any country, let alone a strategically located middle power. Thus, a clear preference for the peaceful resolution of conflicts and the conceptualization of various cooperation schemes need to be developed.

5 5

"grand strategy as process" and "grand strategy as blueprint" (pp. 53-54). Accordingly, grand strategy as a variable agenda "provides a prism through which academics may study the origins of state behavior," while grand strategy as process "foregrounds the importance of grand strategizing, whether as a governmental strategic-planning process or as a more generic mode of decision-making," and grand strategy as blueprint "proffers broad visions in hopes of influencing future governmental behavior."

12   For the "Section 3043 Annual National Security Strategy Report" of the Act, see Nathan J. Lucas & Kathleen J. McInnis, "The 2015 National Security Strategy: Authorities, Changes, Issues for Congress," *CRS Report*, No. 7-5700, April 5, 2015, p. 4, https://docplayer.net/28491146-The-2015-national-security-strategy-authorities-changes-issues-for-congress.html (Accessed August 19, 2020).

13   "Presidential Decree No. 6" based on Article 118 of the Constitution, published at *Resmi Gazete*, No. 30479, July 15, 2018, https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2018/07/20180715-3.pdf (Accessed August 19, 2020).

14   Silove, "Beyond the Buzzword," p. 29.

15   Edward N. Luttwak, *The Grand Strategy of the Byzantine Empire*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009, p. 409.

16   Darryl Howlett, "Strategic Culture: Reviewing Recent Literature," *Strategic Insights*, Vol. 6, No. 10 (2005), p. 4, https://www.hsdl.org/?view&did=457639 (Accessed August 19, 2020).

17   Alastair Iain Johnston, "Thinking about Strategic Culture," *International Security,* Vol. 19, No. 4 (1995), p. 46.

18   Lissner, "What is Grand Strategy?" pp. 57-58.

19   Silove, "Beyond the Buzzword," pp. 45-47.

20   Sayle, "Defining and Teaching Grand Strategy," pp. 4.

21   Luttwak, *The Grand Strategy of the Byzantine Empire*, pp. 409.

22   Ibid.

23   James Holmes, "Grand Strategy and the Art of the Possible," *The Diplomat*, June 17, 2013, pp. 1-2, https://thediplomat.com/2013/06/grand-strategy-and-the-art-of-the-possible/ (Accessed August 19, 2020).

24   Ibid, p. 2 (addition is mine).

25   For the latest example, see the Ministry of National Defense, *White Book 2000*, Ankara: Mönch Media, August 1, 2000. The tradition was discontinued after 2000.

26   Turkey's National Security Council was initially established in 1933 as the High Assembly of Defence (*Yüksek Müdafaa Meclisi*), which was renamed in 1949 as the High Council of National Defence (*Milli Savunma Yüksek Kurulu*), and finally the National Security Council (*Milli Güvenlik Kurulu*) in 1982. It received its current restructuring by means of the constitutional referendum on April 16, 2017. The NSC, meeting every two months, is the highest coordination authority of the state in security and foreign policy and is currently comprised of the President, Vice President(s), Ministers of Defense, Interior, Foreign Affairs, and Justice, the Chief of General Staff and the Commanders of the Army, Navy and Air Force. For details, see https://www.mgk.gov.tr/index.php/kurumsal/hakkimizda (Accessed August 19, 2020).

27   Silove "Beyond the Buzzword," pp. 45-49.

28   This most often repeated policy principle of republican Turkey was first pronounced by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in an election declaration on April 20, 1931: "Cumhuriyet Halk Fırkasının müstakar umumî siyasetini şu kısa cümle açıkça ifadeye kâfidir zannederim: Yurtta sulh, cihanda sulh için çalışıyoruz (I think the following short sentence is sufficient to clearly express the determined general policy of the Republican People's Party: We work for peace at home and peace in the world)." See *Atatürk'ün Tamim, Telgraf ve Beyannameleri Vol. IV*, Ankara: Atatürk Kültür, Dil ve Tarih Yüksek Kurumu, 2006 (Document No. 681), pp. 606-609.

29   Ferenc A. Váli, *Bridges Across the Bosporus; The Foreign Policy of Turkey*, Baltimore & London: Johns Hopkins Press, 1971, p. 55.

30   Mustafa Aydın, "Determinants of Turkish Foreign Policy: Historical Framework and Traditional Inputs," *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 4 (1999), pp. 171-176.

31   See Ahmet Davutoğlu, "Turkey's Zero-Problems Foreign Policy," *Foreign Policy*, May 20, 2010, https://foreignpolicy.com/2010/05/20/turkeys-zero-problems-foreign-policy/ (Accessed August 19, 2020). For various aspects of Ahmet Davutoğlu's strategic understanding, see Talha Köse, Ahmet Okumuş & Burhanettin Duran (eds.), *Stratejik Zihniyet; Kuramdan Eyleme Ahmet Davutoğlu ve Stratejik Derinlik*, Istanbul: Küre Yayınları, 2014. For a critical analysis of his foreign policy and its comparison with the policies of İsmail Cem in the late 1990s, see Mehmet A. Tuğtan, "Kültürel Değişkenlerin Dış Politikadaki Yeri: İsmail Cem ve Ahmet Davutoğlu," *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, Vol. 13, No. 49 (2016); and Tarık Oğuzlu, "Komşularla Sıfır Sorun Politikası: Kavramsal bir Analiz", *Ortadoğu Analiz*, Vol. 4, No. 42 (2012), pp. 8-17, who likens it to Turkey's foreign policy in the interwar years, i.e. the Atatürk era.

32   The "order builder" rhetoric for Turkish foreign policy was increasingly utilized by Davutoğlu after he became foreign minister in 2009, although he had used it in his analyses much earlier. See Ahmet Davutoğlu, "Türkiye Merkez Ülke Olmalı," *Radikal*, February 26, 2004, http://m.radikal.com.tr/yorum/turkiye_merkez_ulke_olmali-702116 (Accessed August 19, 2020); and Ahmet Davutoğlu, *Stratejik Derinlik: Türkiye'nin Uluslararası Konumu*, Istanbul: Küre Yayınları, 2001. Its real effect in Turkish foreign policy came after the impact of the Arab uprisings reached Turkey through Syria, as evidenced in Foreign Minister Davutoğlu's speech to Turkey's Ambassadors on January 3, 2011, where he prioritized Turkey's "order builder" role in the Middle East over "zero problem with neighbors," thus emphasizing the usage of hard power tools over soft power. See http://www.mfa.gov.tr/disisleri-bakani-sayin-ahmet-davutoglu_nun-3_-buyukelciler-konferansi_nin-acilisinda-yaptigi-konusma_-03-ocak-2011.tr.mfa (Accessed August 19, 2020).

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35   Mustafa Aydın, "Securitization of History and Geography: Understanding of Security in Turkey," *Journal of Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (2003), pp. 166-170.

36   See Gu Guan-Fu, "Soviet Aid to the Third World; An Analysis of its Strategy," *Soviet Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 1 (1983), pp. 71-89.

37   See Mustafa Aydın, "The Long View on Turkish-Russian Rivalry and Cooperation," *On Turkey Series (GMF)*, June 8, 2020, https://www.gmfus.org/publications/long-view-turkish-russian-rivalry-and-cooperation (Accessed August 19, 2020).

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42 Raymond Aron, *Peace and War: A Theory of International Relations*, New York: Anchor & Doubleday, 1973, pp. 125-127.

43 Fahir Armaoğlu, "İkinci Dünya Harbinde Türkiye," *SBF Dergisi*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (1958), p. 163.

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48 See *Atatürk'ün Tamim, Telgraf ve Beyannameleri*, pp. 606-609.

ARTICLE

Neither Ideological nor Geopolitical: Turkey Needs a 'Growth'-Based Grand Strategy

Ersel AYDINLI *

Abstract

This article proposes a new conceptualization of "grand strategy" in International Relations terms, as a balance between capacity and aspiration. It first identifies the contemporary predicament of grand strategizing in the age of modern populist democratic trends, by highlighting the sustainability and consensus problem resulting from the public's rapidly shifting support levels for such grand policies. It then discusses whether that predicament makes grand strategizing impossible in Turkey, concluding that with careful formulation, it can be overcome. It identifies status inconsistency as the prime instinct driving grand strategizing potential and desire in Turkey, and evaluates eight possible grand 'ideas' that have emerged at various times and could serve as reference points for Turkish grand strategy-three ideological ones: modernization, Islamism and Ottomanism; three geopolitical ones: 'being part of the West', Eurasianism and 'being part of the East'; and two 'others': survival and growth. The discussion of these various ideas reaches the conclusion that the most feasible Turkish grand strategy is one based on the idea of growth, an apolitical concept that contains both domestic dimensions evolving around democratic liberalization, and international ones based on economic and trade development.

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Keywords

Introduction

Significant discussion has revolved around broader disciplinary debates on the state of strategic studies, and reflects what can be considered a near existential crisis in the field. One can cite many possible reasons for this crisis, but a main one is the question of whether strategic studies as a discipline should be limited to its traditional military perspectives or should move beyond that into something broader, more interdisciplinary and more multi-perspective. Those adhering to the strict military view, Uyar for example, openly argue that "there is no strategy without blood, and there can be no strategic studies without a military perspective and focus."[1] Such a view is understandable, as the founding father of strategic studies was Clausewitz, who had basically one thing in mind: the military.[2] The foundations of strategic studies were thus laid in an era in which war, and the winning of wars, was the ultimate goal of states and their leaders, and all wars were considered military practice.

Perhaps the most significant change in global political affairs-for the purpose of discussions of strategy-is that in today's international relations there are an abundance of actors, both states and non-states, many of which are unsatisfied with their status, and have tremendous revisionist potential.

I would argue, however, that the present crisis in strategic studies in fact stems *from* the straitjacket of this traditional military perspective, which has imposed a disciplinary impasse on scholars in the field. Two things have happened in the decades since strategic studies emerged as an area of study within the International Relations (IR) discipline. First, the nature of global affairs has changed immensely, and second, the nature of warfare has been revolutionized. Perhaps the most significant change in global political affairs-for the purpose of discussions of strategy-is that in today's international relations there are an abundance of actors, both states and non-states, many of which are unsatisfied with their status, and have tremendous revisionist potential. Examples abound, from states like China, Russia, Iran and Turkey, to non-state actors as widely diverse as the global Jihadists, transnational organizations and influential individuals in business, culture and society. In other words, the political universe and the realities that strategic studies are meant to explain have dra-

matically expanded and evolved, but because of the solely military focus in the concept of strategy and the ways of studying it, the outcomes of such studies remain limited and inadequate.

While some may advocate simply relegating strategic studies to the past as an anachronistic and no longer useful idea, this article argues that we should instead revive strategic studies and the concept of strategy by liberating it from its military focus and its Clausewitzian conceptual limitations. It proposes doing so by broadening its understanding of strategy and strategic studies beyond their limited military sense to one of 'grand strategizing'. Such a shift does not mean throwing aside the many valuable and essential aspects of the original Clausewitzian perspectives, but rather expanding upon them by drawing on international relations concepts to achieve a more current, relevant approach.

This paper presents a picture of 'grand strategizing' as a concept capable of addressing the new nature of global relations and the multiple, new, status-discontented actors with revisionist tendencies that inhabit this new reality. It offers perspectives on how such actors may approach developing a grand strategy, including whether there is a need to do so, and the challenges that may arise in such efforts. Finally, based on the above exploration, it examines the particular case of Turkey and proposes a possible grand strategizing approach for the country.

Grand Strategy: Definitions and Design

What is meant by 'grand strategy'?[3] Is it a basic goal that a country is trying to achieve politically? Is it the prime directive in a country's foreign policy? Is it the ultimate belief that a country or nation is most committed to materializing? In a sense, it's all of the above, and more. In this paper 'grand strategy' refers to a grand objective, a prime directive so to speak, of a state or an internationally active non-state actor. This prime directive must emerge from and become internalized in a way that is consistent with that actor's historical, sociological and political realities and tendencies and must be 'permanent' in the sense that it is maintained by a cross-generational consensus and enjoys a relative autonomy from the changing nature of daily politics. As a grand strategy, this prime directive serves as a guiding principle for much of that actor's political, sociological, economic and military activities, with the ultimate goal being to guide that actor to achieve a desired status-either one the actor does not yet have but is aspiring to, or a status they have and would like to preserve. What constitutes the 'grandness' of a strategy? 'Grandness' may lie in

the process (execution) of the strategy, or in its goal or purpose. Real 'grand-ness,' however, is generally attributed to a strategy when there is a harmonious consistency between the purpose and the execution.

'Grandness' may lie in the process (execution) of the strategy, or in its goal or purpose. Real 'grandness,' however, is generally attributed to a strategy when there is a harmonious consistency between the purpose and the execution.

Broadly speaking, how does an actor decide on a prime directive? An initial analogy may be drawn at the individual level, when you ask someone, 'what do you want most in life?' Ultimately, in that question, you are asking them what they value most. Some people, therefore, may want to preserve something they already have, while others may be seeking to build up something to which they aspire. Imagine asking this question to three individuals: a refugee, a tenured university professor and Bill Gates. The first may name a goal like security and survival for himself and his family, the second may contentedly wish to maintain the status quo in her life and the third may say that he wants most to be able to help others.

In the case of large international actors, the process shares an initial similarity: they consider their context and current status. The prime directive may be offensive in nature (aspiring to something) or defensive (preserving something) or a combination of the two. A defensive goal is most likely assumed either by actors that are happy with who they are and want to preserve the status quo or by those that are so weak they just do not want to lose even the minimum they have. Offensive goals are most likely to be assumed by rogue actors or those with nothing to lose. Mixed goals may, arguably, be the most common, as larger actors, like individuals, want to guarantee the minimum but at the same time want to be ready to seize the opportunity to become 'great', whatever that may entail.

In many ways, grand strategizing revolves around the idea of balancing. This balancing must occur first at the level of imagining and formulating the grand strategy, and secondly at the level of execution. Each of these should be considered in turn.

Balancing the Imagination: Capacity vs. Aspiration

At the first level, grand strategizing involves a balancing of capacity and aspiration: Which of these does an actor begin with when initially trying to identify and formulate a grand strategy? How can that actor avoid the natural limitations of overemphasizing one over the other?

Clausewitz's defining of strategy begins by emphasizing the need to 'identify the situation'. In other words, know your environment and who is competing in it, in order to identify what you are able to do. This appears logical, coming from the military sense of 'intelligence before action'. In this view, grand strategy formulation begins with an assessment of one's capacity, both internationally and domestically. While there is an apparent logic to beginning with capacity assessment, it is not without its risks. Too much emphasis on capacity may limit one's imagination potential, and may even result in a conclusion that not being a 'powerful' enough actor means you cannot have a grand strategy. This is not true however, as even a relatively weak actor, or one with imperfect capacity, may still have a grand strategy, for example, improving capacity. Yet another risk of beginning with a capacity focus is that evaluations of capacity, perhaps domestic ones in particular, are often highly politicized, making them open to exaggeration or underestimation. In this way, leaders, in order to justify their domestic actions or even their personal or own group interests, may view the results of a capacity measuring situation analysis, and misrepresent the feasibility of certain moves for political gain, or may purposefully opt for *non*-action.

