

[DOI: 10.20472/IAC.2016.022.008](https://doi.org/10.20472/IAC.2016.022.008)

**AYDIN AYDIN**

Suleyman Demirel University, Turkey

## **CHANGING DYNAMICS IN THE MIDDLE EAST AFTER THE ARAB AWAKENING; THE POSITION OF TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY**

### **Abstract:**

The transformation and power struggle in the Middle East after the Arab Spring and actual withdrawal of the USA in December 2011 from Iraq and therefore from the Middle East caused serious changes in the dynamics and balances of the region. The aim of this paper is to investigate evolving foreign policy strategies, activities of both regional and global actors on Middle East from the perspective of Turkey. The changes in the Middle East policy of Turkey after such changes and the effects of regional and systemic actors on such changes were studied comparatively with the foreign policies of Iran and Saudi Arabia. The national powers of Iran, Turkey and Saudi Arabia, the effective power centers in the region, were measured and compared to each other. Within this context, it was attempted to reveal the roles that these countries assumed in the changes in the region based on their powers from the perspective of Turkey. Furthermore, the critiques of relations of Turkey with the region countries and the foreign policy approaches it abortively produced against the regional changes were assessed within the new atmosphere developing in the Middle East.

### **Keywords:**

Middle East, Power Struggle, Turkish Foreign Policy, Regional Power

**JEL Classification:** R59, F50, R58

## 1. Introduction

Arab Spring caused dynamics to change in the Middle East. The power gap led to a power struggle in the region after the withdrawal of the USA. This paper investigates to assess and compare the evolving foreign policy strategies, activities of Iran and Saudi Arabia from point of view of Turkey. Also involvement degree and influence of three states throughout the region will be discussed. These three states have struggled to dominate Middle East after the Arab Spring.

The national powers of regional countries will be measured and compared to each other. Within this context, it was attempted to reveal the roles that these countries assumed in the changes based on their powers from the perspective of Turkey. In this study, Iran, Turkey and Saudi Arabia displayed a power struggle and expanded their activity areas in the region either alone or in an alliance. When the Arab Spring started, they faced the fact that it was not possible for the regional powers like Turkey, Iran, Saudi Arabia, or Egypt to come together in order to resolve the problems in the region because they did not possess the dynamics and instruments that would enable them to work together to resolve the regional problems of the countries in the region. Moreover, the ethnical and sectarian differences of the regional powers are manifested as a player that fuels the competition. However, this power struggle caused different reflections in the Turkish foreign policy.

Although there were some studies regarding to Arabic Springs and changing dynamics in Middle East (Gause 2014) caused by the Arab Spring, regional and systemic activities and power struggle policy (Khatib 2012) of Sunni-Shia blocks (Gonzalez 2013) in the case of Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Iran have not been examined before. Therefore this study with this study stands apart from other studies in this respect. Because of this reason this study may give clues about future power competition on Middle East.

Iran, Turkey and Saudi Arabia entered into a power struggle in the region either alone or forming global - regional alliances. The global and regional alliances and consistent policies established the states influential in the region. Turkey foreign policy after Arab Spring will be discussed in Middle East by taking into consideration of Saudi Arabia, and Iran situations. Iran conciliates a major sphere of influence by dominating regional policies. Iran and Saudi Arabia appear to be the two major powers that support the sectarian struggles in the region.

## 2. Selection of Case Study

The activities of Islamic countries in the region are discussed as the significant regional powers in the Middle East. Especially since the power struggle in the region is based on sectarian foundations (Sunnite-Shiite), Israel is not included in this study when selecting the regional powers with strength in the region. Israel's policy makers instead of to be

part of this competition, they prefer to observe current sectarian struggles in region. They do not want lose country's energy. In this study, the influence of Israel shall not be mentioned and the power struggle amongst the Muslim countries shall be discussed. Since Israel is different in ethnical and religious aspects in the region and is not a direct subject of the conflict amongst regional powers after the Arab Spring, therefore, Israel is not included in the study. Moreover, although Egypt is another influential regional power, Egypt focused more on its internal policies in order to resolve its domestic problems instead of producing foreign policies especially after the Arab Spring and therefore the influence of Egypt in the region was reduced. Iran, Turkey and Saudi Arabia (Gause 2014) entered into a power struggle in the region either alone or forming global - regional alliances. The global and regional alliances and consistent policies established the states influential in the region.

