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# All Azimuth

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## In This Issue

In this issue of *All Azimuth* we lead off with two research articles. The first of these, by Çiğdem Kentmen, looks at the topic of public attitudes towards European Union (EU) membership, and explores whether patterns and trends experienced in East European countries' post-communist transition periods can help explain what has happened in the Turkish case. Using Turkish statistics from 2002-2003, she finds that in both the Turkish and East European cases satisfaction with economic circumstances directly correlated with increased pro-EU attitudes, while in Turkey and many of the East European countries there appeared no connection between satisfaction with the democratic system and increased pro-EU attitudes.

Çağdaş Üngör's research article examines the role of the media in Turkish-Chinese foreign relations in the mid-20th century, specifically looking at the role of Radio Peking's Turkish language section, which, beginning in 1957, began broadcasting the young Socialist Republic's worldview to Turkish-speaking audiences abroad. Pre-dating official Turkish-Chinese relations, Üngör argues that these broadcasts constituted an important part of Cold War era relations between the two nations. Based on interviews and Chinese documentation, Üngör explores an approximately 20 year period (1957-1976) and discusses how the broadcasts continued despite considerable technical and administrative challenges.

The next three pieces in this issue of the journal are all commentaries on various critical issues in the broader Middle East. The first of these is Mark Almond's attempt to provide an interim assessment of the "Arab Spring", and to explore whether and, if so, how, this current phenomenon fits into broader patterns of major upheaval and change dating back to the time of the French Revolution. To those who would question the feasibility of comparing patterns of change in such vastly different contexts, Almond pointedly asks how, without making comparisons that reveal those very differences, can we identify things that are "actually unique" and separate them from what is "falsely assumed to be peculiar to a particular culture?" In the analysis that follows he points to, among other things, the important future test the region will provide for Democratic Peace Theory and to the changing role of foreign intervention, before concluding with preliminary thoughts on future developments.

The second of the commentaries is Onur Gökçe's examination of past, present, and future Turkish-Israeli relations, and the particular domestic and international events that have affected those relations over the last 60 years. He points out commonalities and differences between the two countries, and explores the important question of how relations can be improved in the current era of regional restructuring and changing power balances.

The final commentary in this issue comes from Carlo Masala and Ivo Hlaváček in their discussion of nuclear deterrence in the Middle East and the possibilities for its success in light of Iran's nuclear military capability. Their article begins with a defining and conceptual clarification of what 'extended deterrence' is and under what conditions it can succeed. The European and Asian models of extended deterrence are presented, and the question is asked whether either of these might be applied in the case of the Middle East. Neither model is shown to be viable, and the article ends therefore with exploring alternative options for how extended deterrence may be introduced.

The final piece in this issue of *All Azimuth* is an essay by Eyüp Ersoy, in which the author reviews three current books and critically examines their respective contributions to the debate on the role and place of religion in international relations. In addition to his

presentation of the books' main arguments and his critiques of their relative analytical strengths and shortcomings, Ersoy seeks to show how each one ties in with his own argument that a balanced relationship between the religious and the political in international relations is unlikely to be achieved, and that, rather, it will always remain asymmetrical.

## Comparing Individual Attitudes about EU Membership in Turkey and in Post-Communist Central and Eastern European Countries

Çiğdem Kentmen

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### Abstract

*This article examines whether theories previously developed to explain variations in individual attitudes toward European Union (EU) membership in post-communist Central and Eastern European countries (CEECs) also explain attitudes in Turkey. In CEECs, attitudes reflect whether individuals feel they win or lose in economic and democratic transitions. Although Turkey did not experience a transition from communism to liberal democracy, its political and economic spheres have nevertheless changed to meet EU membership conditions. Using 2002.2 and 2003.2 Eurobarometers, I found that, while satisfaction with economic circumstances significantly increased pro-EU attitudes, satisfaction with the democratic system did not increase pro-EU attitudes in Turkey and many CEECs.*

**Keywords:** Public opinion, EU membership, Turkey, Central and Eastern Europe.

### 1. Introduction

The existing literature on public support for the European Union (EU) has generally focused on two groups of countries. The first group includes Western European member states. For example, the Norwegian referenda in 1972 and 1994, in which the electorate rejected Norway's accession, and the Danish 1992 referendum, in which the electorate voted against the Maastricht Treaty, prompted scholarly interest in the determinants of support for integration with Western Europe.<sup>1</sup> The second group includes Central and Eastern European countries (CEECs)<sup>2</sup> where public approval for EU membership was required to complete the accession process. This group provides an interesting case because, unlike the Western European member states, these countries were experiencing a transition from an authoritarian communist system to a democracy and market economy. These changes had an important influence on individual attitudes towards EU membership. The CEECs also provided an opportunity for public opinion scholars to test whether they could generalize theories explaining variation in individual opinion in Western European countries to post-communist Europe.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See Adam P. Brinegar and Seth K. Jolly, "Location, Location, Location: National Contextual Factors and Public Support for European Integration," *European Union Politics* 6 (2005); Richard Eichenberg and Russell J. Dalton, "Europeans and the European Community: The Dynamics of Public Support for European Integration," *International Organization* 47 (1993); Mark Franklin, Michael Marsh and Lauren McLaren, "Uncorking the Bottle? Popular Opposition to European Unification in the Wake of the Maastricht Treaty," *Journal of Common Market Studies* 32 (1994).