A reverse view might be that grand strategizing should therefore begin by thinking about what the actor aspires to. In other words, actors should *first* imagine, free from constraints, what they would like to have, and then start narrowing down from that dream into reality, based on the assessments they receive about themselves and the world. Of course, this route is not without its own risks. By starting with the dream one may be more likely to fall into unrealistic disillusionment, and therefore reduce the chance for success. There is the possibility that by starting out with aspirations, leaders may simply be dreaming or, more cynically, they may again take political advantage of these dreams by selling them to the public as realistic possibilities.

Actors engaged in grand strategy discussions are likely, therefore, to be in a process of juggling their aspirations with their capacities. An aspiration can be considered an internally motivated desire for some kind of higher status in international relations; in other words, the status quo, however defined or felt by that actor, is not satisfactory. As expressed above in the individual analogy,

some actors are more likely to be content with what they have, who they are and how they are perceived in international life, and do not seem to be in a struggle for greater aspirations. Others may not. They may not be content with who they are, what they have, how they feel and how they are perceived, and therefore look for an opportunity to move up to their aspired status.

Status Inconsistency

Perhaps the closest scholarly interpretation of the capacity-aspiration relationship can be found in the literature on status inconsistency. The concept of 'status inconsistency' has its roots in the fields of psychology and sociology, and can be linked to Weber's articulation of status as one of three parts of social stratification-the other two being class and power. At the individual level, status inconsistency occurs when people have imbalances in their rankings within each of these three conceptual fields and because of this inconsistency, are likely to feel greater dissatisfaction than their status consistent peers. Status inconsistency theories predict that the behaviors of such individuals are more likely to be conflictual and that they will target those above them-indirectly at least, in the sense of joining political parties that are directed against higher status people.

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Status inconsistency has also been addressed in the field of IR. At the state level, early work on status inconsistency theory defined the discrepancy as a gap between a state's self-conception of its own status, and the status ascribed to it by other states. Status is distinguished from concepts like power or capacity, in that it relates not to elements of hard power, but to 'softer' values, specifically, perceptions of honor or respect within the international community. As with individuals, status inconsistency in states is predicted to lead to more conflictual behaviors, in this case, as expressed through foreign policy activities.

Recent bodies of literature find their basis in the early definitions and empirical studies of status inconsistency, a primary (and sometimes admitted) shortcoming of which was the challenge of operationalizing a complex and subjective variable like 'status'. Building on Galtung's 1964 work introducing the idea of "rank disequilibrium" among varying degrees of 'top' and 'under' dogs and the subsequent likelihood of aggressive behaviors, researchers like East and Wallace attempted to test the idea by looking at aggressive behaviors of status inconsistent states.[4] In both of these early studies, a state's 'status'

or prestige was quantified by counting the number of foreign embassies established in the country. Status *discrepancy* was seen as the gap between this measurement of a state's prestige and either the country's military or economic power, measured, respectively, by annual military expenditures and gross national product. Vertzberger, though using largely the same terminology and reaching similar findings, provided some development to the idea of 'status' by distinguishing between two angles of the concept-status ascribed by others (what others believe a state deserves) and self-ascribed (the status a state itself believes it deserves). Aside from these works, most studies of the post-Cold War era tended to rely on the Correlates of War (COW) project's definition and measurement of status for their calculations.[5] In the COW project, rather than counting foreign embassies, the measurement of status ranking was based on the opinions of a number of experts, who were basically asked which states they felt had major power status.

While conventional approaches define status primarily on the basis of material attributes like wealth or military capability, discussions of the concept in more recent years have branched out to include other attributes, e.g. conceptualizing status as a function of relational processes rather than simply constituting a reflection of a state's attributes,[6] and drawing on ideas from other social science fields such as sociology or psychology, where concepts of status (in)consistency are well developed and defined, as in the collaborative works of Volgy et al.[7] Their works draw in particular on social identity theory (SIT) to develop state-level understandings, rather than viewing status attribution as a unidirectional process, attributed by others.[8] The framework of Volgy et al posits that status is bidirectional, and that it takes a state's active desire for status (in the form of an 'expansive' foreign policy) to fill out the picture. In fact, they say that there are three levels of attribution that need to be considered: self-attribution, attribution by the international community and attribution by the existing major powers.

Motivation for a state to seek additional status may stem from a perceived mismatch between the status they are attributed and the status they feel they deserve, or a fear of losing the status they already have.[9]

Three characteristics/requirements are used to describe a state with 'major power' status. Such a state must have: capability: the opportunity and capacity to act like a major power (measured through such factors as military spending and GDP); willingness: the will to act like a major power, as displayed in an unusually "broad and expansive foreign policy" that extends beyond its own region and that is not enacted solely under the influence of other major powers, particularly the U.S. (measured using one of various event datasets, e.g.

COBDAB, WEIS or IDEA); and status: attributed by the policy makers of other states (external attribution).

In their subsequent works, Volgy et al focus on the last of these requirements, which they measure by looking at the number of diplomatic contacts and state visits between the country in question and the existing major powers. Thus their framework for evaluating major power status depends largely on perceptual judgements and on other states acting as gatekeepers.

Drawing on the above three requirements, Volgy et al note in their research a distinction between states with 'properly' attributed status, and those without. Thus, the idea of consistency ties in the idea of status (c) with a state's capabilities (a) and actual behaviors/willingness (b). According to the (mis)match among these three categories, Volgy et al assign states one of three possible labels:

1. Status consistent (in which attribution equals power capabilities and behavior)

2. Status underachievers (in which they are not attributed the status proportional to their capabilities and their behaviors)

3. Status overachievers (in which they are attributed more status than their capabilities and behaviors seem to warrant)

Balancing the Execution: The Clausewitzian Trinity

Balancing also must occur at the level of execution of grand strategy and involve the relationship among the three main players within the Clausewitzian trinity. Clausewitz argues that strategy relied on a "paradoxical trinity", [10] essentially consisting of the tension between three fundamental elements of war: the government, the people and the army. Striking a balance at the level of the execution of grand strategy, however, requires incorporating a fourth element: management (*irade*), basically, the process of balancing within and among the three main factors, a role most often assumed by a skilled leader.

Another way of conceptualizing the balancing 'within' and 'among' the three players can be by looking at an objective (underlying) and subjective (triggering) potential. In this sense, the objective potential refers to a balanced and harmonious *desire* to make broad changes in the status quo that runs across and through all three elements of the trinity. In other words, at the societal level, the governing level and the military level, there is a broad, balanced consensus on a particular aspiration. In addition to running across the three

elements, a balanced harmony must exist *within* each of them as well. If any one component is incomplete in terms of maturity and consolidation, that will pose a major threat to the objective potential.

Subjective potential, on the other hand, can be considered the 'triggering initiative': a leader or movement that comes in with the skills and motivation to trigger the objective potential and manage the ensuing process. Execution level balancing involves managing the interaction between these two: the existing cross-community 'desire' (ideas, beliefs, aspirations-the objective potential) and the effective use of it to constitute a prime directive around which to build a grand strategy. This management or fourth factor, triggered by the leader/movement, involves identifying that desire, formulating it into a grand idea, strategically conveying that idea to the full group and fostering its acceptance and internalization to the point at which the grand idea becomes a widely accepted prime directive of the actor (the subjective potential).
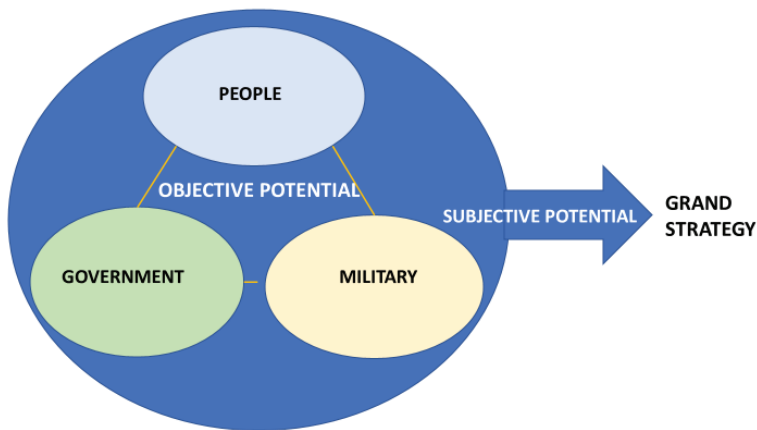
Diagram 1: Objective and Subjective Potential in Grand Strategizing

Power

While the literature on status inconsistency is helpful in interpreting the relationship between capacity and aspiration, the literature on conceptualizing power can lend a different perspective to the idea behind this fourth element of management; one that may be helpful for application to real-life cases. This management element, which is ultimately what makes grand strategizing possible, can, when actually applied to the case of an actor, be reflected as 'management power'-a third component to the more familiar concepts of 'hard' power and 'soft' power.

The notion of power is ineluctably linked to strategy since it is the means with which to achieve objectives. Whether it is a tangible resource that can be accumulated or a relationship between actors in which one can influence the other, power requires management. It has become customary to distinguish between hard and soft power. The former is often conflated with material capabilities, such as military force and economic power.[11] This interpretation is useful because it can engender an objective assessment of one's power in quantifiable terms and in relation to others. At the same time, accumulation of hard power is important primarily as a coercive component of statecraft. This leads to another relational aspect of hard power: the threat of the use of force, to use the Clausewitzian parlance, compels the enemy to do what we want if our latent potential for violence is more credible or potent.[12] Economic statecraft, and the resources that enable it, also operates as a kind of hard power since policies like aid or economic sanctions can influence an actor's decisions by means of transactions or through the promise of (economic) pain. Hard power, therefore, can be created, measured and deployed in the service of political ends by affecting the enemy's will.

Soft power, meanwhile, offers an alternative pathway to desired policy ends wherein intangible qualities translate into political influence. States' objectives, grand strategic or not, are not always mutually exclusive or incompatible, and states need not always coerce each other to pursue their desired policy outcomes. Sometimes, states may deem it beneficial to cooperate for no other reason than wanting to cooperate with you. As Nye coined it, soft power "is the ability to affect others through the cooptive means of framing the agenda, persuading, and eliciting positive attraction in order to obtain preferred outcomes."[13] States in the modern world are interlinked through various economic, institutional and cultural networks that require them to work together. Cultural, ideological and institutional power components do not immediately create tangible influence that can be exploited by a state. However, pursuing acceptable behaviors, professing familiar identities and familiar cultural practices can incentivize voluntary acquiescence. Soft power is difficult to wield and measure, but is an indispensable part of modern statecraft nonetheless.

Finally, there is what we might call management power, or how well a nation is able to convert power into influence, and regenerate power for further influence. This is not unlike Nye's discussion of power conversion or even his description of 'smart power'; that is, "the capacity to convert potential power,

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as measured by resources, to realized power, as measured by the changed be-havior of others."[14] In terms of management power, a nation may be strong in hard and/or soft power resources, but may not be able to handle them well and may squander them, like an individual who has money but spends it irresponsibly. The management of power is in some ways the most com-plicated kind of power to understand and assess, but it is critical to try to do so in terms of understanding and assessing a country's accumulation of power. Either internal efforts (moves to increase economic capability, increase military strength, develop best custom-designed strategies) or external efforts (strengthening existing alliances, improving public diplomacy or internation-al image) are critically affected by the quality of the management potential in that particular actor. This is why the management element is included here as a distinct power type.

The above discussion tells us that any grand strategizing effort must include two types of effective balancing. The actor must first strike a custom-designed perfect balance between its capacity and aspirations, and must have a creative management power (leadership genius) alongside its hard and soft power ca-pacity in order to strike an adequate balance among the Clausewitzian trinity of elements. The following section applies this framework to the Turkish case, starting with a vital, preliminary consideration of whether grand strategizing is even feasible in the Turkish case.

Grand Strategizing in Turkey: A Case Study

Is it Possible?

Many of the challenges that were identified at the outset of this paper are certainly valid when it comes to grand strategy discussions for Turkey. One may even reach the conclusion that, under the present conditions, Turkey cannot have a sustainable grand strategy. As discussed above, for a sustainable grand strategy to emerge, a fourth component must be considered in addi-tion to the desire of the three elements in the trinity: namely, the ability to balance among them and within them (objective potential), and an effective leadership force capable of managing a minimum degree of harmony into a functioning power-generating engine for the imagining, consolidating and executing of a grand strategy (subjective potential).

For Turkey, as with any actor, the starting point for a grand directive to emerge must be a minimum consensus on what everyone wants the country to be; a common idea that must be at least minimally internalized by a steady majority

in each of the three pillars of the trinity. Some may argue that such consensus hasn't always been in existence in cases when grand strategy has nevertheless been successfully made. A striking example is the Monroe Doctrine, which was proclaimed in 1823, just a year before one of the most contentious presidential elections in U.S. history, in which societal 'consensus' produced a 'winner' who could not even earn a plurality of the votes! Such historical examples cannot refute the present need for consensus, however, as historically, and indeed, up until very recent times, foreign policy and grand strategy belonged solely to a narrow elite. In the past it was relatively easy for the elite to come up with an idea for grand strategy that the establishment could then slowly make available-and palatable-for public consumption without the need for immediate 'consensus'. In an era of populist democracy, however, even imagining grand strategy, let alone materializing it, becomes far more challenging. The task is even more difficult for countries like Turkey that are still undergoing a process of democratizing, and in which the public still lacks confidence in the country's democratic consolidation, institutions, norms and values, that might reduce their questioning of any grand strategizing efforts.

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When we look at what constitutes the people, the government and the military (hard power) in the Turkish case, among the three, with the exception of some brief periods (e.g. the Liberation War and the early Republican period), existential harmony has rarely existed. In those exceptional times, under the heavy weight of imperial collapse and the struggle for survival, the historically extraordinary quality of leadership in the figure of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk managed to create a context out of which a sustainable grand strategy emerged (at least temporarily). Under these conditions, two components, that of modernity as an ultimate goal and that of protecting the continuity of the modernization process (as a prime directive) were able to constitute a grand strategy that drove the nation for several decades.

Considering today's Turkey, however, one can make the plausible argument that this minimum existential harmony is not fully there. In countries like Turkey, that have long been in search of an established identity, the understanding of even what constitutes 'national' is continually being redefined in tandem with the ongoing transformations at the sociological and political levels. Since a grand strategy requires a degree of timelessness, defining and

consolidating a national grand strategy is highly challenging. Instead, we see ethnic faultlines within society: ideological splits between secularism and Islamism and electoral democratic pressures that highlight these differences every election period, all of which conspire to make short-termism dominate the Turkish agenda. This short-termism renders the political landscape far from fertile for *sustainable*[15] grand strategy formulation and implementation. One can further argue that whatever strategic thinking may seem to still be evident under these circumstances is far from stable, and could be overhauled by any change in the civilian governmental component of the trinity. The fact that the relationship among the trinity in Turkey is highly volatile and subject to change creates a natural uncertainty, out of which it is virtually impossible for a grand strategy proposal to become deeply enough digested for it to be pursued for decades to come.

