
Editorial

The growing debate on TFP is likely to evolve in parallel with the activities of foreign policy makers in neighboring regions and beyond. The academics and experts aim to understand and explain TFP, while policy makers pursue a multidimensional policy line with adjustments necessitated by the changing situations on the ground. The duty of the scientific community is to provide a framework of analysis for understanding and explaining broader long-term trends in foreign policy. There is also a growing need for semi-academic analyses that not only offer policy recommendations but also present policy analyses in terms understandable by the ordinary public. The analyses may differ depending on whether the study is pursued from a generalist perspective, is based on a regional approach, or deals with the specifics of a country's foreign policy. Studies analyzing current affairs encounter a major challenge: the difficulty of presenting a complete picture of events while dealing with a rapidly evolving situation.

TFP has undergone a considerable transformation driven by the imperatives of structural transformation in the domestic landscape, the changing dynamics of regional politics and the shifting balance of power in the

international environment. Reforms in the political, economic and legal spheres helped Turkish policy makers to put their house in order and develop a sense of self-confidence in their foreign policies. Turkey's internal democratization attempts also found expression in the foreign policy realm. TFP is formulated and conducted in a more democratic manner and in a pluralistic atmosphere, paying considerable attention to societal demands. TFP is also a response to the changing dynamics of the post-Cold War era and the realities of the new Turkey, which is still in the process of consolidating its democracy and strengthening its economy.

In addition to the changing domestic landscape, chronic regional problems - the most important one being the situation in Iraq - impel Turkey to adopt a more proactive foreign policy in the new atmosphere. Such a proactive policy line has become necessary to preserve Turkey's regional interests, as well as to respond to domestic demands for opening up to the immediate neighborhood and beyond. Turkey's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Prof. Ahmet Davutoğlu, has formulated a foreign policy framework based on a number of principles and policy mechanisms. Although there are continuities with Turkey's earlier

foreign policy, Mr. Davutoğlu deserves credit both for some brand-new policy principles and mechanisms, and for his performance in the implementation of foreign policy, first as the former Chief Advisor to Prime Minister and now as the current Minister of Foreign Affairs.

The seven articles in this special issue of *Perceptions* deal with different aspects of TFP within this new framework and aim to contribute to an understanding of the new foreign policy and offer insights into the new dynamics, openings and policy adjustments observed in TFP in the last decade. The articles published in this issue are translated and updated versions of Turkish originals published in a recently released book, entitled *2000'li Yıllar: Türkiye'de Dış Politika* (The 2000s: Foreign Policy in Turkey). We would like to thank the editor of the book and the Coordinator of the Office of Public Diplomacy, Assoc. Prof. Dr. İbrahim Kalın, for granting permission to reproduce the articles.

İbrahim Kalın deals with a new phenomenon in TFP: public diplomacy and soft power. There is almost universal agreement among scholars and policy makers that Turkey needs more effective public diplomacy tools to support its policy initiatives towards the neighboring regions and other geographies of interest. Kalın offers a comparative analysis of public diplomacy in different contexts, and concludes with clues as to how Turkish public diplomacy will take shape, looking specifically at

the possible evolution and modes of operation of the newly formed Office of Public Diplomacy.

Şaban Kardaş examines a long-time issue of TFP, the transformation of Turkish-American relations. Having identified the traditional parameters of the bilateral relationship as formed in the early years of the Cold War era, he extrapolates the evolution of that relationship into the years to come. He pays particular attention to transformations in the bilateral relations at two critical junctures: the early post-Cold War era and the first decade of the new millennium. He argues that, as Turkey has sought to reintegrate with its immediate neighborhood and pursue a more autonomous foreign policy, the Turkish-US relationship has also gone through a period of redefinition throughout the last decade.

Hasan Kösebalaban examines TFP in the Middle East, another region which constitutes a major item on Turkey's overall foreign policy agenda. He advances the argument that in the making of Turkey's regional policies in the Middle East, not only material but also ideational factors play certain roles. He identifies areas where, by drawing on the ideational factors, the incumbent AK Party managed to adjust TFP to the rapidly changing structural conditions in the region.

Mehmet Özkan focuses his discussion on the new openings to Asia

and Africa within the wider framework of the emergence of the new TFP. He presents the policies toward Asia and Africa as the most striking examples of the new horizons of recent foreign policy initiatives. Özkan studies Turkey's burgeoning relationship with new regions along geographical sub-divisions, and suggests the formation of alliances and partnerships with a number of countries inside these regions, as well as with some external countries which are already influential in Asia and Africa.

Fahrettin Altun offers a sociological analysis of TFP. Altun focuses on the media's representation strategies and provides a critical assessment of the "World" pages of the two widely-circulated national newspapers *Hürriyet* and *Habertürk*, in order to assess the coverage of international news. He reaches the critical conclusion, in addition to several complementary ones, that Orientalization is pervasive in the mainstream media in Turkey.

Another interesting area in TFP is Turkish-Russian relations. Fatih Özbay undertakes to explain the rapprochement between Turkey and Russia, particularly throughout the recent decade. His examination proceeds on the basis of political and economic analysis. Although he acknowledges that strategic alliance between the two

countries is not presently the case, he posits strategic alliance as a future target and offers policy recommendations for achieving it.

The article written by Bülent Aras and Pinar Akpınar tackles the complexities of TFP in the Caucasus. Their study is based on analysis at the regional level, which takes into account policies of not only the regional countries but also a number of external actors with strong interest in the Caucasus. The role of Russia, the EU and the U.S. are all included as explanatory variables, while analyzing TFP toward individual countries in the region. Aras and Akpınar conclude that, although the prospect for good relations with Armenia is limited for the time being, Turkey is an important player in the region and is likely to remain so.

I also would like announce that *Perceptions* has a new Deputy Editor, Asst. Prof. Dr. Şaban Kardeş of TOBB- University of Economics and Technology, and a Book Review Editor, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Şule Toktaş of Kadir Has University. *Perceptions* will start to feature a book review section in the next issue and continue to publish special issues, looking at various pressing issues such as NATO and Turkey, Turkish migration to Germany and foreign policy analysis. Stay tuned for more!

Bülent ARAS
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