<sup>2</sup> This group of countries includes Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.

<sup>3</sup> See Rachel A. Cichowski, "Western Dreams, Eastern Realities: Support for the European Union in Central and Eastern

Although Turkey has been a candidate country since 1999, the existing literature has generally failed to identify the dynamics of citizen support for Turkey's accession to the EU. There are few studies providing empirical evidence on public opinion on the EU in Turkey, and none of these studies compares whether the factors explaining attitudes in Turkey are the same as in other candidate countries.<sup>4</sup> This study is the first to compare the determinants of EU attitudes in Turkey and the CEECs.

The study tests two types of theories within the context of Turkey and the CEECs: utilitarian theories and democratic support theory. Utilitarian theories argue that citizens who benefited from an economic transition from a communist system to a liberal economy would support their country's EU membership.<sup>5</sup> The underlying assumption is that those individuals would hold the EU responsible for beneficial economic changes. Democratic support theory applies a similar logic. Those who are satisfied with how democracy works after the collapse of the communist system would support EU succession for two reasons: first, EU membership conditions help build a democratic system, and second, EU membership guarantees that these countries will never return to an authoritarian system. Thus, citizens would again hold the EU responsible for how democracy works in their country.<sup>6</sup>

The analyses presented here reveal that attitudes in Turkey do not differ substantially from those in the CEECs. Beneficiaries of economic changes support EU membership in all countries concerned. More specifically, individuals' evaluations of the EU's impact on national economies have the largest impact on support for EU membership across all countries: those who are content with their current personal economic situation and future prospects are also likely to support EU accession. In contrast, in Turkey, Hungary, Poland and Romania there was no significant effect of satisfaction with democracy on individual attitudes toward EU membership. In other words, the argument that winning from democratization leads to pro-EU attitudes is not supported in these CEECs or in Turkey.

## 2. Winners and Losers in Economic Reforms

Public opinion research has identified utilitarian calculations as an important factor in explaining individual attitudes toward EU membership. Existing research suggests that individuals evaluate their country's accession to the EU on the basis of the economic benefits they would gain from membership.<sup>7</sup> It is reasonable to focus on utilitarian calculations because of the impact of the EU's Economic and Monetary Union on national economies and the daily life of EU citizens. The EU has eliminated borders, established free movement of capital, goods and services among most member states and created a common currency and a common central bank. Utilitarian theory suggests that if the benefits of these developments exceed the costs then citizens will have positive attitudes toward the EU.

Europe," *Comparative Political Studies* 33 (2000); Pat Lyons, "It's the Economy, Stupid: Popular Support for EU Accession in the Czech Republic," *Sociologický časopis - Czech Sociological Review* 43 (2007); Joshua A. Tucker, Alexander C. Pacek and Adam J. Berinsky, "Transitional Winners and Losers: Attitudes toward EU Membership in Post-Communist Countries," *American Journal of Political Science* 46 (2002).

<sup>4</sup> Ali Çarkoğlu, "Who Wants Full Membership? Characteristics of Turkish Public Support for EU Membership," *Turkish Studies* 4 (2003); Çiğdem Kentmen, "Determinants of Support for EU Membership in Turkey: Islamic Attachments, Utilitarian Calculations and National Identity," *European Union Politics* 9 (2008).

<sup>5</sup> Tucker, Pacek and Berinsky, "Transitional Winners and Losers," 558-559.

<sup>6</sup> Cichowski, "Western Dreams," 149-1250.

<sup>7</sup> Liesbet Hooghe and Gary Marks, "Does Identity or Economic Rationality Drive Public Opinion on European Integration?" *PS: Political Science & Politics* 37 (2004): 415-416; Matthew J. Gabel, "Economic Integration and Mass Politics: Market Liberalization and Public Attitudes in the European Union," *American Journal of Political Science* 42 (1998): 939-941.