Perhaps a more existential challenge in the Turkish case is what appears to be a conflation of two primary grand strategy aspirations. On one side, Turkey's grand strategy has long been perceived as modernization and Westernization-basically reaching a functional harmony among the trinity based on the completion of this goal. On the other hand, there has been a lust for a grand strategy of internationalization in the form of achieving a larger and more effective global status. At minimum, there seems to be an ordering problem between these two. While modernization is based on an introverted process, internationalization is obviously very much extroverted. Moreover, effective extroversion relies heavily on a developed internal development and coherence. Only then can an internationalist grand strategy be fully feasible. If Turkey decides that its apparently existing grand strategy of modernization and Westernization is not yet finalized and still deserves to be the number one priority of the land and nation, then radically progressive, internationalist status-based offensive grand strategizing does not appear viable. The first grand strategy is about the harmony of the three components, therefore it is a kind of base for the second. This paradox of grand strategizing in Turkey must be taken into account while imagining the top idea for a new grand strategy.

The remainder of this section begins by exploring the Turkish state's capacity

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(power) in the current setting, as well as what the country's major aspirations may be. It then offers a starting point for grand strategizing in the Turkish case, by assessing possible prime directives for the country.

Capacity

Turkey's capacity is assessed on the basis of three elements: material (hard) power, ideational (soft) power and management power.

Material (Hard) Power

Briefly speaking, there has been a tremendous jump in Turkish hard power over the last 20 years. If we consider economic growth since 2000, World Bank data show that Turkey's GDP annual growth rate has gone from -5.962% in 2001 to +4.8% in 2019 (down from a peak of +11.113 in 2011);[16] despite the challenges of everything from the failed coup attempt in 2016, the ongoing Syrian war and resulting three million plus Syrian refugees living in Turkey, the country's GDP growth rate in 2018 exceeded 2.827%.[17] Turkey's growth has gained it a spot among the G-20 top economies since 2009. National personal income has also risen in the country, from $4,300 USD in 2000 to $10,20 USD in 2018.[18] Despite certain-seeming crises, Turkey is still growing in significant numbers, and its mega-projects and infrastructural investments (metro construction, high speed trains, etc.) are still underway. On the military growth side of the picture, Turkish military spending has not in fact fluctuated greatly over the last 17 years. Rather, reports show a fairly consistent annual spending that ranges between approximately 14 to 16 billion USD.[19] There is, however, a general growth within the military sector, for example in the Turkish local defense industry, with the country's defense exports doubling between 2011 and 2016, and local design and production efforts aimed at achieving near full self-sufficiency in armaments in the next few years.[20] Furthermore, according to the Turkish Presidency of Defense Industries, Turkey is seeking to increase the value of its aerospace exports and services to an annual 25 billion USD by 2023.[21]

Ideational (Soft) Power

Turkey has also seen a growth in soft power-both in the sense of its overall use, and also in the sense of its freedom to use soft power in an unlimited fashion. In the Cold War era Turkey was a committed, though subordinate, member of the Western club. As such it had to copy the West, and was restricted in its foreign policies to doing things that were 'appropriate' for a subordinate member of a particular group. Turkey's ideational or soft power potential today is unlimited. Turkey can still embrace Westernization, but also be open to the East. The new Turkish elite can talk about siding with the oppressed globally, and

feel free to define the oppressed as they wish, thus adding a humanitarian and egalitarian appearance to their soft power practices.[22] In the past, the freedom to do so was somewhat limited, since such soft power moves of siding with the oppressed risked being interpreted as taking a left-wing or Soviet perspective, one that was therefore non-NATO or non-Western. Turkish ideational power can now include Islamism when necessary, Turkish nationalism when necessary or global justice when necessary, all resulting in what seems to be a much larger ideational utilization potential. Most importantly, this potential is both eclectic and pragmatic, focused on gaining larger political standing in the world.

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With this greater freedom and potential, the 2000s have seen substantial growth in the actual implementation of Turkey's soft power initiatives. In Africa for example, Turkey's official humanitarian aid for regional development increased from $3.8 million in 2004 to nearly $250 million in 2012, and between 2002 and 2014 the number of Turkish embassies on the continent increased from 12 to 39.[23] We can also look to the broad distribution of Turkish television programs[24] and music, the widespread efforts at teaching Turkish abroad and investments in educational exchanges. Since 2011, for example, the Yunus Emre Foundation, a non-profit organization created by the Turkish government in 2007, has opened up institutes in 40 countries around the world, aimed at promoting Turkish culture and language.[25] A much broader example can also be seen in Turkey's approach to the refugee crisis, particularly Syrians. Turkey's response has added a great deal to the country's image-if not in the West, at least in more peripheral parts of the world. While European countries are trying to block refugees or at best handpick a select few, Turkey has had an open-door policy and is hosting more than three million. Turkey's position is that it is a humanitarian responsibility to host them, which is a major element in the country's soft power image.

Management (Initiative) Power

To better assess the possible growth or decline of Turkey's management power, it may be helpful to look at it from two angles-the entrepreneurial capacity to imagine and grow, and the institutional capacity to do so.

The first of these, the entrepreneurial capacity to imagine ways of sparking and sustaining growth, can be described as the governing elite's initiative-taking capacity or, as the governing elite themselves refer to it, *irade* (management). In the past, this psychological and political dimension of management

in Turkey was tamed by various issues. First, as discussed above, there was a fixed ideology of Westernization in foreign policy that in itself was self-limiting. Now we see in Turkish foreign policy actually a reduction of ideological influence, and a rationalization of international orientation and engagement. No longer does foreign policy have to be Western or Eastern or any single orientation at all. Turkey can act Western with the West, Islamist with the Muslim world, Eurasian with the Russians… a kind of *tous azimut* (all over the place) approach to foreign policy.[26] We can also call this rationalization of foreign policy a freeing from ideational straitjackets. In the past, taming was inevitable due to certain governance limitations. Governance was generally by coalition, and there was considerable political instability, which created a more introverted environment. Moreover, the Turkish political elite were focused on securing the domestic modernization project, and didn't have the time or energy to spend on international issues. This too, by its nature, kept any entrepreneurial capacity limited. These limitations are no longer as prevalent.

The second sub-element of management power is institutional capacity. Turkey in recent years has benefitted on this front from a unique period of unified governance. Before the 2000s, Turkey was characterized not only by coalition governments but by a well-documented dual-state structure. In this structure there was an inner state, the core of which was the Turkish military, which acted as an internal balancer against the surface, or governing state. Even when there was a strong political will and entrepreneurship capacity among the governing elite to do something internationally, generally this inner state acted as a brake and a 'veto' power. The Turgut Özal years of the early 1980s were a great example of this. Özal was a powerful, individual leader, but when he wanted to take larger international initiatives, such as intervening in Northern Iraq and Syria, the military, with the help of their civilian inner state allies, blocked him. Internationally, this meant that Turkey was not as powerful, as it was unable to operate and show power. In today's Turkey, the dual state structure has been for the most part eliminated, and the Turkish political authority controls all segments of the Turkish state structure. This is even more true with the recent changes to the Constitution regarding the presidency, which have resulted in a unified, single structure. While criticized as lacking checks and balances, this unified structure allows for strong institutional capacity and brings in solid and unchecked management power.

As a concrete reflection of the growth of management power, one can look at a country's ability to mobilize in response to security threats. Those countries that are able to mobilize their masses behind the moves necessary to counter such new threats can be considered as having greater management power

than those countries that cannot. The fact that President Erdoğan is able to mobilize both the Turkish masses and the military for outright war in Syria signifies a critical new dimension to Turkish national power. Both in terms of this mobilization capacity and the initiative-taking capacity necessary to imagine such moves, we can say that Turkey has now has more fungible management power than it has ever had in its modern history.

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While these factors suggest positive potential in terms of Turkey's management power, there are still serious shortcomings to consider. Primary among these is the question of governance quality and the support that is being given to those in charge. Perhaps the greatest concern is in the area of human capital investment, such as education quality. In recent years, the number of universities in Turkey has expanded rapidly, from 73 in 2000, to 204 in 2019.[27] At these universities there are large numbers of what might be considered 'pro-government' scholars, or at least those who would wish to produce scholarship that could help guide effective policies for the governing elite. But overall we have yet to see evidence of a successful, sophisticated doctrine being produced that can match the political energy of President Erdoğan. Practice and ideology seem to go hand in hand, rather than having a preceding doctrine that guides the policy that follows. The potential risk, of course, is that this government may stall if it continues to fail to support its moves with informed knowledge production and strategic planning.

Aspirations

The most apparent aspiration that the Turkish elite/society has-and has long had-is that of an internationalist agenda. In other words, the desire for a visible, prestigious, influential international presence or status globally. This was obviously the case in the Ottoman era and is also evident in recent years. I would argue that it was even true in the early Republican era, even though the vision was one of 'peace at home, peace in the world'. First, you could not expect a more adventurous prime motto out of an extremely young republic, the result of a collapsed empire, whose primary purpose was nation-building and modernization. Second, at that time, the grand strategy of that period was the safety of the modernization process-that is why the focus was stability at home and abroad. Even then, however, at the time of the Republic's lowest capacity and international focus, the fact that half of the motto was 'peace in the world' meant that there was still a global awareness and vision.

In the last couple of decades, there is no question of Turkey's internationalist orientation and agenda. This internationalist instinct is the direct result of status inconsistency in the psyche of the society. Most Turks have long felt a major gap between 'where they are' (as a people and a nation) and 'where they believe they ought to be' in global politics. The idea that this gap must be closed, whether via expansion of territory, influence or international recognition, constitutes the potential offensive revisionism in Turkish internationalism.

There is also what we might label 'defensive revisionism' referring to actions that appear revisionist but, rather than aiming at coercive, aggressive goals, are conducted at least in part with defensive aims of protecting national security. While it is of course hard to tease apart intentions, in trying to understand Turkey's most 'revisionist' looking behaviors in recent years, it is important to consider the national psyche in Turkey. With the PKK remaining active and the YPG building up on the country's southern border, with the deadly coup attempt in 2016 and the subsequent ongoing investigations and arrests, with terrorist attacks taking place, and with the social strain that naturally may occur when there is an influx of millions of refugees into a country, the national feeling remains uneasy, despite Turkey's measurable growth in power. When we look at the most problematic of Turkey's 'acting out' behaviors, such as the 2019 military advances into Syria, it seems clear that they are largely being made to counter the PKK. The governing elite in Turkey, particularly with their recent domestic aligning with the Nationalists (after the June 2018 election now a consolidated majority in the '*Cumhur*' Alliance in the Parliament), agree that the biggest obstacle to sustainable Turkish political and economic growth is the Kurdish question.[28] When they look to the South, they see the international community apparently building up a Kurdish belt to block Turkish growth. From their perspective, Western actions in Syria in support of the Kurdish groups there are designed to keep Turkey down. First, if Turkey is kept busy dealing with the Kurdish challenge, it will waste its economic and other resources. Second, if Turkey is physically separated from the Middle East by a rival entity, its further political and economic growth toward the Muslim world/Middle East will be crippled.

By moving into Syria militarily, therefore, Turkey is trying to block the building up of an entity that would cut it off from any kind of genuine influence in the Middle East. It is not surprising that Turkey would view as a vital threat any Kurdish entity stretching along the southern border all the way from Iran to the Mediterranean-particularly one that harbors natural irredentist claims on Turkey's own heartland. Such an entity would clearly hinder the

new Turkish elite's dreams of becoming a major player in the region/world, and therefore defensive moves against such a blockage must be made. Ultimately, Turkey's governing elite's aim is to disrupt what they see as an international plan of physical containment, then turn inward and clean up Turkey's domestic PKK problem, and then turn their attention to projecting influence that would guarantee the sustainable growth of Turkish power. This ultimate goal of defending the sustainability of Turkey's growth is what distinguishes these actions as a kind of 'defensive' revisionism.

Grand Strategizing Proposal

Keeping in mind all of the practical and conceptual complications involved in grand strategizing in an age of democracy, populism and electoral liberalization, and considering that Clausewitzian grand strategizing may itself no longer be completely relevant in the age of empowered individuals, technically, the conclusion should be that a sustainable grand strategy for Turkey is an impossible task-if not a potentially destructive one (as a polarizing, politicized, radicalizing force). However, in terms of capacity, not only has there been a perceived increase in traditional components (hard/soft power), there currently appears to be some degree of management power in the Turkish case that can serve as the triggering initiative (*irade*), with the potential of attempting to grand strategize and find the balances both across and within the trinity. More importantly perhaps, the fact remains that one of the most stable, shared feelings among Turkish society and elite alike is that of status inconsistency; in other words, aspiration is abundant. For this reason, the search for a grand strategy to reach that imagined status will not end. And therefore, it seems important to discuss the best possible idea that may serve as a starting point for grand strategizing in Turkey.

What are the embedded, objective potential ideas have been entertained in Turkey in recent decades? The ideas proposed can be divided into three types: ideological, geopolitical, and other. Ideological ideas have included modernization, Islamism and Ottomanism; geopolitical ideas could be characterized as 'being a part of the West', Eurasianism or, more broadly, 'being a part of the East'.[29] The third category of 'other' refers to ideas that are neither clearly ideological nor geopolitical, which in the Turkish case refers to the prime directive of survival (*beka*).

This final section of this article looks at each of these in turn and concludes by proposing a new prime directive that may avoid their shortcomings and serve as a better goal for Turkish grand strategizing.

Survival

Survival (*beka*) refers to the fear of losing your existence, in other words, the most basic instinct of any actor, small or large. Such an existential fear of 'non-existence' is anathema to the concept of dreaming for something larger. To exist, therefore, cannot in itself be a purpose for a grand strategy. Even in those cases when an actor falls into a battle for survival, say a major interstate war or a civil war, saving the country, i.e. survival, can only serve as a *part* of something still larger, a grander aspiration that the society/nation would like to someday become. For example, during the Turkish liberation war, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk repeatedly expressed the idea that the liberation war itself was in fact the smaller war; the bigger one was Westernization. In other words, survival may have been the immediate goal, but the prime directive was something larger and more future-driven. Survival is thus a necessary but not sufficient element to qualify as a grand idea. Remembering the status inconsistency argument, grand strategy should be about moving ahead and upward, reaching for (or remaining as) what you would like to be at your best. Basic survival can never be the end goal.