### **3. Regional Power and Power Measurement**

Classification national power of countries is not a simple act of measurement. There are many different kind of variables (combination of material capability) have been used to determine state power level. According to literature, it is very difficult to explicitly and clearly reveal the differences between regional power and middle power. Wight put forward the discrepancies dominant powers, great powers and minor powers, by using two categories of states: regional great powers and middle powers. The main differences between regional great powers and middle powers are their national powers and sphere of influence (Wight 1978). Middle Powers are more powerful and influence than regional great powers.

Iran (Rathmell 1998, Ahouie 2004), Turkey (Cooper, Antkiewicz, and Shaw 2007, Müftüleri and Yüksel 1997) , and Saudi Arabia (Buzan 2004, 71) are regarded as both middle power and regional power in academic literature. Due to both their inherent potential national powers, their historical and political experiences and their ethnical and regional hinterlands, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Iran are considered as regional players in the region. These three countries are regarded as a regional power in this article. In this context, each of states national power will be determined numerically by using Ching-Lung Chang's model(Chang 2004, 7-8) in order to find out their power levels.

#### **3.1. Measurement of National Power of Iran Turkey and Saudi Arabia**

In order to understand the struggle after the power gap in the Middle East, it shall be helpful to compare the national powers amongst Iran, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia. The power measurement formula was formed using the modeling of Ching- Lung Chang. The purpose of calculating the national power is to reveal correlation between the national power of the country and its foreign policy.

**National Power** = (Critical Mass + Gross National Product + Military Expenditure) / 3.  
(Chang 2004, 7-8)

Ching- Lung Chang's model used in order to measure national power. By using this formula, national power is going to be confirmed to justify the argument. Chang's formulas are to reach a straight and certain conclusion in the reckoning of national power.

**Table 1: Values of Countries**

Countries	Military Expenditures (SIPRI 2015)	Population (Worldatlas 2014)	Size of Country (Worldatlas 2014)	GNP (GNI)
Saudi Arabia	3,990,000,000 (2013)	26,246,000 (2013)	1,960,582 (2013)	\$62,933,000 (2013)
Turkey	17,898,000,000 (2013)	72,561,312 (2013)	780,580 (2013)	\$17,898,000 (2013)
Iran	11,453,000,000 (2012)	75,078,000 (2013)	1,648,000 (2013)	\$ 11,453,000 (2012)

**Critical Mass** = (Population of Country / World Total Population) x 100 + (Size of Country/Size of World) x 100 (Chang 2004, 8).

**Economic Strength** = (Gross National Product / Gross World Product) x 200 (Chang 2004)

**Table 2: Values of World**

Year	Military Expenditures (SIPRI 2014)	Population	Area	GWP (WorldBank 2014)
2015	1,776,000,000,000	7,230,452,409	510,072,000	75,592,000,000,000 (2013)

"GNI (formerly GNP) is the sum of value added by all resident producers plus any product taxes (less subsidies) not included in the valuation of output plus net receipts of primary income (compensation of employees and property income) from abroad. Data are in current U.S. dollars (WorldBank 2015) "

**Military Strength** = (Military Expenditure of Country / Military Expenditure of World Total) x 200 (Chang 2004)

**Table 3: National Power**

Countries	Critical Mass	Economic Strength	Military Strength	National Power
<b>Saudi Arabia</b>	0,746	1,665	0,449	2,860
<b>Turkey</b>	1,018	4,735	2,015	7,768
<b>Iran</b>	1,361	3,030	1,289	5,680

This model takes into account the widely used tangible factors of national power. Critical Mass, Economic Strength, and Military Strength are equally weighted. According to Chang's formula, after the indicators were applied, the countries critical mass, military and economic strength were designated. The national power of Iran 5, 6 is stays between Turkey and Saudi Arabia. The national power of Turkey 7, 7 is around 3 times bigger than the national power of Saudi Arabia because the economic capacity, military strength and size of Turkey surpass that of Saudi Arabia's. However the national power of Turkey and Iran does not have a huge difference.