The costs and/or benefits can be related either to the sociotropic national economy or to the personal pocketbook economy. Explanations regarding the national economy posit that individuals will support integration if it positively affects national economic indicators such as GDP, inflation or employment. Individuals' subjective evaluations of how the EU affects national economic conditions also shape their attitudes toward the EU: those who are satisfied with how the economy works in general are more likely to support the EU. Explanations regarding the pocketbook economy state that individual attitudes depend on how EU membership alters their personal economic conditions and opportunities: if they are content with their economic prospects, they will support EU membership.<sup>8</sup>

Models of sociotropic utilitarian calculations were successfully tested on data from Western European member states. Eichenberg and Dalton showed that inflation rate was negatively associated with support for the European Community (EC). This result implied that the impact of the EC's economic instruments, "such as VAT [Value Added Tax] financing of revenues, regulation of agricultural prices through the common agricultural policy (CAP), and especially the European Monetary System (EMS)" affected prices and consequently the economic cost-benefit analysis of individuals.<sup>9</sup> More recent studies have focused on individuals' perceptions of the impact of the EU on national economic conditions and how this influences their opinions about the EU. For example, Karp and Bowler found that those who are not satisfied with their country's economic circumstances were against the enlargement and deepening of the EU.<sup>10</sup>

Models of the personal pocketbook economy, on the other hand, found only mixed support in the Western European context. Scholars had claimed that individuals' expectations about the economic benefits of the EU would vary with their human capital. Individuals with higher occupational skills, education and income level would have the human capital to adapt themselves to the free movement of financial capital, goods and services. Thus, they would benefit more from European integration and so would have higher support for EU membership. Gabel did find that those with the most education and skills and the highest income levels expressed more support for the EU than others in Western European member states;<sup>11</sup> however, examining 2002 survey data from Denmark and the Netherlands, De Vreese and Boomgaarden found that occupational status did not have any significant impact on attitudes toward European integration.<sup>12</sup> These mixed results might have been due to these studies ignoring "the redistributive, protectionist, and social-democratic commitments of the European Union".<sup>13</sup> These commitments mean that, through the Structural and Cohesion Funds and the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), less-developed regions and the economic sectors adversely affected by the removal of barriers receive EU support. These benefits distort the negative effects of freedom of movement on disadvantaged occupational groups,

<sup>8</sup> Gabel, "Economic Integration," 939-941; Matthew J. Gabel and Guy D. Whitten, "Economic Conditions, Economic Perceptions, and Public Support for European Integration," *Political Behavior* 19 (1997): 82-85.

<sup>9</sup> Eichenberg and Dalton, "Europeans and the European Community," 522.

<sup>10</sup> Jeffrey A. Karp and Shaun Bowler, "Broadening and Deepening or Broadening versus Deepening: The Question of Enlargement and Europe's Hesitant Europeans," *European Journal of Political Research* 45 (2006): 381-386.

<sup>11</sup> Gabel, "Economic Integration and Mass Politics," 947-948.

<sup>12</sup> Claes H. De Vreese and Hajo G. Boomgaarden, "Projecting EU Referendums: Fear of Immigration for European Integration," *European Union Politics* 6 (2005): 70.

<sup>13</sup> Piret Ehin, "Determinants of Public Support for EU Membership: Data from the Baltic Countries," *European Journal of Political Research* 40 (2001): 37.

which in turn reduce the expected effect of human capital on attitudes toward the EU.<sup>14</sup>

The overall success of economic stimuli in explaining European attitudes within member states has led scholars to test utilitarian models in the CEECs. These studies hypothesize that post-communist CEEC citizens will also evaluate the EU by its impact on their personal financial situation and their country's economy. In particular, the membership conditions imposed on CEECs by the EU prevent any return to a planned economy. Those citizens who benefit from this transformation will be the winners of integration and thus will support EU membership.<sup>15</sup> Scholars also emphasize that financial assistance through the EU's Structural and Cohesion Funds and interventionist social policies in the CEECs will affect individual economic cost-benefit analyses. Those who think they will gain more from accession will be more likely to support EU membership. For ten post-communist candidate countries, Tucker et al. tested whether winners of integration have positive attitudes about joining the EU. Their results revealed that winners of the transition supported EU membership, while losers opposed such membership.<sup>16</sup>

Turkey provides us with an opportunity to evaluate how individuals evaluate the economic benefits of accession to the EU in a candidate country that has neither a communist background nor a capitalist tradition akin to Western European countries. I expect citizen attitudes toward the EU to be shaped by the EU's impact on national and individual prosperity, as in Western and CEE countries. Experiences with the Customs Union, accession negotiations, economic reforms and expectations about accession should shape the individuals' cost-benefit calculations.

Turkey's economic relations with the EU started shortly after the original six members set up the European Economic Community (EEC). Turkey applied for associate partnership in 1959 and signed the related agreement with the EEC in 1963. The goal was to gradually create a customs union between Turkey and the EEC; however, the Associate Agreement did not immediately affect economic conditions in Turkey because it did not abolish tariff and non-tariff barriers as foreseen. Instead, in order to achieve large-scale industrialization, Turkey protected its domestic industry with tariffs and quotas until the 1980s.<sup>17</sup> During the 1980s, Turkey attempted to liberalize its trade regime, yet, to accommodate the wants of their industrial and agricultural supporters, clientelist government parties failed to relinquish control over the market. Instead, successive governments provided these groups with "export incentives, tax breaks, and credits" to gain their electoral support.<sup>18</sup>

The EU's economic impact on Turkey was largely felt after 1996, when Turkey and the EU set up a customs union. As a result of the Customs Union Agreement, Turkey and the EU abolished tariff and non-tariff barriers between each other, and Turkey adopted the EU's Common External Tariff applied to third countries. The agreement also included the "harmonization of technical legislation, the abolishment of monopolies and the protection of intellectual property, [...] the mutual opening of the public procurement markets,

<sup>14</sup> Ehin, "Determinants of Public Support," 37.