When looking specifically at the Turkish case, survival (*beka*) is a loaded term, as it has been used to mean territorial integrity, the centralized nature of Turkish governance and the safety of existing dominant ideologies and nationalistic perceptions.[30] With these uses and interpretations, it cannot be an inclusive 'grand idea' because its overly nationalistic implications may be inherently exclusive to some. Kurdish separatism, for example, cannot be incorporated as part of a 'survival' grand idea thus understood. With a 'survival' prime directive, therefore, striking a balance becomes impossible among the pillars of the trinity.

Ideological/Geopolitical

Turning to ideological ideas, one of the ways that modernization in Turkey has been perceived is in the form of secularism.[31] A significant portion of Turkish society has not, however, been on good terms with the implementation of secular modernization. Turkey's political experience with a strong Islamist movement is the sign of the significant societal faultline between Western-centric modernization and Eastern-centric Islamism. This divide again stands as a blockage to balancing both among and within the pillars of the trinity, and divides the very management power charged with creating that balance. Geopolitically defined possibilities for a grand idea, in other words, East or West, share similar limitations. There is in fact an obvious overlap between geopolitically defined (directional) ideas and ideological ones in terms of the polarization within the country. Basically, the unconsolidated, fragmented nature of

Turkish society and governance makes it virtually impossible to pursue either an ideologically or geopolitically defined grand idea.

This tells us that a 'grand idea' for possible Turkish grand strategizing must be defined in an apolitical manner. Moreover, it has to be future-centric enough so that the differences/faultlines that currently prevent the management power from succeeding in striking the necessary balances can be postponed and downplayed until such a point that an actual harmony becomes possible.

Growth

In order to overcome the inherent divisions and challenges in the Turkish case while remaining loyal to the country's aspirations, a feasible grand idea for Turkish grand strategy must be process-based. In other words, as a grand idea, it has to itself contribute to helping Turkey proceed along the road of building up that minimum degree of coherence among the three elements of the trinity to a point at which the fourth element-the management (*irade*) power-can potentially succeed. Arguably there is only one possible such grand idea: Growth. Such growth can be more specifically defined as economic growth internationally, in other words, the prioritizing of trade and liberal economic policies,[32] and political 'growth' domestically in the sense of liberal democratization in line with European standards. Political liberalization as part of 'growth' may not immediately appear an obvious element for the initiation and sustainability of grand strategizing, but it is vital as it helps address the diversity that exists inside the country by creating a common cause that the majority can feel they may benefit from. This common cause can serve to turn that diversity from a fragmenting force into an integrating call for pluralism. As discussed earlier in this article, grand strategizing in an era of populism is difficult due to the fragmenting potential of political diversity. Through democratic development, in the form of a pluralist democracy and guaranteed basic liberal democratic freedoms, hope for inclusion can be engendered and a diverse society may become ready to believe in grand ideas for the nation as a whole.

> In order to overcome the inherent divisions and challenges in the Turkish case while remaining loyal to the country's aspirations, a feasible grand idea for Turkish grand strategy must be process-based.

If such a scenario seems overly optimistic, one need only look back to the early 2000s, and the first years of the AK Party government in Turkey, to see evidence of how a minimum consensus amidst diversity can be built up and maintained. Between 2002 and roughly 2010, it was possible to see in

Turkey a broad spectrum of society, from leftwing liberals, Republican elites and pro-Kurdish movements to conservatives, nationalists and Islamists, all embracing the idea of a growing Turkey, both politically and economically. The naturally fragmenting forces in the society were in large part all able to entertain the idea of the country 'taking off' in a period marked by liberalization (through EU accession efforts), democratization, economic growth and a growing identity as a trading state. Crucially, there was even international recognition of a transforming and growing Turkey (the era of the Turkish 'model'), which fed back into the hopeful domestic consensus. For a brief time, divisive domestic agendas were postponed, as everyone saw a positive potential for themselves in that democratic and economic growth.

An idea sometimes suggested as being similar to growth, welfare (*refah*), is also a non-geopolitical or ideological idea; however, it does not have the same practical potential as growth for a variety of reasons. Most importantly, economic and democratic growth refers to a dynamic process and represents aspirational upward movement. Welfare, on the other hand, refers more to a status and thus is more static. Moreover, while the goal of 'welfare' raises the inevitable question of 'whose welfare', 'growth' is a more all-encompassing aim. Because growth involves hope and a futuristic ideal, it is more appropriate for strategizing. Growth surely encompasses welfare, but the same cannot be said necessarily in reverse. Moreover, while growth not only encompasses welfare, it does so not just for the present but for the future. The welfare concept begins lodged in the present, and raises the question of how are we going to share what we have right now in terms of welfare-an immediately problematic start to consensus building for grand strategizing. Growth, because it is futuristic, means that building up a consensus is likely to prove easier. This aspect makes growth a much more sustainable option for a prime directive. Since growth contains something for everyone, maintaining the minimum necessary consensual support within and among the trinity becomes more possible. As long as all citizens can all hope to gain something from it, the sustainability of that consensus is increased.

Another, practical benefit of a future-oriented directive like 'growth' in terms of economy (international trade) and democracy is that it can curb, or at least postpone, current, divisive debates within and among the elements of the Clausewitzian trinity, by saying let's grow first, and then decide what we will do. A focus on growth also lessens the chance of making premature internationalist and revisionist moves, and therefore does not provoke early containment from the country's rivals or the international community.

Moreover, the hunger for status that was noted as the primary reason for Tur-

key's grand strategizing in the first place, even if satisfied only little by little, still stands a better chance of being at least slowly addressed under a growth prime directive. With growth, all the pillars of the trinity have the chance to see that their status is changing, even if only gradually. Growth's reflection, even at the societal level and in individual lives, gives them the impression that their own status is improving, and comforts them that the nation's status as well is changing for the better.

Another advantage of growth as a grand strategy is that, because it could prove easier in garnering consensus, it would also be convenient for the redefining of certain major sub-policies, such as domestic and international security policy. Security policy under a prime directive of 'growing international trade and democratic development at home' would naturally become one of securing those priorities. Without any clear prime directive, or one with a geopolitical or ideological goal, there is much larger room for securitization. Turkey's tendencies in recent years toward a strategy of Islamism or Ottomanism led, for example, to an arguable overemphasis on the Middle East, a highly problematic open-door policy toward Syrians and a tendency to intervene in other countries' domestic affairs-all of which would likely have unfolded differently under a grand strategy of growth.

Finally, adoption of a grand strategy like 'growth' may also prove useful in a larger conceptual sense, in that it addresses the criticism that grand strategy ideas are not adaptive, and that, in the face of changing conditions domestically and internationally, they cannot survive. Because of these arguments, the concept of 'emergent strategy' as a recommended route to pursue in strategy studies and policy has been suggested. If, in an important case like Turkey, growth were to be adopted as a grand strategy, because of its apolitical nature, its futuristic character, and indeed because of the very vagueness about what will be done with the future power resulting from it, it would represent a strategy that is emergent in nature.

Conclusion

Dramatic changes in both the nature of global affairs and that of warfare demand that discussions of strategy, which too often remain overly entrenched in outdated, military-based concepts and understandings, need to be reconsidered in new ways. The discussion of 'grand strategy' in this paper sought therefore to propose a new framework for grand strategizing based on IR concepts, namely, the duality of aspiration and capacity. The paper identified what might be considered the most contemporary predicament of grand

strategizing in the age of populist democratic trends: the consensus-building and sustainability problems that emerge from rapidly shifting support levels among the masses. Despite this very real challenge, the paper argues that grand strategizing is still possible in Turkey, provided that it is structured around an appropriate basis.

Over the nearly 100 years of the Turkish Republic's existence, various broad ideas have served as potential bases around which a grand strategy could have been-and in some cases was attempted to be-constructed. From the ideological, like 'modernization' or 'Ottomanism,' to the geographical, be it looking Eastward or Westward, or even looking inward and emphasizing the basic survival of the nation as a driving principle, these ideas have all had proponents and detractors. Moreover, all can be cited for their shortcomings to serve in the current era as a feasible force to bring about a consensus around which a successful and sustainable grand strategy can be devised.

> **The idea of 'growth' holds within it the potential of hope for enough of the divergent actors within the Turkish state, military and society, that a grand strategy based on growth-both democratic expansion domestically and economic development internationally-has a chance to succeed.**

One option, however, may stand a chance for achieving such consensus. The idea of 'growth' holds within it the potential of hope for enough of the divergent actors within the Turkish state, military and society, that a grand strategy based on growth-both democratic expansion domestically and economic development internationally-has a chance to succeed. But of course, as always, grand strategy proposals are simply ideas and cannot be turned into historical realities without extraordinary leadership.

All too often, political mobilization and consensus-building genius may not be matched by grand strategy vision, or vice versa. Therein lies the real tragedy of grand strategy discourse.

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ARTICLE

Turkey's Grand Strategy in the Post-Liberal Era: Democratic Assertiveness

Belgin ŞAN-AKCA *

Abstract

The global security environment has been in flux for almost two decades now, and Turkey has been at the center of the major global shifts that have taken place since the end of the Cold War. The demise of the Soviet Union, the democratic revolutions in the Eastern European countries, the Gulf War, the invasion of Iraq in 2003, the Arab Spring and the subsequent domestic turmoil in some of its neighboring countries, such as Syria, have influenced Turkey dramatically. Among the recent major challenges, one can count an unprecedented refugee flow, the loss of interest by the U.S. in the Middle East and the ensuing opening of a sphere of influence for authoritarian countries like Russia and Iran to fill the vacuum, the revival of terrorist attacks and the halting of the long-awaited peace process to achieve a long-lasting solution to the Kurdish problem, and the strained relations with the EU. All of these challenges coincide with a period in world history characterized by the decline of the institutions-based order, rising nationalism and authoritarianism in the most advanced democracies and-last but not least-a shift from a unipolar world to a multipolar one. In order to meet these challenges, I recommend that Turkey employ a grand strategy of democratic assertiveness, which consists of

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(a) persistent democratic reforms in the domestic realm and (b) an assertive defense strategy in the military realm. In the present article, I analyze the existing state of the international environment to identify the risks and opportunities and to assess the overall instruments available to policymakers. I conclude with a presentation of the main pillars of Turkish grand strategy for a concrete recipe for policymakers.

Keywords

Democratic assertiveness, unipolarity, hegemonic order, regime of dissidence.

Introduction

Grand strategy is conventionally perceived to be an overarching foreign policy plan for great powers. Indeed, it has rarely been discussed in the context of middle power states, since such states' influence is thought not go beyond their immediate region.[1] Nevertheless, the decline in American hegemony and, with it, the weakening of the post-WWII liberal institutions accompanied by the rise of China and Russia led to the resurrection of the major power rivalry and an increase in the significance of middle and/or regional power states. This complex global security environment presents challenges for countries like Turkey as well as some opportunities. I argue that the key to make the best use of these opportunities is to maintain a stable domestic political environment guided by the principles of rule of law and democratic institutionalization. In this context, I propose that Turkey should follow a grand strategy of *democratic assertiveness* in order to minimize the threats to its security and interests from states and non-state armed actors in the long run. A strategy of democratic assertiveness builds on two foundations: (a) persistent efforts to implement democratic reforms in the realms of individual rights and liberties, freedom of speech and rule of law and (b) an assertive defense strategy that is transparent and consistent and coordinated with long-term security partners, such as the NATO and the EU.

We are at the juncture of a transition from a rules-based international order to a post-liberal order characterized by states constantly competing with each other to achieve status, either globally or in their region

The major problems that will face the world in the future will stem from great power rivalry, the prevalence of proxy conflicts and the risk of nuclear war. This does not mean that global issues such as climate change, cyberattacks, economic crises and contagious diseases are not as important. Nevertheless, my

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focus in this paper is on the former. We are at the juncture of a transition from a rules-based international order to a post-liberal order characterized by states constantly competing with each other to achieve status, either globally or in their region.[2] The uncertainty that characterizes this transition is exacerbated by a confused unipolar state, the U.S., with respect to the role it wants to play: whether to be the shaper of this new era or allow its role to be shaped by other major powers such as Japan, Russia, China and the EU. The confusion of the U.S. stems from two factors:[3] (1) the cognitive gap between policymakers and academics, who are experts on the broader patterns of interstate relations, and (2) the gap between the foreign policy establishment, which has been motivated to shape the world in the shadow of the U.S. ever since the end of WWI, and the American public or domestic audience, which feels neglected by the establishment's long-standing project of liberal hegemony.

The future structure of the international system will be determined by how these two gaps are closed in the upcoming years. The major characteristics of the current international environment are as follows:

1. A troubled unipolar state that is not fully committed to playing the role of a hegemon,

2. An increasing number of imbalanced interstate relations characterized by constantly shifting interstate alliances,

3. The absence of a competing worldview with which to achieve a classical balance of power,

4. Tension between nationalism and liberalism (long invested in the idea of global governance),

5. The increasing cooperation with non-state armed groups to achieve foreign policy objectives.

In order to identify the risks and opportunities available to Turkish foreign policymakers, it is essential to fully comprehend the kind of international system these characteristics yield, and to discuss the likely scenarios for the role of regional and global powers in this newly emerging system. The national security policy of every state is influenced by the material and ideational nature of the international system. The material nature refers to the distribution of power among the major powers in the world. The ideational nature refers to the dominant norms, ideas, values and institutions that make up the global governance patterns for economic relations and security related matters among states.

In the rest of the paper, I will first talk about the challenges and opportunities posed by the changing international environment and its main features as described above. Next, I will talk about the risks and opportunities for Turkey and identify major priorities in its domestic and international political environment. Then, I will present the potential policies Turkey can implement toward a grand strategy of democratic assertiveness.

Grand Strategy in an Age of Uncertainty

There are various definitions of grand strategy in the existing research. Posen defines it as "a nation state's theory about how to produce security for itself."[4] He then states that it entails "the preservation of sovereignty, safety, territorial integrity, and power position."[5] Brooks and Wohlforth define grand strategy as "a set of ideas for deploying a nation's resources to achieve its interests over the long run."[6] A categorical definition of grand strategy was offered recently by Silove, who argues that grand strategy can be thought of as (a) a grand plan about the choices related to which objectives to prioritize and resources to be allocated towards these objectives, (b) a set of principles related to "decisions across spheres of statecraft with the view of achieving long-term goals," such as the U.S. policy of containment during the Cold War era and (c) a pattern of behavior consistently displayed over time, such as U.S. policies toward the foundation of a hegemonic order in the post-WWII period.[7]

Regardless of how grand strategy is defined, anarchic structure of the international system, i.e. the absence of a world government to run to the rescue of states in times of external attacks to their security and survival, obligates each state with formulating a strategy to maximize its chance of survival. Edward N. Luttwak states that "all states have a grand strategy, whether they know it or not."[8] Going into this strategy are (a) a list of objectives that need to be realized to maximize security and survival and (b) making appropriate choices with respect to the extraction and allocation of domestic resources toward achieving each objective. Figure 1 presents a basic process through which grand strategy is made. I start with the assumption that domestic political affairs cannot be isolated from any strategy that strives to be a grand plan for a state's future.