Turkey's foreign policy activism in the Middle East seems to proactive and effective until 2010. After Arab Uprising mentioned criteria by Flames such as possession of the necessary power resources, the claim to leadership, employment of successful foreign policy strategies, and acceptance of leadership role by other states in the region have been used regional powers in Middle East. All of three states have these criteria. But, role of Turkey has diminished and destroyed regional power in recent years due to its weaseling foreign policy (Flemes 2007).

A powerful state characteristically possesses economic, military, diplomatic, and cultural strength, which may cause other weaker countries to consider the opinions of great powers before taking actions of their own (Louden 2010, 187). Weak states have ability to control their own region. These three states relation is not alike weak and strong state. While Turkey and Iran are assessed in the regional power status, Saudi Arabia is also considered regional power with its economic incomes due to the rich oil fields because of its alliances it formed both within and outside the region. The strength and unpredictability of the power struggle amongst these countries seems to arise from the closeness of their national powers to each other and their alliances against each other. Also, it is a fact that each country has a different formula for the regional problems. Combinations of the fact that the national powers of the regional powers in the Middle East are close to each other and their conflicts of interest with the out-of-region powers made it harder to establish domination in the region and also power situation increases the power struggle in the region. Especially the closeness of the powers of Iran and Turkey, interventions at systemic level, and cross-alliance relations cause the non-emergence of a hegemonic

regional power. This causes chaos, power struggles, ethnic-religious separation, and instability. This also causes changes in the policies of Turkey regarding to this area.

#### **4. Systemic Level of Analysis: Cooperation with Systemic Actors**

The influence of the regional players after the Arab Spring varies depending on how consistent relations they have established with the global players. Especially the collaborations that Saudi Arabia and Iran established with global players differ from the collaborations of Turkey. Even though it seems as if Turkey moves with the western block, the west is not a very reliable partner for Turkey. It seems difficult that Turkey, as a medium-sized country, (Jordaan 2003, 170) can create policies on its own in this region having a global power struggle. This has turned into a struggle between the regional powers with unpredictable consequences and effects.

The foreign policy of Turkey mainly on the Middle East started discussions on axis shift and the relations between Turkey and the global powers such as USA, United Nations, or European Union began to be questioned. The breaking point in this issue was that Turkey used a nay vote for the resolution regarding sections of Iran for nuclear program at the United Nations Security Council (Duran and Özdemir 2012, 181). The conduct of Turkey favoring Iran became an indicator that Turkey was not acting fully together with the western block and the facts that Turkey developed a self-ordained attitude and that it did not take into account great power that is the central player of the system when establishing its alliances led to the questioning of Turkey's reliability in the international arena and to the deadlock of the policies it produced as a result of its alienation in the Middle East due to its ignoring the international balances.

The rivalries in the Middle East caused by the changes suggest that a strategic power struggle area is formed. America-based, single-pole world order has been significantly worn out, the geopolitical pressures of the newly-rising powers related to the system have started to increase, and thus the demand for the system to evolve towards multi-polarity has increased. But the global power struggle in the Middle East continues over two poles in spite of the multi-polarity. It was observed that Russia, China and Iran formed ever-present alliances against the Western Block and the problems in the Middle East became more complicated because of the dispute of the systemic blocks on the region and issues, especially on the Syria issue.