<sup>15</sup> Thomas Christin, "Economic and Political Basis of Attitudes towards the EU in Central and East European Countries in the 1990s," *European Union Politics* 6 (2005): 35-36; Tucker et al., "Transitional Winners and Losers: Attitudes toward EU Membership in Post-Communist Countries," 558-559.

<sup>16</sup> Tucker, Pacek and Berinsky, "Transitional Winners and Losers," 564-565.

<sup>17</sup> Sübidey Togan, "Turkey: Toward EU Accession," *World Economy* 27 (2004): 1014.

<sup>18</sup> Mine Eder, "Implementing the Economic Criteria of EU Membership: How Difficult is it for Turkey?" *Turkish Studies* 4 (2003): 224.

liberalization of trade in services, and the abolition of restrictions on the freedom of establishment".<sup>19</sup> Scholars and decision makers expected the Customs Union to promote foreign direct investment in Turkey and provide Turkey with lower-cost access to the EU market.<sup>20</sup>

Although the economic developments of the 1980s in Turkey cannot be attributed solely to its relations with the EU, the Customs Union and the EU membership application significantly reshaped Turkey's economic structure, especially after 1995.<sup>21</sup> Thus, Turkish citizens might also view the EU as responsible, to an extent, for the current state of the Turkish economy. Additionally, I expect that some individuals will consider themselves winners and some losers from current economic policies. Turkey's economy will continue to change as relations with the EU deepen, which I expect will also have an impact on individuals' utilitarian calculations. If people are content with the course of economic relations with the EU and economic conditions in Turkey, they will consider themselves winners in economic integration, as people did in the CEECs. In other words, I argue that the economic winners of accession to the EU will favor EU membership, both in Turkey and in the CEECs.

### 3. Winners and Losers from Democratic Reforms

The literature on support for EU membership suggests that citizens in CEECs will evaluate EU membership on the basis of the EU's effect on the consolidation of democracy in their country. Studies have suggested that if CEE citizens are satisfied with how democracy is working in their country, they will be supportive of EU membership. This is because they would think that their country will achieve democratic reforms to meet the standards of the EU. From a different point of view, those who are not satisfied with the quality and/or speed of the ongoing democratization process in their country might also support the idea of EU membership, as accession would facilitate deeper democratization.<sup>22</sup>

However, not everyone will perceive the EU's effect on the transition of the CEECs in a positive way. As Pridham puts it, "still fragile new democracies [undertook] a crippling overload of implementing change, involving [...] specific political conditions but also extensive tests of their 'ability to assume the obligations of membership'".<sup>23</sup> Those who were concerned about the pressure of implementing new rules will neither be supportive of how democracy works in their country nor of the EU, which pressures for such changes. There may also be some individuals who want to return to communism; they will be less supportive of EU membership because it will strengthen the consolidation of democracy. Utilizing 1996 survey data from five CEECs, Cichowski showed that attitudes about the way democracy works in each CEEC were closely associated with support for integration with the EU.<sup>24</sup>

Scholars claim that the EU has also accelerated Turkey's democratization attempts.<sup>25</sup> To satisfy membership conditions and to start accession negotiations, Turkey has passed a

<sup>19</sup> Arjuna M. Lejour and Ruud A. Mooij, "Turkish Delight: Does Turkey's Accession to the EU Bring Economic Benefits?" *Kyklos: International Review for Social Sciences* 58 (2005): 91.

<sup>20</sup> Eder, "Implementing the Economic Criteria," 228.

<sup>21</sup> Togan, "Turkey," 1016-1031.

<sup>22</sup> Cichowski, "Western Dreams, Eastern Realities," 1249-1250.

<sup>23</sup> Geoffrey Pridham, "EU Enlargement and Consolidating Democracy in Post-Communist States: Formality and Reality," *Journal of Common Market Studies* 40 (2002): 954.

<sup>24</sup> Cichowski, "Western Dreams, Eastern Realities," 1268-1269.