> **Regardless of how grand strategy is defined, anarchic structure of the international system, i.e. the absence of a world government to run to the rescue of states in times of external attacks to their security and survival, obligates each state with formulating a strategy to maximize its chance of survival.**

Figure 1. Designing Grand Strategy

States' domestic policies have increasingly become influenced by developments in their external environments, and these policies in turn influence foreign policy decisions.[9] The extent to which these two realms have come to be intertwined is almost unprecedented. Several factors are contributing to this trend, such as increasing interdependence among states, the U.S. emphasis on democratic government and human rights in the aftermath of WWII, and particularly in the post-Cold War era as a condition for the sovereign recognition of states, and an increasing number of non-state armed groups that regularly challenge states' authority, bringing about weak states that are vulnerable to third-party interventions. These developments have also led to the erosion of sovereignty as an organizing principle of interstate relations.

While some argue that the American predominance has been gradually fading away and we are in the middle of a transition from a unipolar to multipolar period, some argue that American hegemony will continue for several decades, as long as it is willing to pursue a leadership position in an increasingly multipolar world.[10] This transition period itself deserves special attention if we want to identify a roadmap for a Turkish grand strategy that will serve the country's interests in this highly turbulent and volatile environment. Next, I examine the recent major shifts in the international environment to identify the risks and opportunities facing Turkish foreign policymakers.

A Confused Unipolar Power

The post-Cold War era began with an optimism celebrating the success of liberalism against communism and the anticipation that liberal democracy would prevail as the dominant form of domestic political governance. This success, it was believed, would lead to world peace and stability under the guidance of the U.S.-led liberal hegemony. The present affairs of interstate relations could be described as anything but peaceful and stable, however, and hegemony has turned out to be an extremely ambitious goal, even for the most preponderant unipolar state human history has ever witnessed. The U.S. has been involved in armed conflict abroad for almost two of the total

three decades since the end of the Cold War.[11] During these three decades, the attacks of September 11, the interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq, the 2008 financial crisis, the failed Arab Spring, the ongoing tensions in the Middle East, the Russian transition to a revisionist regional power, the rise of populist regimes and "illiberal democracies," the rise of non-state armed groups, insurgents, and terrorists, the trade wars between the U.S. and China and last but not least, a global pandemic make the top ten on the world scene in a long list of issues.

One would anticipate that all these troubles would be better dealt with in a post-bipolar world, where there is a hegemon acting as the guardian of liberal institutions, rules and regulations. Instead, the hegemon has reached a point where it has begun to retrench from its long-held commitments to liberal institutions and democracy promotion abroad.[12] What went wrong? In a 2017 *Foreign Affairs* article, Ikenberry describes the decline of American hegemony with the following words:

Is the world witnessing the demise of the U.S.-led liberal order? If so, this is not how it was supposed to happen. The great threats were supposed to come from hostile revisionist powers seeking to overturn the postwar order. The U.S. and Europe were supposed to stand shoulder to shoulder to protect the gains reaped from 70 years of cooperation. Instead, the world's most powerful state has begun to sabotage the order it created. A hostile revisionist power has indeed arrived on the scene, but it sits in the Oval Office, the beating heart of the free world. Across ancient and modern eras, orders built by great powers have come and gone-but they have usually ended in murder, not suicide.[13]

Trump's foreign policy pursuits after gaining office in 2016 might have caught the international community by surprise or shock. The rule-based order was being challenged by the very state that had championed its foundation. Both the security alliance and the trade systems that had dominated the post-WWII world were being denigrated as useless, in terms of advancing American interests, by the new president. Although it came as a surprise to U.S. allies and trade partners, the debate about whether the U.S. would sustain its role of a liberal hegemon[14] or apply restraint in its foreign policy through selective engagement[15] had long been going on prior to Trump's election.

Whether the recent election of Biden as the new president will bring the U.S. back to the world scene as a hegemon remains to be seen.[16] Should that occur, there is almost scholarly consensus that it will not be on the terms of the U.S. only.[17] Many argue that America should open space for rising powers such as Russia, Japan and China. For scholars who write in the realist tradition, this is not a choice, but an inevitability of the classical balancing strategy. Coun-

terbalancing will occur regardless of whether the U.S. makes room for rising powers or not. On the other hand, liberals argue that the U.S. should engage more deeply with these states to prevent them from balancing against the U.S. and to determine the mode in which they rise as regional and global powers.[18]

Obviously, the international community is facing an unwilling unipolar power. Conventional U.S. allies, other than Israel, are facing a disengaging ally that also happens to be the guardian of the liberal international order. It is not even clear if the U.S. *wants* to continue its hierarchical relationships anymore, such as those with Japan and South Korea. Hence, it has been very difficult for other countries to predict the terms of their alignment with the U.S. In the case of Turkey, the U.S. seems unable to move beyond perceiving Turkey as a strategic ally. This made sense during the Cold War period, when the two states faced a common threat from the Soviet Union. In the aftermath of the Cold War period, Turkey remained a member of NATO. Yet the strategic alliance between the U.S. and Turkey had already begun to falter by the time the Syrian conflict began; a major issue of contention had emerged when, in early 2014, the U.S. decided to support the People's Protection Units (YPG) in Syria, an extension and/or partner of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), in its operations against the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (DAESH). The two allies now also differed with respect to the source of threat, which is the most significant foundation of a strategic alliance. It was not that Turkey did not see DAESH as a threat; rather, it was the fact that the U.S. was pursuing a policy that increased the sense of insecurity of a major ally in the Middle East by allying with an armed group affiliated with PKK, which Turkey had been fighting for decades till then. This was very disturbing for Turkish policymakers.[19]

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As a result, in the context of the Syrian conflict, Turkey frequently found itself aligning with Russia. This partnership was not necessarily a choice but a necessity on the part of Turkish policymakers at the time. The problem with such an alliance is that it is extremely asymmetrical, leaving little space for Turkey to pursue its interests autonomously. Indeed, U.S. support was occasionally needed to bolster a resilient stand against Russia. This two-tier alliance system further strained Turkey's relations with NATO and the U.S., as did the purchase of the S-400 missile system.

How to navigate between a disengaging hegemon, the U.S. that also happens to be a long-time strategic ally, and an emerging regional power, Russia that strives to dominate the Middle Eastern political landscape? It is time to move on and change the nature of the alliance with the U.S. and NATO from a strategic-based to a principle- or idea-based alliance. NATO already embodies the grounds for such an idea-based alliance. Common ground must be found for restructuring bilateral relations between the two countries beyond a partnership, which only exists in the presence of a common threat. The election of Joe Biden might provide a window of opportunity for a better coordination of the strategic and ideational interests of Ankara and Washington. This would require a consistent effort on the part of Ankara with respect to a realignment of the values, ideas and norms that govern domestic politics and those that govern its foreign affairs. A strategy based on democratic assertiveness can help close the ideational gap between policies across these two realms. It is also the key for formulating a principle-based alliance with the U.S. that goes beyond spontaneous strategic calculations. A revised alliance with the U.S. will make it easier for Turkey to navigate in its asymmetrical alliance with Russia as well.

Increase in Imbalanced Interstate Relations and Shifting Interstate Alliances

Interstate alliance formation has historically been a key component of world politics. Specifically, realist scholars argue that balancing is a natural consequence of anarchy if a state is unable to deter external threats on its own. Both during the Cold War and in its aftermath, the scholarly community used balance of power theory to predict stability, the absence of major power war, in the world.

The complex issues and actors involved in international politics in recent years point to powerful shifts in the nature of international relations. It is time that we question how much these classical methods will help to reinstate stability. The different layers of issues and actors require us to employ different methods so that we can provide policymakers with informed policy recommendations. Two states might concurrently agree and disagree with each ither depending on the range and nature of issues. They might be allies and enemies at the same time. Let us take the Syrian crisis into consideration; for example, although Turkey is a member of NATO, it has dramatic differences with its major NATO ally, the U.S., when it comes to post-conflict power distribution in Syria. The U.S. and Russia have distinct perspectives over the crisis in Ukraine and Georgia, but they seem to have an agreement on specific aspects of the Syrian conflict. Each example illustrates the paradox in inter-state relations called relational imbalance.[20]

A new approach to examining these complex layers of interactions among international actors is network analysis.[21] From the perspective of the U.S., DAESH is an enemy. Russia, a rival of the U.S., perceives DAESH as an enemy as well. The scenario presents the following triadic network relationship from the perspective of the U.S.: the enemy of my enemy is my enemy. It is a form of imbalanced relationship. If there were balance, the enemy of one's enemy should be one's ally. In other words, DAESH is anticipated to be an ally of the U.S., but that is not the case. Such imbalanced relations cannot endure. Therefore, actors will realign their strategies to reinstate balance in their relations.

What does this imply for interstate relations in general and for Turkish foreign policy in particular? We know that as the number of imbalanced relations increases in the world, states are more likely to engage in armed conflicts with each other.[22] The present affairs in the international environment are germane to the rise of imbalanced relationships because the present era is not as rigid as the bipolar Cold War period. Writing in 2009, Ikenberry, Mastanduno and Wohlforth talked about the disciplining effect of bipolarity during the Cold War era.[23] The external threat disciplined the American interest groups and lobbyists so that they deferred to key decision makers to define the national interests and how best to achieve them. By the same token American decision makers used caution when catering to interest groups and public opinion, so that the latter did not capture the foreign policy decision-making process. The authors stated that, under unipolarity, with less at stake in foreign policy, it is harder for leaders to discipline societal actors and easier for societal actors to capture aspects of the foreign policy agenda to suit their parochial needs… the likely results are in less coherent foreign policy and a tendency for the state to underperform in the international arena, missing opportunities to exercise influence commensurate with its preponderant capabilities.[24]

The U.S., the unipolar power of the present era, has pursued a very incoherent foreign policy in key regions in which it has been involved since the end of the Cold War. The Middle East, for example, has been gradually abandoned by the U.S. This strategy is not limited to the Trump period. It goes well back to Obama's presidency. If one examines the debates in academic and policy circles, the present attitude of the U.S. in the Middle East does not come as a surprise. In 2016, Stephen Walt and John

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Mearsheimer stated the following in defending their argument for offshore balancing:

In Syria, the U.S. should let Russia take the lead. A Syria stabilized under Assad's control, or divided into competing ministates, would pose little danger to U.S. interests. Both Democratic and Republican presidents have a rich history of working with the Assad regime, and a divided and weak Syria would not threaten the regional balance of power. If the civil war continues, it will be largely Moscow's problem, although Washington should be willing to help broker a political settlement. In Europe, the U.S. should end its military presence and turn NATO over to the Europeans. There is no good reason to keep U.S. forces in Europe, as no country there has the capability to dominate that region. The top contenders, Germany and Russia, will both lose relative power as their populations shrink in size, and no other potential hegemon is in sight.[25]

Given this background, Trump's attitude toward NATO countries and the Syrian civil war do not appear unrooted in American scholarship and policy circles. And this shift in the U.S. attitudes over the last several years and the subsequent disengagement is one the main reasons behind the turbulent international environment we experience at present. It is characterized by constantly shifting alliances, which fit perfectly to relational imbalance scenarios. Alliances seem to be more pragmatic and issue-based, reminiscent of the interstate alliances prior to WWI. They are formed based on common interests rather than shared ideas, values or worldview.

There is a risk for countries like Turkey if they plan their foreign policy strategy in accordance with this pragmatic tendency, however. An alliance pattern that is constantly changing is not sustainable or helpful for a long-term grand strategy. Existing research finds that the order of preferences among democracies when making decisions about whether to form an alliance with a state or not is the following: joint democracy, shared enemy and common culture.[26] In other words, Turkey is more likely to form alliances with democratic states if it also chooses the path of further democratization. Nondemocratic states prioritize the motive of a common threat or shared enemy above all. This means that in the absence of a common threat it is very difficult to form alliances with authoritarian states. This might explain the challenges Turkey is facing in its relations with Russia. Empirical evidence also suggests that alliances between two democratic states are more durable than those between democracies and authoritarian states and between two authoritarian states.[27]

Going back to the earlier examples of imbalanced relations, Turkey's alliance with Russia is, in a way, an alliance with the enemy/rival (Russia) of its ally

(U.S.). In a triadic context, from the perspective of Turkey, it is an imbalanced relationship: the enemy/rival (Russia) of my ally (U.S.) is my ally. However, if it were balanced, the enemy/rival of one's ally should be one's enemy/rival as well. Of course, this does not mean that Turkey should not cooperate with Russia or that it should adopt an unfriendly attitude toward it. Rather, it means that balance should be brought back into the triadic relationship between Turkey, Russia and the U.S., especially in high security matters.

The Absence of Alternative World Views

The demise of communism was widely perceived as an ideological victory by Western states against the communist Soviet Union. Liberalism managed to defeat fascism twice in WWI and WWII and communism by the end of the Cold War. Yet, according to Fareed Zakaria, the efforts to rebuild post-communist societies led to a new form of democracy, which he labels 'illiberal democracy' that emerged in ethnically divided societies with no historical experience of constitutional democracy.[28] Indeed, transitions to democracy in ex-Soviet and Eastern European states were often accompanied by ethnic tensions, an elevated sense of nationalism and civil war. Bosnia, Azerbaijan and Georgia were among the pioneering cases in which democratization led to contention among diverse groups. Zakaria further posits that every wave of democratization was met with a reverse process, dominated by "demagogues who were very popular" in the beginning and elected by the people. In order to handle this "virus of illiberalism", the most important task is to help democracy to consolidate and take deeper root in the societies in which it already exists, rather than trying to spread it to new societies and countries. Writing in 1997, Zakaria claimed that this was the most important role the U.S. could play at the time.[29] Unless measures were taken, he warned, illiberal democracy would discredit democracy itself as the most respectable form of governance.

It is not clear if democracy is to be discredited, but it certainly faces many challenges at present.[30] Whether it will endure in the end as the most consolidated and common system of governance depends on the most powerful democratic state's attitude toward it. The U.S. foreign policy of the last decade does not warrant much hope for it. Nevertheless, we also do not seem to have an alternative worldview emerging as an organizing principle of both the domestic and international political realm. Most international relations experts agree that China looms on the horizon as a major rival against the U.S.[31] Nevertheless, they also agree that one significant component of China's power that impedes its role as an alternative hegemon is its inability to develop an alternative worldview that challenges the perception of the U.S. hegemony's

benign character and soft power. Without ideas that can unite different countries around commonly shared social and economic goals, it is very hard for China to establish an alternative hegemonic order. Therefore, the alternatives posed by Russia and China usually remain to be "counternorms, such as sovereignty, security and civilizational diversity,"[32] that are short of a universal ideology that promises peace and prosperity for all.