Turkey's policy on Middle East in general was squeezed amongst the strategies, which were implemented globally and shaped by the global powers throughout the years, and drawn into an unmanageable condition. Moreover, at a ground that is so variable and where new alliances and adversities may occur at any new step, preferring rigid and unyielding discourse instead of a flexible discourse for Middle East. Syria and al-Assad means the inhibition of Turkey's ability to change policies by its own hand. Also, it was subjected to radical evolutions at the action level against the strategies of the leading players of the international system in spite of all its unyielding discourses. This is a best

exemplified by the fact that the mutual trade between Turkey and Israel increased by 50 percent and exceeded 5 billion 600 million dollars in 2014 compared to 2009, based on the data of the Turkish Statistical Institute (TÜİK), after the challenging Israel in the "one-minute" crisis (TÜİK 2014) and by the paradox where it brought itself to the verge of war with Arabs in the Syria crisis.

In 2016, the solution seems as a deadlock for both systemic block and the power balances appear to be in agreement on Middle East (Syria). The situation of Turkey in this web of complex relations is rather to act unilaterally individually without taking into account its capacity. With the changeover of the USA to a multi-partied foreign policy and the starting a policy mainly based on the neighbors of Turkey, fluctuations began to increase in the relations between the USA and Turkey. Many disputes and oppositions are experienced with the USA on various issues. Oppositions have been experienced on issues such as Iran, Palestine, Libya, Ayn al-Arab (Kobane) and dissidences continue on these issues. Therefore, the US Congress, government, public, and media have drawn themselves to a more cautious and careful line in the relations with Turkey. The US Congress has not approved weapon sales to Turkey (SAE 2011).

In general, while the Eastern block chose a position in favor of status quo in the region, both blocks displayed different attitudes to the Libyan and Syrian crisis showed the limits of Turkey's autonomous (Sumer 2009, 23) foreign policy. While the Syria issue is almost just a Syria issue for Turkey, it manifests itself as one of the important pieces of global strategy first for the USA, and then Russia and China, the leading players of the international system. These three countries attempt to take the steps in their territorial interest together through handling economy and security together when revealing their new strategies related especially to the Asia-Pacific line. Also, they support these steps not with hasty policies, but with policies that are spread over time, sometimes competitive and sometimes collaborative. When the issue is observed in this context, it is obvious that new alliances and competition environments may be formed. For instance, the improvement in the USA-Iran relation observed after Rouhani or the nuclear agreement between the USA and Iran in April 2015 (Stone 2015) may be perceived as a manifestation of this argument.

## **5. Regional Level of Analysis**

The struggle for the influence domains is the influence struggle of two power blocks guided by the principle of supporting the enemy of one's enemy with each decision made so that the competitor does not gain an advantage; that is, a strategic war alternating between a resemblance of cold war and hot war. With this point of view, Saudi Arabia suppresses the Shiite protest movements so that Bahrain and Yemen where the Sunnite monarchy reigns do not fall under the influence of Iran. Similarly, Iran provides support to the Assad regime (Mohns and Bank 2012) and prevents it from being seized by Sunnite groups in order to protect Syria as a significant ally in the region.

Although the power struggle in the Middle East after the Arab Spring has global, regional and sub-state aspects, this article shall address the systemic (global power struggle) and regional (Iran - Turkey - Saudi Arabia) aspects. Turkey attempted to develop a regional order via close integration with the Middle East until the Arab Spring. The power gap arising with the withdrawal of the USA from the region turned into a power struggle amongst the regional players.

Power struggles occurred in the region with regards to who would fill the power gap created after withdrawal of the USA. Especially Turkey, Iran, and Saudi Arabia entered into tensioned relations at certain times and into alliances at other times in order to achieve balance in the region. Actually when consider of national power of countries (Iran Turkey, Saudi Arabia), Turkey certainly the superior power compared to other two countries. Therefore effective policy of Turkish is expected in this situation.