<sup>25</sup> Aylin Güneş and Petek Karateklioğlu, "Turkey's EU Candidacy and Civil-military Relations: Challenges and Prospects," *Armed Forces & Society* 31 (2005): 439-462; Ziya Öniş "Domestic Politics, International Norms and Challenges to the State: Turkey-EU Relations in the Post-Helsinki Era," *Turkish Studies* 4 (2003): 9-34.

series of constitutional amendments since 1995. The limitations on trade unions that prevent them from engaging in political activities were repealed (Article 52); certain categories of civil servants were given the right to form trade unions (Article 53); rules governing the formation of political parties and party membership were liberalized (Article 68) and political parties were allowed to work with organizations such as trade unions, associations, foundations and vocational institutions (Article 69). When Turkey was eventually recognized as a candidate for membership at the 1999 Helsinki Council, the EU was still urging Turkey to enhance “the right to freedom of expression”, “the right to freedom of association and peaceful assembly” and “measures to reinforce the fight against torture practices”, as well as to improve “opportunities for legal redress against all violations of human rights”, “the functioning and efficiency of the judiciary”, “the training of judges and prosecutors on European Union legislation, including in the field of human rights” and to abolish capital punishment and “provisions forbidding the use by Turkish citizens of their mother tongue in TV/radio broadcasting”.<sup>26</sup>

In 2001, Turkey announced the National Program for the Adoption of the Acquis (NPAA), in which it set out the details of the further measures it will take to comply with EU membership criteria. The short-term focus was on reviewing the regulations regarding freedom of thought and expression, torture, imprisonment, duties of the police, capital punishment, freedom of association and peaceful assembly and the functioning and effectiveness of the judiciary. In that same year, the Turkish Parliament adopted 34 constitutional amendments to meet some of Turkey’s accession partnership priorities. The highly criticized provision that banned publication in any language other than Turkish was removed (Article 28). Moreover, the amendments included an addition to Article 69, which removed the ambiguity surrounding the specification of activities that could allow a political party to be banned.<sup>27</sup>

I predict that the argument that winners from democratic transition will support the EU can explain not only attitudes in the CEECs, but also in those candidate countries such as Turkey that have not had a communist history yet are still in the consolidation stage of democracy. The EU has had an impact on democratic consolidation in Turkey, as outlined above, and thus, I expect Turkish individuals to view EU membership on the basis of its impact on how democracy works in their country.

#### 4. Data and Operationalisation of Variables

To test the two hypotheses outlined above, I evaluate how being a winner or loser in economic and democratic transitions affects support for EU membership, and include a set of control variables in the contexts of Turkey and the CEECs. To explore these relationships, I rely on the pooled survey data from the 2002.2 and 2003.2 Candidate Countries Eurobarometers.<sup>28</sup> The surveys involved 13 candidate countries<sup>29</sup>, but I excluded Cyprus and Malta because

<sup>26</sup> Council of the European Union, “Council Decision of 8 March 2001 on the Principles, Priorities, Intermediate Objectives and Conditions Contained in the Accession Partnership with the Republic of Turkey,” *Official Journal of European Communities* 235/EC (2001).

<sup>27</sup> Turkey made several other amendments to its constitution and civil law between 2002 and 2008. However, since I tested my hypotheses using data from 2002 and 2003, I do not summarize reforms after 2002.

<sup>28</sup> European Commission, Directorate-General Press & Communication, Public Opinion Analysis Sector, *Candidate Countries Eurobarometer 2002.2* (Ann Arbor: Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research, 2002); European Commission, Directorate-General Press & Communication, Public Opinion Analysis Sector, *Candidate Countries Eurobarometer 2003.2* (Ann Arbor: Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research, 2003).

<sup>29</sup> These are Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Turkey.

my study focuses on the differences between Turkey and CEECs.<sup>30</sup> I used the 2002.2 and 2003.2 surveys because the Eurobarometers in subsequent years did not ask respondents from CEECs how they would vote in a possible referendum; most of those countries held referendums in 2004. These two surveys included all the questions needed to operationalise my variables. In addition to the usual referendum and EU support questions, they also asked questions about satisfaction with life and democracy.

My dependent variable is individuals' support for their country's EU membership. This variable was operationalised using the Eurobarometer question asking respondents whether they would vote for their country's EU membership in a possible referendum. I coded individuals who would vote for membership as '1' and all others as '0'. To increase the number of observations and to identify "firm supporters of integration", I did not delete the 'don't know' and 'would not vote' responses.<sup>31</sup>

To identify winners and losers in economic transition, I used two independent variables. The first is individuals' evaluations of the effect of EU membership on the national economy. According to my first hypothesis, those who think that their country will gain economic benefits by joining the EU will support their country's membership. In contrast, those who do not believe that the EU will help the well-being of the country will consider themselves losers in the transition; they will disapprove of their country's accession. This variable was captured through the survey question that asked "*Thinking about the enlargement of the European Union to include new European countries, including [this country], do you tend to agree or tend to disagree with each of the following statements? Being a member of the European Union would help the [country's] economy*". I recoded those who tended to agree as '1' and those who tended to disagree as '0'.

The second variable that taps winners and losers in economic transition is self-assessment of individual economic circumstances. There are several measures of this variable, such as education and income levels. However, utilitarian and value-based approaches use education and income as independent variables. For example, Inglehart operationalised post-materialist and materialist values using education and income levels, and McLaren measured the ability of individuals to adapt to European economic integration using the same variables.<sup>32</sup> As Ehin points out, "as both hypotheses expect these socio-economic characteristics [...] to be positively related to support for European integration, observed correlations contribute little to our ability to choose between rival theoretical perspectives".<sup>33</sup> To overcome this problem, I determined winners and losers in the economic transitions from two survey questions in the Eurobarometers.