Tension between Nationalism and Liberalism

A significant characteristic of the present international environment is the tension between nationalism and liberalism. The failures of the Arab Spring, the rise of right-wing populism and the increasing inequality, xenophobia and racism even within the most advanced liberal democracies have undermined the attractiveness of liberal ideology globally. Mostly, these troubles have been claimed to emerge as a reaction to increasing globalization around the world in the last couple decades or so. Furthermore, a hegemonic power, which had promised peace and prosperity to the world on the premise of democratic ideals, respect for human rights, liberal institutional cooperation and interdependence has recently reneged on its promises by falling victim to these recent global shifts. Trump is the first American president in the seven decades following the end of WWII to question the value of the American hegemony for the American people.[33]

In *The Great Delusion: Liberal Dreams and International Realities,* Mearsheimer argues that liberalism has always been existing in a world populated by nation-states. And, therefore, when national issues come to the forefront of a state's agenda, nationalism will always trump liberalism.[34] Nationalism is an ideology aiming to bond people who live in the same territory. It is based on the innate understanding that one's own nation is the priority. Liberalism, on the other hand, is based on designing foreign policy to help other societies. This is because liberalism favors equal rights and liberties for all human beings, regardless of where they live in the world. When some societies fail in protecting these rights and liberties, a liberal state ends up defending this idea through armed coercion, if necessary. This is why the U.S. has found itself at war with other states for almost twenty out of the total thirty years since the end of the Cold War. Whether this tension is resolved by the U.S. policymakers by tilting towards nationalism or liberalism is also to determine the future strategic and normative environment in the international system.

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The Rise of Nonstate Armed Groups (NAGs) and States Alliances with NAGs

The post-WWII period has been characterized by the rise of organized violent and nonviolent groups seeking political reforms and/or territorial concessions. Almost half of these armed groups have managed to secure outside state supporters that were/are willing to provide them with safe havens, weapons, funds, training camps, logistics and troops.[35] This trend is mostly due to the decline in conventional warfare, by which states used to confront each other directly to gain territorial or political concessions. In the era of nuclear weapons, however, it is too risky for states to engage in direct war.

Rough estimates indicate that almost 20 million people have lost their lives in the internal conflicts that have occurred since the end of WWII. This high number of casualties is to some extent driven by third-party interventions, which often prolong conflicts rather than resolving them.[36] Since there are no established rules about whom to side with once a conflict erupts, internal conflicts frequently transform into transnational proxy conflicts that become a theatre for the escalation of interstate rivalries and animosities. Most recently, the Syrian conflict turned into an internationalized conflict due to the interventions of several state and nonstate actors. Empirical findings also reveal that states increasingly rely on armed groups to pursue their foreign policy objectives.[37] Indeed, they often substitute conventional state allies with non-state ones.

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There is no reason to think that this will change in the near future. Whether armed groups are of ethno-national, religious or some other ideological origin, unless there is collective action based on a multilateral international framework for dealing with dissidence, it is very difficult to contain them. The U.S. declining role as a norm-setter makes it more complicated to develop a joint plan for dealing with domestic dissidence. Although from the end of WWI to the present several principles and norms emerged in response to the major challenges the modern state faces, such as self-determination and the responsibility to protect (R2P), there is hardly any consensus on how a new state enters into the international system. The UN, embodying the principles of sovereignty and non-intervention as a solution to global governance, falls short or occasionally contradicts itself when it comes to issues related to domestic governance.

Therefore, in the absence of an international **regime of dissidence,** states undergoing internal conflicts are vulnerable to outside intervention by states that would like to pursue their own agenda and exacerbate those conflicts. By regime of dissidence, I mean *a set of formal and informal norms and principles outlining the conditions under which an organized group of people, who have grievances against a government can actually share and/or influence governance or dissent peacefully*.

Extant research on international regimes finds that they reduce transaction costs and informational imperfections, thus facilitating cooperation among states.[38] The formulation of an international regime of dissidence would reduce uncertainty in the international system by laying out (a) certain rules for governments about how to handle dissidence, (b) rules for dissidents regarding the legitimate course of action to pursue their grievances, and (c) rules for potential outside interveners about the circumstances under which several forms of intervention are legitimate. Such a regime would be strengthened by setting standards for liability when parties fail in compliance. Some scholars recently went beyond recommending an international regime and suggested that a cosmopolitan global governance body needs to be established to identify cases of repression and human rights violations.[39] For example, Kaldor argues that the international community needs "to develop democratic processes for authorizing the use of legitimate force."[40]

Although the R2P principle states that the international community may intervene to prevent a crime against humanity, such as mass killing, genocide or ethnic cleansing, even in clear cases of mass atrocities, multilateral action to protect civilians has been hard to coordinate. Nevertheless, the developments in Ukraine (the Euromaidan protests), the Arab Spring and the crisis in Venezuela paved the way for expanding R2P to other areas of human suffering, such as authoritarian repression and state failure. One could consider the intervention in the Libyan civil war as the first multilateral effort toward the creation of a regime of dissidence. On March 17, 2011, the UN passed Resolution 1973 addressing the situation in Libya, which was the first UN-authorized "use of force for human protection purposes against the wishes of a functioning state," namely Libya.[41] Though the subsequent intervention proved the difficulty of achieving consensus on what kind of military attacks by third-party states constitute "human protection," it was obvious that there was an agreement on a new principle, namely that the international community has a mission to protect individuals from grave crimes. Clearly, we have transitioned to a world in which the nonintervention principle has been traded for the R2P principle.

If the U.S. manages to form a new platform or union of democratic states, it might try rewriting the rules of engagement in the internal politics of troubled states. Otherwise, a more turbulent world is awaiting us since major powers will use internally troubled states as a battleground to expand their sphere of influence in specific regions.

Risks and Opportunities for Turkish Foreign Policy

The main components of Turkish foreign policy in recent years can be listed as activism, humanitarianism and security maximization.[42] Turkey has been dealing with a humanitarian crisis and threats to its security and territorial integrity, both spreading from the civil wars in Iraq and Syria, while simultaneously trying to fulfill certain regional and global aspirations. A significant spillover effect of the Syrian civil war is the 2.7 million refugees who escaped the violence and atrocities of either the Assad regime and/or the armed groups that populated the Syrian battlefield from the beginning of the civil war. Turkey pursued an open-door policy toward these refugees.[43] Another effect is the threat posed by armed groups, such as DAESH and the PKK that were using Syrian territories as safe havens and occasionally engaging in cross-border attacks.

Trying to offset the spillover effects from these civil wars, Turkey frequently found itself navigating between the U.S., the European countries and Russia. Ankara's vital foreign policy priorities were a multilateral solution to the refugee crisis and the protection of Syria's territorial integrity during the extremely turbulent times described in the previous section. Turkey's main difficulty lay in its lack of experience with a unipolar world, where the U.S. was not fully committed to playing the role of the hegemon as prescribed by liberal-oriented scholars. This lack of experience is obviously not unique to Turkey, since the post-Cold War unipolarity is an unprecedented system in world history.[44] The Syrian crisis came at a time when the U.S. was already exhausted from its prolonged engagement in Afghanistan and Iraq as well as the lingering effects of the 2008 financial crisis on the U.S. economy.

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This turbulent international context, characterized by a reluctant hegemon, an increased level of relational imbalance and major global shifts due to China's rising economy, present both opportunities and risks. In the next section, I conduct an assessment of these risks and opportunities.

Territorial Threat/Aggression

Territoriality constitutes the foundation of the modern state system in the international arena. Indeed, a minimum size of territory is required to validate any claims of sovereignty.[45] These claims are justified by security delivered to the people who populate a specific territory. Borders are considered a major defense against outside threats. Of course, this assumption relies on the fact that the threat to a state's territorial integrity is usually conventional and from other states. But as we get closer to the recent era, it is obvious that humanity faces threats that transcend national borders, such as terrorism, diseases, global warming, etc.

The post-WWII international order was founded on the principles of sovereign equality and nonintervention. The liberal understanding championed the motto that sustainable peace is only possible if security is no longer divisible. In other words, sovereign entities should feel equally secure from aggression or use of force against their territorial integrity or independent existence.[46] This collective security notion, embedded in the UN, has been the major instrument for mitigating anarchy's effects on interstate relations. The idea was to make sure that even the minor states felt secure from the intervention by relatively strong states. Up until the annexation of Crimea by Russia in early 2014, the international community had settled on the idea that aggression, basically the forceful acquisition of territory, was banned and the days of imperial expansion were over. Although Russia had pursued revisionist policies prior to this incident, i.e. its occupation of South Ossetia and Abkhazia since 2008, it was not anticipated to annex the territories of these two runaway regions. Indeed, Russia had launched an invasion of the entire territory of Georgia in 2008 until the U.S. launched a "humanitarian convoy" accompanied by U.S. warships as a "signal to Russia" to stop its aggression against Georgia.[47] Russia's annexation of Crimea six years later undermined the mental barrier, embedded in the UN charter, against the forceful acquisition of territory. Although Russia based its annexation on a referendum and the principle of self-determination, in a statement issued by then U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, Russia's act was pointed out to be obsolete: "You just don't in the 21st century behave in 19th century fashion by invading another country on a completely trumped up pretext."[48]

Should Turkey anticipate such a threat against its territorial integrity by outside states? The short answer to this question is NO. Considering the fact that Turkey is located near Russia, which has been known to engage in many glaring attempts at the forceful acquisition of territory in the post-WWII era,[49] one can easily get skeptical about Russian intentions towards Turkey. Still, it is not

realistic to anticipate such a threat directed toward Turkish territory. Instead, it is already known that Russia can make it hard for Turkey to achieve specific foreign policy objectives in the Middle East. The recent confrontation in Idlib is an example of such a challenge. More significantly, the fact that the U.S. has been disengaging from the Middle East and shifting its focus to China and East Asia, does not help the situation at all.[50] To mitigate the effects of increasing Russian regional influence and the disengagement by the U.S., Turkey has been trying to strike a delicate balance between its long standing allies, the U.S. and NATO and bandwagoning with Russia to get some leverage in the Middle East.

As mentioned above, the risk is that Turkey's relationship with Russia is more asymmetrical than its relationship with the U.S.[51] Obviously, Turkey does not need natural gas from the U.S. The opportunity is that Russia can open space for some Turkish leverage on the issues of the Middle East at a time when the U.S. is withdrawing. But how much space Russia opens is directly correlated with the nature of relations Turkey has with the U.S., NATO and Europe. In the absence of a direct threat to its territorial integrity by regional and major powers, Turkey can forge idea-based principled alliances with other states.

Domestic Instability and the Kurdish Issue

Turkey's peace process in regard to the Kurdish issue has been interrupted due to several factors. The war in Syria and the subsequent power vacuum encouraged the PKK to start planning for a semi-autonomous or fully autonomous Kurdish state in Syria.[52] From the beginning of the conflict with Turkish government, the PKK has received considerable support, such as financial and logistical support, safe havens and weapons, from third-party states throughout its existence.[53]

Third-party state support of the PKK is one example of handling foreign policy through proxies, which has been a common practice for many states in the aftermath of WWII, as mentioned above.[54] Research reveals that there are several motives behind state support of armed insurgencies, such as getting even with rivals and protecting transnational ethnic kin. Interestingly, 52% of all armed groups manage to acquire external state backing in the form of safe havens, arms, funds, etc. Obviously, none of these instances of support were authorized by the UN. Each was a result of a unilateral decision-making process by individual sovereign states. In total, 132 states, almost 68% of all the states in the international system, have provided some form of support to an armed group in the post-1945 period.[55]

In order to prevent external rivals from gaining a bargaining chip against Turkey, it needs to take trust-building measures towards the solution of the Kurdish issue. We know from existing research that any perception of internal vulnerability creates an opportunity for outside rivals to exploit.[56] A grand strategy of democratic assertiveness should rely on political institutions that serve for the consolidation of democratic ideas and norms for every segment of the society.

Economics-Related Threats

Domestic economies have never been so interdependent with the rest of the world. We already know that increased communication technology facilitates interaction among individuals of different countries, and people see many different parts of the world as potential places to live rather than staying limited to their home countries. What matters for Turkish grand strategy is to calculate the potential areas that are most vulnerable to outside intervention in the realm of economy. This could be the energy, agriculture or food sector, the IT sector and/or the financial sector. Focusing on the security realm is not sufficient to reduce the vulnerability of Turkey in the face of increasing international economic issues.

The instability of the Turkish Lira's value in recent years vis-a-vis strong currencies, such as the U.S. Dollar, the Euro and the British Pound, make it more difficult to attract long-term investments into Turkey's borders. A domestically strong Turkey with a high degree of societal consensus is very hard to achieve when there is inequality across different segments of the society. Without foreign investment, no state is able to achieve long-term development.

Furthermore, Turkey has a high level of dependence on outside sources of energy. In 2019, 34% of the natural gas consumed in Turkey was still imported from Russia, despite the recent efforts to diversify the suppliers (17% of natural gas was imported from Iran and 21% from Azerbaijan). This creates an asymmetric interdependence with Russia. Although the recent discovery of natural gas in the Eastern Mediterranean provides an opportunity for cooperation in the region and a reduction of Turkey's energy dependency, it also exacerbates the existing tensions among the main actors involved, including Turkey, Greece, Cyprus, Egypt and Israel.[57] Therefore, the hopes for natural gas discovery bringing peace to the region seem to be on

> **Focusing on the security realm is not sufficient to reduce the vulnerability of Turkey in the face of increasing international economic issues.**

hold now. But the parties to these tensions should realize that the discovery of shale gas and liquified natural gas (LNG), as well as innovations related to renewable energy, will in the long run contribute to the diversification of energy resources, thus reducing the energy-driven interdependence among states. Long-term cooperation and prospects for peace should not be sacrificed for short-term gains.

On November 16, 2020, China signed the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) treaty with 15 countries that account for almost 28% of world trade. On the global scene, "a hybrid international order" is about to emerge, that consists of the traditional Bretton Woods institutions and new ones, led by China, such as the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB).[58] These new institutions have a different approach when it comes to providing financial support to developing countries. They promote a Beijing-style authoritarian state capitalism, which will have significant repercussions with respect to market-state relations. Although these new institutions offer alternative venues for acquiring autonomy from the West in fiscal policy, they come at a cost. They may lead to an increase in the asymmetric ties with the East that are more difficult to sustain in the long run. This, in turn, might leave Ankara isolated.