Iran conciliates a major sphere of influence by dominating from Afghanistan to the Mediterranean Sea. Arabian Peninsula has seen as a Lebensraum since Shah Regime. Assad government in Syria, Hezbollah in Lebanon and the success of a pro-Iranian government in Iraq would create that Iranian sphere of influence in the region. Iran is an influential and significant power in Syria, Iraq, and Lebanon. They provide a critical and effective support to the Assad government in Syria. Iran plays a key role in Iraq (Rahimi 2012), including support for the Shiite militia. The reign of Iran in Lebanon is directed over Hezbollah (Norton 2014). On the other hand, the support of Iran to Hamas, the dominant movement in Gaza, continues. Also, the fact that Bahrain and Yemen entered a hegemony struggle with Saudi Arabia in the Gulf Region is a reference to Iran's being an effective regional power in the region. Iran and Saudi Arabia, or the Gulf countries, appear to be the two powers that support the sectarian struggles in the Middle East.

However, Iran is not alone in using its influence and reinforcing its alliances in the region. Saudi Arabia also looks out for its interests. There is a close relationship between Saudi Arabia and Egypt. Egypt is one of the countries that make the most out of Saudi Arabia's aids. Egypt had undertaken an important role in the formation of a new military power in the region after the events in Yemen. This new power intended to oppose the influence of Iran. The numbers of the points where the interests of Egypt and Saudi Arabia coincide are numerous in the region. The capture of Idlib by opponent forces has been the first defeat of the Assad regime in the recent months. Iran-Saudi Arabia confrontation is made over Syria. It is a fact that Saudi Arabia operates closely with Turkey to protect their mutual interests in the region. Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states started to follow a strict policy against Iran. The five countries that are the members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) - except for Oman - supported this ten-sided coalition. Saudi Arabia led the way. The fact that Turkey shall take part in the Sunnite block has been made apparent with its holding Iran responsible for the events in Yemen.

## 6. Capacity Discrepancy and Foreign Policy of Turkey

Turkish foreign policy during and after Arab Spring, inconsistency, and its keeping the national interests in the background reflects its qualifications in establishing a foreign policy dependent on the Western global powers and strategies based on external dynamics. The facts that Turkey did not respond rapidly to the events arising in Libya and that it made critics after studying the developments better are shown as the basis for such a criticism. Turkey try to protect status quo till latest time. This action caused examined trustworthiness of Turkey by West block. It shall be a more realistic perspective to explain Turkey's insight underlying its attitude towards Libyan Arab Spring, which it exhibited rather than highlighting the identity search of the Libyan people as a friendly and brotherly people, showing respect to human rights, democracy, fundamental rights and freedoms in the constructivist context or rather than developing policies in the mutual trade interest and a neoliberal approach,(Akbaş and Düzgün, 57) by a unilateral interest relationship. Because Turkey made very strong economic integration with Libya over \$10 billion USD and around 25,000 Turkish citizens were working in the country (Cornell 2012, 21). The situation in Libya was a clear indication that Turkey failed to read correctly the international balances and the conjecture in the region when taking steps regarding Libya. At first, Turkey took steps to protect the status quo in order to protect its investments, but its capacity was not sufficient to maintain this situation, so it changes its attitude and positioned itself near NATO in Libya.

It is possible to say that Turkey failed to achieve a result in its attempts to overthrow Assad in Syria, that the tension in the relations with the military regime, which overthrew Morsi, the candidate of the Muslim Brothers, and still has the power in Egypt, reached to a significant dimension when they demanded the Turkish Ambassador to leave the country and Turkey responded by declaring the Egyptian Ambassador persona non grata, that the relations with Israel could not be normalized in spite of the efforts by the USA, that there is a coldness in the relationship with Iran because of both Turkey Kürecik and Syria policies, that there is a stagnancy in Turkey relations with Palestine Government (FLO) due to Hamas to put it mildly, and that the relations with the Gulf countries are distant because of the support provided to the Muslim Brotherhood. Firing upon the Turkish vessel by Libya and the warning of Turkey by Tunisia regarding not providing support to opposing groups indicate that Turkey has problems with these countries, too.