The first question asked respondents: "*If you compare your present situation with five years ago, would you say it has improved, stayed about the same, or gotten worse?*" The second question asked: "*In the course of the next five years, do you expect your personal situation to improve, to stay about the same or to get worse?*" For both questions, I coded those who thought that their situation had improved or would improve as '3', had stayed or

<sup>30</sup> The pooled survey sample consists of 22, 245 individuals aged 15 and older. I used the sample weighting recommended by the Eurobarometer series.

<sup>31</sup> Piret Ehin, "Determinants of Public Support for EU Membership: Data from the Baltic Countries," *European Journal of Political Research* 40 (2001): 43.

<sup>32</sup> Ronald Inglehart, *Culture Shift in Advanced Industrial Society* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990); Lauren M. McLaren, "Public Support for the European Union: Cost/Benefit Analysis or Perceived Cultural Threat?" *The Journal of Politics* 64 (2002): 560.

<sup>33</sup> Ehin, "Determinants of Public Support," 36.

would stay about the same as '2' and had gotten or would get worse as '1'. I averaged the responses to these two survey questions to create a measure of individuals' evaluation of their economic circumstances. Tucker et al. used a similar self-assessment measure, although their survey questions asked respondents about their financial situation rather than personal situation. The Candidate Country Eurobarometers that I utilize in this analysis did not ask the same financial questions. Tucker et al. suggested that demographic characteristics can also be used as measures of winners and losers;<sup>34</sup> however, because the definition of winner and loser varies according to individual perception, it is more reliable to use self-evaluation questions as measures of winner and loser status.

Individuals' evaluations of their country's democratic system are also expected to affect attitudes toward the EU. Those who are satisfied with how democracy works in their country will view themselves as winners in accession. They will seek EU membership to preserve the changes and to achieve even more democratic reforms. Those who are not satisfied with the transition will consider themselves losers and blame the EU for their circumstances. Consequently, to avoid more changes to the system, they will not support their country's EU membership application. I used the Eurobarometer question that asked respondents whether they were satisfied with how democracy works in their country. The answers ranged from 1 "not at all satisfied" to 4 "very satisfied". I coded "don't know" answers as missing data.

Alongside the measures of winners and losers in economic and democratic transitions, I included variables for national identity, religiosity, knowledge about the EU, gender, age, education, income and year of the survey as controls. I do not make any predictions about the direction of these coefficients. The first control variable is national identity and I operationalised it using two survey questions. The first question asked respondents: "*In the near future do you see yourself as 1 [nationality] only, 2 [nationality] and European, 3 European and [nationality], 4 European only?*". To differentiate individuals with a strong sense of nationality from all others, I coded those who indicated only their own nationality as '1', and all others as '0'. I then multiplied their answers to that question with their responses to the following question: "*Would you say you are very proud, fairly proud, not very proud, or not at all proud to be [nationality - indicate citizenship]?*". The responses for this question ranged from 1 "not at all proud" to 4 "very proud".

The second control variable is religiosity. The surveys asked respondents "*Do you attend religious services other than weddings or funerals several times a week, once a week, a few times a year, once a year or less, or never?*" The responses ranged from 5 "several times a week" to 1 "never". The third control variable is knowledge about the EU. Respondents were asked to evaluate their knowledge about the EU, its institutions and its policies using a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 representing "know nothing at all" and 10 "know a great deal". The fourth control variable is gender, with women coded as '1' and men coded as '0'. The fifth control is age, which documents the age of the respondent at the time of the survey. The sixth control variable is income. I created four binary variables for the four income levels reported in the Eurobarometers. I coded those whose income level was between 1 and 3 as 'low-income respondents', those whose income level was between 4 and 5 as 'low-to-mid income respondents', those whose income level was between 6 and 7 as 'mid-to-high

<sup>34</sup> Tucker, Pacek and Berinsky, "Transitional Winners and Losers," 560.

income respondents' and those whose income level was between 8 and 10 as 'high-income respondents'. The high-income variable formed the base category. The seventh control variable is education, which represents the age of the respondent when she or he stopped full-time education. The last control variable is the year of the survey, to control for the effect of time. It is a binary variable, with 2002 coded as '1', and 2003 coded as '0'.