Main Pillars of a Turkish Grand Strategy of Democratic Assertiveness

Any grand strategy designed for Turkey cannot ignore the present, dramatic power shifts in the international environment. Two major developments that took place in the past decade pose significant challenges for Turkish foreign policy: (1) the traumatic experiences in the Middle East following the 2003 U.S.-led invasion of Iraq and the disappointing consequences of the Arab Spring, and (2) the dramatic decline of American power accompanied by the unpredicted resurgence of Russia as an influential regional and global power. The U.S. domestic public's pressure to reduce troops on the ground gave Russia an opportunity to run to the rescue of the Assad regime. Eventually, this is what the proponents of offshore balancing strategy had recommended to U.S. policymakers: let Russia take care of the Middle East.[59] Therefore, it was not necessarily a choice for Turkish policymakers, but rather a necessity to work with Russia on the future of Syria.[60]

The comprehensive analysis presented earlier revealed that the U.S. is shifting its attention toward China and East Asia as well as Russia. In an article that appeared in *Foreign Affairs* in 2014, Richard K. Betts, a senior fellow at Coun-

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cil on Foreign Relations, a very influential think-tank founded in 1921 with a specialization in U.S. foreign policy, states that "for a quarter century, Washington had the luxury of concentrating on second- and third-order challenges: rogue states, medium-sized wars, terrorists, peacekeeping operations, and humanitarian relief. But the time has come to focus again on first-order dangers. Russia is back, and China is coming."[61] The U.S. National Defense Strategy of 2018 clearly stated that "inter-state strategic competition, not terrorism, is now the primary concern in U.S. national security."[62]

Understanding the future of American policy abroad is vital for any country's design of a grand strategy, since it seems that the U.S. will not easily give up its dominance over world politics. But it will try to contain the negative effects of these aspirations on the economic and social aspects of Americans' lives, and prevent major powers from being skeptical of America's real intentions. Figure 2 tries to capture the current features of the international environment, the foreign policy instruments needed to handle these shifts and how these instruments can help Turkey pursue a grand strategy of democratic assertiveness that can, in turn, help it continue to claim its regional and global influence. Realization of this influence is vital for security maximization and sustainable economic growth, which are the ultimate national interests.
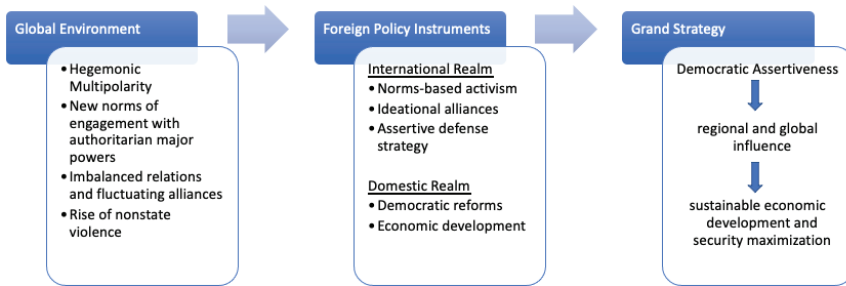
Figure 2. Global Environment, Foreign Policy Instruments and Turkish Grand Strategy

Norms-based Activism

Long gone are the days when Turkey tried to strike a delicate balance between two rigid power poles led by the U.S. and the Soviet Union. The aftermath of the Cold War presented a significant opportunity for Turkey in initiating cooperation with the ex-Soviet Turkic states of Central Asia. This activism has later spread to Ankara's interactions with other regions, and has continued throughout the entire AK Party period.

Many experts agree that the U.S. will not be as involved in certain parts of the world as it was in the first two and a half decades after the Cold War. President Trump withdrew from the Iran nuclear deal, the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade deal and the UN Human Rights Council and threatened NATO, the most enduring military alliance in world history. The U.S. attitude can hardly be described as rules- and norms-based anymore, and it is uncertain how much President-elect Biden will be able to reverse Trump's actions, given that there are immediate issues, such as the Covid-19 pandemic and its increasing death toll, racism and economic inequality, that require immediate attention.

The common misconception is that the decline of American hegemony, and thus the liberal order, equals a decline of liberal ideas, norms and values. Since there is not a new power stepping up to take the role of world leader, the anticipation is that individual governments will adopt their own rules, ignoring the institutions, alliances and values that bound them together in the past. This might well be the case, but the desire for the rule of law, liberty, freedom of expression and respect for human rights are universal. In the current world, no government can endure ignoring these claims from its citizens. Even China will find itself in a situation where it is required to be more transparent and open, especially if it wants initiatives such as BRI and AIIB to succeed. Oth-

erwise, it will be very difficult to market Chinese hegemony and leadership to the world.

Why should Turkey continue pursuing a rule-based strategy in a world characterized by the decline of liberal institutions, norms and values? The U.S. is a major power and it seems that its unmatched military and economic capacity will not be matched by any other rising power soon. After it takes time to handle issues at home, the U.S. will once again turn to the world. It cannot afford isolationism or restraint for a long period of time. Such times of restraint have been a constant feature of the American foreign policy, but only temporarily. When the U.S. decides to come back and engage with its allies more, Turkey should be in a position to offer a competitive advantage. That competitive advantage is Turkey's identity as a democratic country in the very turbulent region of Eurasia and the Middle East. Ankara cannot afford to be excluded from the club of democratic states that the U.S. will forge against Russia and China. Indeed, President-elect Biden signaled the formation of such a club in early 2020 in an article titled "Why America Must Lead Again," stating:

During my first year in office, the U.S. will organize and host a global Summit for Democracy to renew the spirit and shared purpose of the nations of the free world. It will bring together the world's democracies to strengthen our democratic institutions, honestly confront nations that are backsliding, and forge a common agenda...

The most effective way to meet that challenge is to build a united front of U.S. allies and partners to confront China's abusive behaviors and human rights violations...

We must ... rally the free world to meet the challenges facing the world today. It falls to the U.S. to lead the way. No other nation has that capacity… We have to champion liberty and democracy, reclaim our credibility..."[63]

> **A grand design for Turkish foreign policy can only be successful in realizing its objectives if it engages with the world through a norms-based activism that is substantiated by endurable patterns of alliances and a defense-oriented military strategy.**

Biden has already signaled that liberalism must win over fascism and autocracy.[64] A grand design for Turkish foreign policy can only be successful in realizing its objectives if it engages with the world through a norms-based activism that is substantiated by endurable patterns of alliances and a defense-oriented military strategy.

Formation of Ideational Interstate Alliances

The current international environment is characterized by a degeneration of international institutions and a preference for ad hoc alliances, which do not seem to be sustainable and reliable over the long run. This is not a pareto optimal state for the international community to continue living in. It is temporary and Turkey should make sure that it does not choose sides in these ambiguous times. Indeed, it should figure out areas of cooperation with every major actor in the international system and do so without irritating the others. Economics estimates show that the U.S. will continue to be the dominant superpower for decades to come. China has a lot to do to catch up and Russia does not even seem to be close.[65] At some point, the U.S. will go back to norm entrepreneurship as it did immediately after the end of two major wars. When that happens, Turkey does not want to be excluded or isolated. Developing stable relations in its region will provide leverage for Turkey to build deeper relations both with the U.S. and the EU in the long run.

One feature of the present international rivalries is that ideology does not drive them. During the Cold War, alliances were formed around shared interests and supplemented by a common world view. At present, this does not seem to be the case. Even if we acknowledge that we are approaching the end of the liberal era, China and Russia do not offer an alternative worldview or way of living for societies. Great powers usually have plans about how to run the affairs of humanity, not only their own domestic affairs. Both the U.S. and USSR had such plans.

If Turkey wants to rise to be a regional power, it must also develop plans that promise a better future to the societies it wants to target for the realization of its foreign policy objectives.

If Turkey wants to rise to be a regional power, it must also develop plans that promise a better future to the societies it wants to target for the realization of its foreign policy objectives. It seems that the U.S. will allow for the rise of a parallel order in the Middle East under the leadership of Russia. The role Turkey plays in this regional order will be determined by the amount of space Russia will allocate to states in the region, such as Iran and Turkey. Sustaining stable relations with the U.S., EU and NATO might be helpful in bargaining with Russia over a bigger role. Many scholars now agree that conventional wars that aim to achieve structural change are no longer anticipated.[66] Rather, the new agents of change are "social movements and new forms of communication."[67] The present transition is considered to be leading toward a deep-

er evolution than could be achieved by conventional warfare. Instead, the challenges the world community faces can be tackled with global governance according to some, who also argue that it would mean a shift away from the conventional state system.[68] All of this provides further support for a Turkish grand strategy focusing on democratic reforms at home and ideational alliances abroad.

Some U.S. foreign policy experts argue that the best strategy other states can pursue against the U.S. is leash-slipping, which means that states can gain autonomy from the U.S. in the realm of security.[69] By acquiring the S-400 missile system from Russia, for example, Ankara might have thought to break free from the pressures of the U.S. against its interests in the Middle East. Yet it was obvious from the many encounters between Turkey and Russia that their alliance was not on an equal footing. Rather, Russia frequently pushed Turkey to accept its interests and objectives in the region, such as negotiating with Assad and not allowing Turkey to secure the entire territory at its border in the Northern Syria. Turkey's alignment with Russia is an example of an issue-based alliance formation rather than a principled or value-based alliance formation, which is very hard to sustain in the long run. The fact that Turkey has seemed to fluctuate between Russia and NATO does not appear to be very profitable so far. It also reduces the predictability of Turkey's intentions in the eyes of the Western countries, an assessment that might end up alienating Turkey during significant regional and global developments.

Democratic Reforms

By the end of WWI, Turkey's great power status was over. For almost the entire 20th century, its foreign policy has primarily focused on protecting its territorial integrity and handling the threats that were posed against the country's security and survival. This concern was exacerbated after the first Gulf War and the ensuing power vacuum in Iraq, the northern part of which turned into a safe haven for PKK militants to carry out cross-border attacks into Turkey.[70] Turkey's domestic issues, such as the prolonged conflict with the PKK, a nascent democracy interrupted by three military interventions in 1960, 1971 and 1980, and economic and fiscal crises that continued well into the early 2000s prevented policymakers from putting their energy into devising a grand strategy.[71] In other words, Turkey's process of democratization always continued side by side with other challenges it had to address, such as terrorism, military's dominance over civilian authority, and economic crises.

Most of the democratic reforms in Turkey were prompted by its expectation to accede to the EU. Throughout the 1990s, Turkey's discourse with European countries was mostly dominated by its efforts to persuade the EU countries

and the rest of the international community to designate the PKK as a terrorist organization. The most successful outcome related to Turkey's counterterrorism strategy was reached when it continued with liberal reforms both in the political and economic realm and had stable relations with major powers such as the U.S. and the EU. Several examples in Europe, such as the IRA and ETA, prove that violence by armed groups is not perceived to be legitimate once such violence is carried out by armed groups that oppose democratic countries. The assumption is that democratic systems allow for the peaceful expression of grievances; therefore, it is difficult to find legitimate grounds for violent attacks against democracies by non-state armed groups.

Power maximization through defense investments and alliance buildup will not be sufficient to protect Turkey's national interests in the long run. The PKK has a high likelihood of receiving external backing from third-party states (given the past history) if the latter acquires some capability to restart its attacks at a large-scale in the future. When deciding whether or not to resort to violence, new research shows that both governments and armed groups design their strategy after an assessment of anticipated third-party support.[72] The resolution of the Kurdish problem is thus a pivotal part of a grand strategy that relies on democratic assertiveness. The broader democratic reforms spreading across every segment of the society will also help close the ideational gap between domestic and international policies. Ankara can pursue an assertive and securitization-oriented foreign policy strategy more comfortably by reinstating Turkey's image as a democratic power in the Middle East. Its status as a regional/middle power will be better recognized by the international community if it is also a consolidated democracy.

Assertive Defense Strategy

In the beginning of this paper, I mentioned that one of the grave risks awaiting humanity is nuclear warfare. Probably not among the great powers, but more likely among the second-tier or middle powers, such as India, Pakistan and China. The border disputes between India and China caught our attention when soldiers of the two countries fought with fists and rocks along the border between the countries on June 15, 2020. Nuclear weapons are mostly maintained by major powers to deter existential threats from each other. Yet recently we have heard leaders such as Putin, Trump, Kim Jong-un and Modi issue subtle threats or exchange rhetoric implying nuclear warfare. The real risk is that the more some leaders talk about nuclear weapons as an instrument of national security, the more they encourage non-nuclear states, such as Germany, Japan, South Korea and Australia to start nuclear acquisition programs.

Turkey is a neighbor to three nuclear states on its east, i.e. Russia, Israel and

Iran. Yet it is also the case that none of these countries have territorial conflicts with Turkey that would escalate to an armed confrontation. We know from existing research that the territorial conflicts have the highest risk of escalation into interstate armed conflicts.[73] Therefore, Turkey's defense strategy is best served by continuing to be an engaged member of NATO and deepening its existing security cooperation with the U.S. and European states. Despite the recent disagreements, Turkey and the Western countries, including the U.S., have a higher convergence of interests with respect to rising powers, such as Russia and Iran in the Middle East. Turkey can set off the excessive influence of these two countries in the region by aligning its interests with the U.S. and European countries.

Conclusion

The preceding analysis positions Turkish grand strategy in the nexus of the complex global security environment by taking into consideration the continuing global shifts. Conducting a comprehensive analysis of the global order, the major state and nonstate actors involved and the risks and opportunities they pose, I made predictions about the future of world politics. This is necessary to provide informed policy recommendations to Turkish foreign policymakers. In addition, domestic policies are presented as an instrument of foreign policy given that the distinction between local and global has been increasingly blurred for all countries for a long time. A stable domestic political environment is crucial for the realization of foreign policy objectives. The liberal order created an international system in which states form their opinions about each other on the basis of the perceived legitimacy of their domestic governments. This perception is directly correlated with each state's respect for basic individual freedoms and liberties within its borders. Whether or not liberalism will continue to shape interstate relations is a separate discussion. But we know that the values, norms and ideas it promoted for decades are here to stay with us.

Hence, I recommended that Turkish grand strategy be built on persistent democratic reforms alongside an assertive defense strategy. These reforms are essential to meet the challenges of the post-liberal order, such as a confused hegemon, rising authoritarianism and nonstate armed groups, the tension between liberalism and nationalism and the increasing number of imbalanced relations among states.

It is a political project to achieve the societal consensus that would support this grand strategy. Without domestic resources, it is very difficult to fund

foreign policy initiatives. This political project can only be realized through genuine effort and planning by Turkey's politicians to develop the institutions that will foster trust among the citizens. Not polarized societies, but those that are able to maintain channels of communication and dialogue across different segments of their population will be able to sustain themselves in the long run.

The resilience of many states will be tested against an increasingly turbulent international environment and only those that maintain such consensus and inter-communal trust will survive-or be less likely to compromise their sovereignty to major power states. The realization of Ankara's regional and global aspirations depends on how well policymakers can coordinate their efforts and policies at the domestic and international levels. Norm-based activism, the formation of ideational alliances that can endure beyond common threats and enemies combined with democratic and economic reforms are major instruments to this end.