It seems that the ability of semi-peripheral states like Turkey to act as a medium-sized countries in the international system depends on their ability to read the fundamental rules of the international system properly and to correctly analyze the boundaries drawn by these rules. However, Turkish policy makers faced a major dilemma with the onset of the Arab revolutions. Turkey took the side of the streets (prodemocracy) against the authoritarian regimes but not in every country. On the one hand, giving support the existing regimes such as Libya, Yemen, Bahrain, on the other hand, Turkey chose to

support Sunni rebels in Syria, Egypt (lack of Turkish investment in Egypt also made the choice easier. Some have seen this as Turkish empathy for the dominant opposition, Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood (Tocci 2011, 1), Tunisia by providing active support for popular resistance to the established regimes, but not the Shiite protesters in Bahrain, exposed Erdogan to suspicion that he was pursuing a sectarian strategy, backed by Western interests. Relations with Iraq's Shiite-led government deteriorated. This is an ethics versus interest dilemma that induce take a reaction of other countries.

There are deadlocks in Turkey's foreign policy. According to Öniş, the era of the Arab Springs has showed is not only Turkey's capacity to play a grand leadership role, but also the inherent adaptability, Turkey's economic and diplomatic capacity and pragmatism (Öniş 2014) of Turkish foreign policy. The attempts of Turkey surpassing its powers and its alienation in Libya, Egypt and Syria are related to its not acting in coordination with the global power balances. The problems suffered by Turkey with regards to overcoming its issues necessitate the questioning of the correlation between its foreign policy and its capacity. Turkey can develop a maneuvering area in the Middle East by avoiding a low-profile foreign policy and an intentionally-exaggerated interventionist attitude in awareness of the lower limits of its capacity.

The fact that Turkey was unsuccessful and alienated in its Egypt and Syria policies when racing to the leadership of Muslim countries and attempting a Sunnite axis in the Middle East caused Saudi Arabia to step forward. Having implemented a Sunnite axis policy against the Shiite Iran since forever, Saudi Arabia used the internal political crisis in Yemen as an excuse to accelerate this policy. Turkey has joined to Saudi Arabia's policy in Bahrain, Syria, Egypt, and Yemen. Regional interests of Turkey and Saudi Arabia are similar: the two sides will continue to disagree about political Islam even as their policies on Syria, Yemen, and Bahrain. This situation shows Turkey instead of produce distinctive policy according to its dynamics, however involve with Saudi Arabia's policy in the region. There seems to be an inconsistency in the policy implemented by Turkey for the countries in the Middle East. While Turkey followed a pro-street policy in order for the demands of the people on the streets to be realized with an emphasis on democracy in Egypt, Syria and Tunisia, it positioned its foreign policy regarding Libya upon the preservation of status quo because of economic concerns, but perceived the same democratization demands in Bahrain and Yemen as sectarian struggle and the widening of the power area by Iran and generated policies to preserve the status quo in these countries.

The desires of Turkey in the Middle East do not realized; moreover, the maneuvering area and capacity of Turkey are minimized against such problems. Also, the gap between the rhetoric and reality widens in the Turkey; almost reaches a non-compensable distance. While Turkey's foreign policy was active and its multi-dimensional quality was a reality between the years 2002-2010, today it consists of just rhetoric, talks, and intentions. Turkish foreign policy in the region is high on rhetoric and low on

actions (Salem 2011, 2). Turkey approached the Arab Spring, especially the Syria issue, with regards to discourse and conduct, in way that had forgotten and abandoned the multi-sidedness and EU membership anchors that had made significant contributions in the last decade. AKP government has over-engaged itself that caused instability in Syria. Instead, it substituted these with single-sidedness as conduct and with strong-active state thought as discourse. This preference was erroneous and caused a foreign policy appearance that was active at the rhetorical level but deadlocked and withdrawn at the reality level. Yesterday there was a Turkey reality that was standing tall in the western and the EU while opening up to the East; today, Turkey face an AKP appearance that wants to act individually and ignores the EU.