## 5. Estimation Procedure and Results

Because of the binary dependent variable, I used logit regression techniques to estimate the models, along with robust standard errors. I report the results in Table 1, which shows that the models performed reasonably well. The explanatory powers of the models, as measured by Proportional Reduction in Error (PRE), are generally high. For example, the models explain 58 percent of the variation in individual support in the Czech Republic, 50 percent in Estonia and 45 percent in Poland. The performance of the model is also relatively high in Turkey. The independent variables explain almost 38 percent of the variation in support for EU membership in Turkey. The lowest PRE is for Romania, at about eight percent. All the models yield statistically significant chi-squares, which means that the models fit the data. Multicollinearity was not a problem in estimating these models, because the highest Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) was below two, which is the generally accepted criterion for multicollinearity.<sup>35</sup>

Table 1 reveals that individual support for EU membership reacts to similar factors in Turkey as in the CEECs. As the economic winners and losers argument predicts, citizens living in Turkey and in post-communist member states assess their country's EU membership on the basis of its economic benefits to the country and their own situation. Table 1 shows that those who think their country's economic circumstances will improve with EU membership are more likely to vote for accession in a possible referendum, as are those who are satisfied with their personal situation. Those individuals perceive themselves as the winners from integration and thus support deeper and permanent ties with the EU.

<sup>35</sup> To test the robustness of my findings, I also used different coding methods for my dependent variable. I recoded those respondents who would support membership as '1' and those who would not as '0'. I deleted the 'don't know' and 'would not vote' responses. I also ran separate models with alternative control variables of religious attachment, occupation, education level and EU knowledge. In these cases, the coefficient estimates for the key independent variables retained their significance and direction. These results are available upon request.

Table 1 - Logit Results for Support for EU Membership in Turkey and the CEECs

	Turkey	Bulgaria	Czech Republic	Estonia	Hungary	Latvia	Lithuania	Poland	Romania	Slovakia	Slovenia
Predictors	Coefficient (Robust Standard Error)										
Intercept	-3.542*** (.694)	-3.883*** (.86)	-6.517*** (1.058)	-5.569*** (.724)	-4.969*** (.89)	-5.551*** (.749)	-4.596*** (.864)	-4.882*** (1.522)	-.414 (1.049)	-4.513*** (.918)	-5.328*** (.887)
National economic prospects	2.986*** (.211)	2.641*** (.24)	2.701*** (.209)	1.887*** (.185)	2.447*** (.204)	2.611*** (.194)	2.576*** (.215)	2.539*** (.226)	2.035*** (.35)	2.716*** (.232)	1.842*** (.192)
Personal situation	.339** (.126)	.641** (.236)	.52** (.199)	.47*** (.128)	.93*** (.165)	.618*** (.168)	.545** (.178)	.804*** (.165)	.517* (.253)	.35* (.172)	.494** (.165)
Satisfaction with democracy	.233 (.139)	.585** (.187)	.614*** (.148)	.369*** (.109)	.183 (.13)	.386** (.126)	.449*** (.138)	-.033 (.132)	.17 (.232)	.52*** (.162)	.632*** (.132)
National identity	-.28*** (.052)	-.218*** (.067)	-.267*** (.069)	-.199*** (.054)	-.137** (.051)	-.177*** (.055)	-.046 (.069)	-.299*** (.056)	-.064 (.071)	-.254*** (.064)	-.208*** (.053)
Religiosity	-.087 (.087)	.086 (.113)	-.092 (.097)	-.004 (.097)	-.061 (.086)	-.143 (.105)	.214* (.108)	-.176 (.119)	-.121 (.146)	-.135 (.079)	.058 (.08)
Knowledge about the EU	.318*** (.057)	.504*** (.104)	.334*** (.078)	.336*** (.059)	.291*** (.069)	.383*** (.064)	.325*** (.073)	.465*** (.088)	.364*** (.109)	.308*** (.07)	.436*** (.088)
Gender	.075 (.198)	-.052 (.236)	.08 (.21)	.021 (.152)	-.152 (.191)	-.174 (.189)	.101 (.208)	-.25 (.199)	-.506 (.284)	-.249 (.21)	.047 (.2)
Age	.02** (.007)	-.008 (.007)	.001 (.007)	.006 (.005)	.023*** (.006)	.011* (.006)	.007 (.007)	.016* (.007)	.002 (.008)	.014* (.007)	.021*** (.006)
Education	.001 (.006)	.011 (.021)	.104* (.046)	.044 (.023)	.017 (.027)	.027 (.02)	.004 (.011)	.081 (.058)	-.014 (.017)	.06 (.034)	.004 (.02)
Low income	.651* (.294)	-.012 (.291)	-.342 (.316)	-.22 (.223)	-.35 (.254)	.065 (.244)	-.036 (.274)	-.104 (.228)	.062 (.382)	-.28 (.254)	-.291 (.249)
Low-mid Income	.505 (.286)	.363 (.327)	.07 (.272)	-.124 (.207)	-.086 (.269)	.061 (.259)	.15 (.304)	-.640* (.282)	-.219 (.409)	.405 (.307)	.678** (.276)
Mid-high income	.21 (.307)	.743* (.366)	.034 (.306)	.235 (.208)	.009 (.265)	-.336 (.272)	-.362 (.296)	-.531 (.315)	-.024 (.406)	.447 (.37)	.034 (.293)
Year	.178 (.212)	-.042 (.231)	.101 (.219)	.286 (.161)	.649*** (.199)	.455* (.206)	-.613** (.206)	.291 (.254)	-.284 (.278)	.359 (.231)	.128 (.232)
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.3659	.4161	.4619	.2596	.3034	.3651	.3821	.3881	.1813	.3672	.3247
Log Likelihood	-472.543	-360.395	-416.446	-665.114	-546.483	-493.859	-415.801	-474.324	-292.093	-499.007	-493.924
N	1406	1378	1192	1296	1472	1139	1182	1345	1375	1501	1332
PRE (%)	37.82	37.55	57.57	50.40	32.29	53.99	44.04	45.38	7.69	38.82	35.08