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BOOK REVIEW

The Jungle Grows Back: America and Our Imperiled World

By Robert KAGAN

New York: Vintage Books, 2019, 179 pages, ISBN: 978-0525563570

The world, as we know, is changing fast and new actors emerge in global politics while the U.S. under the Trump Presidency pulls back from international engagement. As Washington is retreating from its "global responsibilities", the U.S.-led liberal order starts to struggle for survival, while the emerging powers are jumping up to fulfil the power vacuum left by the U.S. at the international scene. But what happens when the U.S. decides to "mind its own business"? The answer is neatly set forth in the title of Robert Kagan's latest book: "the jungle grows back".

In his latest book of 2019, *The Jungle Grows Back: America and Our Imperiled World,* Kagan argues that America's withdrawal is the worst possible scenario, because without the essential role of the U.S. to keep the balance in distribution of power, the world will fall into instability. For him, the world is full of dangerous actors, who remind us of an unstable jungle, and in a possible absence of the U.S. power and order, they have the ability and desire to make things worse at the international arena. As Kagan claims, without any U.S. commitment to preserve the liberal order, it will soon lead into a chaos because the U.S.-led liberal order is like a garden that needs constant care in order to prevent the above mentioned jungle to grow back and "engulf us all."

The Jungle Grows Back is a well-written text, with comprehensive insights that analyze the current state of world politics and it aims to explain the historical and geopolitical circumstances beyond liberal order's birth after WWII. At the heart of the manuscript lies the question of today's U.S. role in the world and why the U.S. has to be so deeply involved in world affairs. For Kagan these are reasonable, but not new, questions and doubts that trouble the mind of Americans. The book can be seen as an answer to the Trump's administration "hostility" towards the liberal order and shows why a support to the liberal order is a crucial factor for world's stability.

The first part of the book, which serves as an introduction on the U.S. role in

creating and maintaining the liberal world order, describes in an easy-reading framework the historical, political and economic background of the liberal order. In Kagan's *weltanschauung* the American-led world order was not a natural phenomenon - far from it. Furthermore, the liberal order was not a result of the culmination of an evolutionary process towards the progress of the consciousness of freedom. Neither was it a production of iron logic of economic determinism nor a construction of "a common inevitable evolutionary pattern in the direction of liberal democracy." There was nothing inevitable in the emergence of the liberal order after the WWII. The story of human progress and the inevitable evolutionary path towards democracy is a *myth*, as Kagan concludes. In fact, the U.S.-led liberal order is an abnormal order, an anomaly and a great historical aberration. Despite sporadically horrors, genocides and oppression of our time, the liberal order by any historical standards has been a relative paradise. In the past seven-plus decades there have been no wars among the great powers, something never seen throughout the history of mankind.

In his "Return to the 1930s" chapter, Kagan warns that authoritarianism is enjoying a renaissance and isolationist feelings that tend to focus on the limitations of the U.S. involvement in the world have revived. However, the latest isolationist resentment is a return to the 1930s when politicians and writers suggested a "return to normalcy". The Americans of the 1920s and the 1930s were not so different from the Americans of today argues Kagan, because both could not fully comprehend the dangerous implications of the U.S. withdrawal. Both Americans lived in a modern, democratic and capitalist society and were informed by modern science and modern ways of understanding the human behavior. Both made choices based on same insight and not on an unusual ignorance or an unusual fecklessness. Therefore, according to Kagan, the admiration of some American conservatives for Vladimir Putin as "a strong leader" is not surprising. Some generations ago, Mussolini enjoyed the same admiration and was supported as the strong leader, the Italian people needed.

But Kagan thinks that this line of argumentation is mistaken, because we already know what a world not shaped by the American power really looks like. Without the exercising of American power, the world "as it is" produces geopolitical clashes, famine, forced collectivization and international disputes for world domination. To prevent the division of the world and to construct peace, the U.S. created the "environment of freedom" which let "the better angels of our nature" prevail and produced a safe ground for democracy. After the Second World War, a new conceptualization of national interest and geopolitics arose and America transcended the traditional notions of national interest. Furthermore, America's new strategy after the war created an unprec-

edented liberal order which meant accepting the international responsibility to protect the interests of those who shared Americans' worldviews. According to Kagan, the liberal order was exceptional less because Americans were exceptional than because America's position in the twentieth century world had become exceptional. Additionally, the U.S. accepted its "global responsibilities as world power" after the Pearl Harbor tragedy and its role as a guarantor of peace on an international scale.

America's role as a peace guarantor was essential to liberal order's survival and, as former Secretary of State, Dean Acheson wrote, the U.S. after WWII became the locomotive at the head of mankind. The historic consequences of the U.S. involvement in world politics after the WWII were greatly revolutionary and incomprehensible back at that time. America's postwar policies went beyond narrow national interest and created new geopolitical realities and new patterns of international behavior. Despite being realists, the architects of the postwar order established a liberal system based on universal ideals and irrefutable principles. In fact, it was realism in the service of liberalism. This American global enterprise established a liberal order as a by-product of a new configuration of power after WWII and the U.S. rise to prominence. One of Kagan's chapters, "Life inside the Liberal Order", was characterized by democratization, pacification, and economic resuscitation. Germany and Japan are the best examples of the transformations that occurred in the geopolitical trajectories in the post-war world. For Kagan, the effect of these transformations in Europe and Asia were revolutionary and far more significant and lasting than the rise and fall of the Soviet Union. Ultimately the transformation of Germany and Japan - once warlike countries - lead to geo-economic competition, which was never translated into the military or geopolitical competition.

In a normal world, Kagan suggests, the Japanese and German economic miracles would have led them to challenge the order and its hierarchy. But in the U.S.-led liberal order this did not happen, because the liberal order demolished the old geopolitical ambitions, spheres of interests and balance power. However, the key element holding the order together was the perception by other powers of the liberal order as just and fair, and its voluntary based engagement. On the other hand, Kagan writes that life outside the liberal order was characterized by old and very traditional brand of geopolitics. In comparison to NATO and the liberal order, the Warsaw Pact was not voluntary and was a power-based arrangement. Kagan argues that the Soviets were behaving normally in a world that was no longer normal. Furthermore, the growing power of the liberal world order that was historically unprecedented transformed the foreign and domestic behavior of the Soviet Union. Perhaps the transformation of the foreign affairs patterns caused by the liberal order

played a significant role in bringing the Cold War to a peaceful end.

The world that emerged from the ashes of the Cold War had never been seen before in the history and led to the extension of liberal world order across Europe and through Asia, Latin America, and Africa. In the "new world order", arms races among great powers were seen obsolete; trade and financial systems were relatively open; and democracy was accepted as superior to communism. The liberal order created an environment where cooperation was stimulated instead of competition, geopolitics was replaced by geo-economics, cosmopolitanism ruled over tribalism, etc.

But today the jungle is growing back. History is returning and we are witnessing a time where nations are reverting to the old and traditional geopolitical patterns. Great-power spheres of interests and geopolitical ambitions are creating international instability and regional conflicts. In recent years, Russia and China have pursued - of course in different manners - a more aggressive geopolitical attitude and have tried to regain their historical greatness on the world stage. Kagan argues that Russia and China's foreign attitudes were encouraged by the lack of cohesion and confidence in the liberal world order. And this is primarily caused by the American jungle, a cauldron of anger, hatreds, and resentments which have been a big part of American politics and history. It is hard to support a liberal order when liberalism is under attack at home, suggests Kagan.

Today's criticism of the liberal order on both left and right wings of American politics is related to the U.S. identity, American foreign policy, and dissatisfaction with America itself. In this respect, Kagan argues that the U.S. should preserve the liberal world order. Otherwise, the liberal order will be replaced by another order, which will more likely produce disorder and chaos of the kind that was seen in the twentieth century. Therefore, the liberal world order as a garden needs constant protection against the jungle that tends to grow back and engulf us all. In summary, *The Jungle Grows Back* is a valuable contribution to the academics and students of IR as well as the foreign policy makers, who are concerned with the current situation of the liberal order and geopolitical implications of the U.S. retreat from world affairs.

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BOOK REVIEW

The Arctic Council: Between Environmental Protection and Geopolitics

By Svein Vigeland ROTTEM

Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020, 104 pages, ISBN: 978-981-13-9289-4 / 978-981-13-9290-0 (e-book)

Svein Vigeland Rottem, who currently works at the Fridtjof Nansen Institute (FNI) in Norway as a Senior Research Fellow, studies politics and international relations in the Arctic region as well as the Arctic Council. The Arctic region in general is rarely studied in the international relations (IR) literature possibly because it is located far away from many countries and is thus detached from the main debates in IR except for environmental issues. However, as the issues of global warming and control of natural resources have become increasingly visible on the international agenda, the Arctic - as well as Antarctica - have attracted significant attention in the last few years. Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that the percentage of IR scholars in the world who specifically study the Arctic region is still only 0.5.[1] This also points out to the need to explore the Arctic from an academic viewpoint and also inform the policy making bodies regarding the developments in the region. In fact, it is not only the circumpolar states such as the U.S., Russia, Canada, Iceland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Finland which could be easily influenced by the turn of events in the Arctic, but also the other states of the world which are closely concerned with environmental issues like climate change.

The book is comprised of five chapters and in the first one, the author highlights the lack of knowledge on the Arctic and the region's growing importance following the negative developments that have taken place regarding environment, while also mentioning the technological advancements in the region in the monitoring and extracting of the natural resources. The book outlines the Arctic's geopolitical history starting from the Cold War period and the cooperation efforts between the Arctic states since the Stockholm Conference of 1972 as well as Gorbachev's initiatives in 1991. The foundation of the Arctic Council and its sub-institutions such as the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP) have directed the attention from realpolitik to issues like climate change and environmental protection. The change in the marine and terrestrial life of the Arctic resulting from pollution and

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1   Mustafa Aydın & Cihan Dizdaroğlu, "Türkiye'de Uluslararası İlişkiler: TRIP 2018 Sonuçları Üzerine Bir Değerlendirme," *Uluslararası* İlişkiler, Vol. 16, No. 64 (2019), p. 10.

global warming has been greater compared with the rest of the world. Another important issue affecting the Arctic has been the natural resource extraction and related problems such as the oil spill in the ocean and the transportation activities in the area. The chapter also mentions the political rivalry between the states in the Arctic and argues that security disputes concerning the member states of the Arctic Council in other parts of the world should be kept away from the Council's agenda.

In the second chapter, the organizational structure of the Council is outlined including a detailed description of the duties of the ministries, senior Arctic officials (representatives of each state) and the working groups. The chapter also discusses the functions of the member states, permanent groups and the working groups and observers other than the Council's own secretariat. As opposed to the general belief that the members of the Council only include states and international organizations, indigenous population, which is estimated to be around 500,000, also gets represented in the Council. The author underlines that the Arctic Council has become a suitable platform to bring all players such as the observers of states and organizations, local people and scientists together to discuss the future of the Arctic region. The Council's six working groups whose members are chosen from the scientific communities of the member states perform the core functions of the Council ranging from monitoring pollution to protecting fauna and flora and recommending solutions for various problems. The chapter also mentions other issues in the Arctic with regard to the conflicting interests and attitudes of the member states. For instance, while some member states like the United States view political problems and national interests as the most important dimension of the Arctic-related issues, other states like Canada pay greater attention to the protection of the rights of indigenous people.

The author discusses the Arctic governance in the third chapter and focuses on the legal issues, power politics, signed agreements and the role of the scientific knowledge which is produced by the working groups of the Council. One of the challenges regarding the Arctic has been the Council's non-binding decisions except for the "Search and Rescue Agreement" which was signed between the Arctic states. Another challenge faced by the Arctic Council is the presence of at least two different groups of members with different agendas regarding the Arctic in the in the decision-making procedure. For instance, in addition to NATO countries and Russia, there are also neutral states in the Council which triggers a debate as to whether security issues should be tackled by the Council. There is also a distinction between the coastal states (A5) and non-coastal states (A3) which affects the hierarchy of the discussion topics on the Council's agenda. For instance, while the UN Law of the Sea applies to the A5 group, it cannot be applied to the A3 group. The chapter also emphasizes that the efforts of the working groups of the Council have been successful in drawing attention to a number of important issues in the Arctic including fisheries, biodiversity/protected areas and emission reduction measures.

The fourth chapter of the book analyzes the Council with all its components and focuses on the main problems of the organization such as the management, funding of projects, competition between members, practicality of the produced knowledge, etc. The chapter also shares the suggestions of various individuals and institutions in order to make greater use of the scholarship and field experience in the Arctic. As the author underlines, even the coordination between the sub-institutions of the Council has been problematic, although it has become better in the 2010s as a result of various initiatives. Some of these initiatives include the SAO and working group coordination meetings as well as the setting up of a permanent secretariat in Tromso. In addition, the overlapping of the responsibility areas of the working groups seems to be an important problem that should be resolved. At the same time, however, the author believes what improves the continuity and stability of the activities of the Council has been the rotation of the chairmanship of the Council among the members. Finally, the chapter discusses the role of the observers and argues that even though the role of the observers is still a bit ambiguous, it could boost the effectiveness of the Council in terms of attracting more participants.

In the final chapter, the author discusses his own views about the Arctic Council and the Arctic region in general. After providing information regarding the structural and financial changes that has taken place in the Council over the years, the author indicates that the Council gets larger in size and increases its responsibility areas. It is important to note that the Arctic Council has been the only governance body in this region and the states of the Arctic region have been implementers of its decisions. Therefore, it is important to make the Council more effective and the knowledge they generate should become more practical for the region and for the world at the macro level. By recognizing the Arctic Council as the only governance organization in the region and avoiding the establishment of another minor organization or replacing the Council with another organization (e.g. the UN), the Arctic states could mitigate their contending geopolitical interests. The chapter is concluded with a brief summary of the factors that influenced the decision of each state to become a member in the Council which includes variety of factors like environmental concerns, protecting the indigenous people's rights or maintaining the balance of power in the region.

As a criticism, it should be mentioned that the fact that the same issues are repeatedly discussed in the different chapters of the book creates an organization problem. For example, the differing interests of the member states and the overlapping responsibility areas of the working groups are discussed in every chapter again and again. It would be much better for the readers to understand the issues if each chapter was exclusively devoted to a specific dimension of the Arctic governance. Furthermore, the positions and interests of the member states and non-member states vis-à-vis the indigenous people of the region could have been elaborated a little more. This would also reveal the complexity of the decision making process as well as the main weaknesses

of the Arctic Council. As a final criticism, the way the book describes the institutions of the Council as well as the relations between them is sometimes quite fragmentary which prevents the readers from fully comprehending the main issues.

Overall, the main purpose of this book is to familiarize the readers with the functions and activities of the Arctic Council as an international organization. These functions and activities at the local and global level are quite important in shaping the course of the political and especially environmental issues in the Arctic. When we take into consideration the growing importance of environmental challenges in world politics, it becomes more significant to study the Arctic region. The book provides the readers with a broad overview as to which states and international organizations have been playing a greater role in influencing the decision making process. In this regard, it is an important contribution to the study of the Arctic region in the IR literature.

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Title of Book Reviews

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