The crisis caused by the Arab Spring in the Middle East and identity-focused adversity players started a distrust era that is a candidate for destroying nation-state borders and sovereignty. This put Turkish foreign policy under pressure. Especially, it was observed that a policy like zero problems with neighbors was politically unsuccessful when a transformation was taking in the region due to what happened in Syria after the Arab Spring and to the attitude of the al-Assad government. Turkey foreign policy regarding Syria -supporting opponent groups and solution without Assad- crashed after entry of Russia in the region because the attitude of Russia is exactly the opposite way of Turkey.

## **7. Conclusion**

There is a correlation between the national power and foreign policy of a country and the countries with strong national power create more effective policies; however, even though it is expected for Turkey, one of the effective power centers in the region, to increase its influence in the region when its national power is considered, its inconsistent behaviors and policies based on the domestic policy it established in the global and regional sense caused Turkey to lose its influence in the region to Iran and Saudi Arabia.

Turkey developed regional policies ignoring the systemic and regional balances throughout the Middle East. When acting in collaboration with Iran and Saudi Arabia, the regional powers, Turkey formed a complete alliance with neither the Western nor the Eastern blocks, failed to perform the requirements of the existing alliances, acted taking initiatives much greater than its capacity, and became isolated. Therefore, Turkey's influence and political efficacy on the region after the Arab Spring remained behind Iran and Saudi Arabia although its national power was greater than Iran and Saudi Arabia. Iran conciliates a major sphere of influence by dominating to Middle East rather than other regional actors. The Shiite Hezbollah structuring in Iraq (the Shiite structuring in the body of the state and the support of the Shiite militia), Syria (the Assad government and the fighters in Syria), and Lebanon on one hand and its support to Hamas dominating in Gaza on the other- , its influence on the Shiite current in Bahrain and Yemen in the Gulf area makes itself felt throughout the Middle East.

Turkey must comprehend its limits as regional power in developing autonomous policies and the weaknesses of the regional mechanisms in order to create regional-based solutions because such developments in the Middle East should be seen as a reflection of the disputes amongst the systemic players on the region rather than inter-state and inter-regional issues. Turkey does not have the power to achieve the results that powerful states. Turkey cannot solve these issues in Middle East alone with autonomous policies, without the support of the global actors such as U.S. and the NATO.

## References

- Ahouie, Mahdi. 2004. "The Middle East Peace Process from the Perspective of Revolutionary Iran: Will Tehran Ever Take Part?" *Iran Analysis Quarterly* 1 (4).
- Akbaş, Zafer, and Zeynep Arslan Düzgün. Libya? daki Arap Baharı? na Yönelik Türk Dış Politikasına Konstrüktivist Bir Yaklaşım, *Ekonomik ve Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi*, Güz 2012, Cilt: 8, Yıl: 8, Sayı: 2, 8: 57-81.
- Buzan, Barry. 2004. *The United States and the great powers: world politics in the twenty-first century*. Polity.
- Chang, Chin-Lung. 2004. "A Measure of National Power." an international seminar at the National University of Malaysia.
- Cooper, Andrew F, Agata Antkiewicz, and Timothy M Shaw. 2007. "Lessons from/for BRICSAM about South–North relations at the start of the 21st century: economic size trumps all else?" *International Studies Review* 9 (4):673-689.
- Cornell, Svante E. 2012. "What drives Turkish foreign policy?" *Middle East Quarterly*.
- Duran, Hasan, and Çağatay Özdemir. 2012. "Türk Dış Politikasına Yansımalarıyla Arap Baharı." *Akademik İncelemeler Dergisi* 7 (2).
- Flemes, Daniel. 2007. "Conceptualising regional power in international relations: Lessons from the South African case." *GIGA Working Paper* 53.
- Gause, Gregory. 2014. "Beyond Sectarianism: The New Middle East Cold War." *The Brookings Doha Center* (11).
- Gonzalez, Nathan. 2013. *The Sunni-Shia Conflict: Understanding Sectarian Violence in the Middle East*. Nortia Media Ltd.
- Jordaan, Eduard. 2003. "The concept of a middle power in international relations: distinguishing between emerging and traditional middle powers." *Politikon* 30 (1):165-181.
- Khatib, Lina. 2012. *Image politics in the Middle East: The role of the visual in political struggle*: IB Tauris.
- Louden, Robert. 2010. *The world we want: how and why the ideals of the Enlightenment still elude us*: Oxford University Press.
- Mohns, Erik, and André Bank. 2012. "Syrian Revolt Fallout: End of the Resistance Axis?" *Middle East Policy* 19 (3):25-35.
- Müftüler, Meltem, and Müberra Yüksel. 1997. "Turkey: A Middle Power in the New Order." *Niche Diplomacy—Middle Powers After the Cold War*. Macmillan Press Ltd.: Basingstoke:184-196.
- Norton, Augustus Richard. 2014. *Hezbollah: A Short History*: Princeton University Press.
- Öniş, Ziya. 2014. "Turkey and the Arab revolutions: boundaries of regional power influence in a turbulent Middle East." *Mediterranean Politics* 19 (2):203-219.
- Rahimi, Babak. 2012. "Iran's Declining Influence in Iraq." *The Washington Quarterly* 35 (1):25-40.

- Rathmell, A. 1998. "Anoushiravan Ehteshami and Raymond A. Hinnebusch, Syria and Iran: Middle Powers in a Penetrated Regional System." *BRITISH JOURNAL OF MIDDLE EASTERN STUDIES* 25:177-177.
- SAE. 2011. "Türk Dış Politikasında Sorunsuz Alan Kaldı mı?". *Stratejik Araştırmalar Enstitüsü* Accessed 20.05.2015. [http://www.turksae.com/sql\\_file/384.pdf](http://www.turksae.com/sql_file/384.pdf).
- Salem, Paul. 2011. "Turkey's image in the Arab world." *TESEV Foreign Policy Programme Report*.
- Stone, Richard. 2015. "Iran deal would transform its nuclear infrastructure." *Science* 348 (6231):164-165.
- Sumer, Fahrettin. 2009. "Turkey, a Special EU Neighbour Patiently Awaiting a "Promised Marriage"." *Europe and the Neighbourhood* 7:124.
- Tocci, Nathalie. 2011. *Turkey and the Arab Spring: Implications for Turkish Foreign Policy from a Transatlantic Perspective: German Marshall Fund of the United States*.
- TÜİK. 2014. "Türkiye-İsrail Ticaret Hacmi." <http://www.byegm.gov.tr/turkce/haber/turkiye-ile-israil-arasinda-ticari-iliskiler-artti/76030>.
- Wight, Martin. 1978. "Power Politics, edited by Hedley Bull and Carsten Holbraad." *London: Royal Institute of International Affairs*.
- WorldBank. 2015. "Gross National Income." WorldBank Accessed 1 May 2015. [http://www.google.com/publicdata/explore?ds=d5bncppjof8f9\\_#!ctype=l&strail=false&bcs=d&nselm=h&met\\_y=ny\\_gnp\\_mktp\\_cd&scale\\_y=lin&ind\\_y=false&rdim=country&idim=country:TUR:SAU:IRN&ifdim=country&tstart=1240347600000&tend=1366578000000&hl=en\\_US&dl=en\\_US&ind=false](http://www.google.com/publicdata/explore?ds=d5bncppjof8f9_#!ctype=l&strail=false&bcs=d&nselm=h&met_y=ny_gnp_mktp_cd&scale_y=lin&ind_y=false&rdim=country&idim=country:TUR:SAU:IRN&ifdim=country&tstart=1240347600000&tend=1366578000000&hl=en_US&dl=en_US&ind=false).