Note 1: I used STATA 9.2 in this research.

Note 2: \* Significant at .05 level; \*\* significant at .01 level; \*\*\* significant at .001 level in two-tailed tests of significance.



Table 2 shows the magnitude of the impact that the statistically significant variables had on the dependent variable. The cell entries show the discrete change in the probability of support for one unit change in each independent variable by changing the independent variables from a half standard deviation below the mean to a half standard deviation above the mean while holding other variables constant. For the dichotomous independent variables, it is the change in the probability of support for a discrete change in the independent variables from 0 to 1.<sup>36</sup> Regarding the national economy, the results reveal that a Turkish citizen who thinks that the EU will contribute to the national economy is 56 percentage points more likely to vote for EU membership than a citizen who thinks otherwise. Similarly, in Latvia, if a citizen believes the national economy will benefit from being a member of the EU, the probability of him or her voting for EU membership increases almost 58 percentage points. The change is also above 50 percentage points in the Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia. In the other countries, the effect of the national economic prospect variable on the probability of support is lower but not less than 20 percent.

Table 2 - Predicted Probabilities of Support for EU Membership

	Turkey	Bulgaria	Czech Republic	Estonia	Hungary	Latvia	Lithuania	Poland	Romania	Slovakia	Slovenia
Predictors	Coefficient (Robust Standard Error)										
National economic prospects	.562	.38	.563	.426	.455	.574	.481	.503	.202	.508	.312
Personal situation	.03	.027	.062	.077	.072	.094	.049	.074	.015	.028	.039
Satisfaction with democracy	-	.032	.088	.069	-	.074	.049	-	-	.045	.06
National identity	-.063	-.025	-.079	-.07	-.031	-.067	-.009	-.07	-	-.043	-.047
Religiosity	-	-	-	-	-	-	.027	-	-	-	-
Knowledge of European Union	.069	.063	.12	.137	.059	.159	.081	.115	.029	.067	.106
Gender	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Age	.034	-	-	-	.052	.049	-	.04	-	.027	.049
Education	-	-	.064	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Low income	.033	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Low-mid income	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-.03	-	-	.036
Mid-high income	-	.02	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Year	-	-	-	-	.08	.109	-.083	-	-	-	-

Note: The probability changes are not listed for statistically insignificant variables.

<sup>36</sup> Scott J. Long, *Regression Models for Categorical and Limited Dependent Variables* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1997).

Regarding personal situations, a standard deviation increase in a Turkish individual's situation perception translates into only a three percent increase in her or his probability of supporting Turkey's EU accession. In Latvia, personal situation has a larger impact on individual attitudes toward the EU: changing the personal situation variable from one to zero results in an increase of almost ten percent in the probability of EU support. The impact of this variable on the dependent variable is lowest in Romania: changing the personal situation variable from one to zero results in only a two percentage point increase in the probability of EU support.

The performance of the democratic satisfaction variable offers weaker support for the winners and losers in democratic transitions hypothesis. In Turkey, Hungary, Poland and Romania, the satisfaction with democracy variable has a statistically insignificant effect on EU support. This result suggests that the probability that an individual will support EU accession is not associated with his or her assessment of how democracy works in their country. By contrast, in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia and Slovenia, citizens apparently recognise a link between democratic transition, regime performance and EU membership: a one standard deviation increase in satisfaction with democracy leads to at least a three percent increase in the probability of support in these countries. It is also interesting to see that the coefficient of the satisfaction variable is not negative in any of the countries. If the variable had a significant effect then it would indicate that those who are *not* satisfied with democracy would be more likely to support EU membership. This might imply that citizens do not see a link between the changes in their country's regime and its attempt to meet EU membership conditions.

Turning to the control variables, in all countries except Lithuania and Romania, the effect of attachment to national identity on individual attitudes toward EU membership is significant and negative. Knowledge about the EU also has a significant effect on support in all countries. Religiosity does not have a statistically significant effect in any of the candidate countries, with the exception of Lithuania. Gender does not have a statistically significant impact in any country. Education has a statistically significant (and positive) impact on opinion only in the Czech Republic: there, people with higher education are more likely to support membership to the EU. In Turkey, Hungary, Latvia, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia, older people are more likely to support their country's accession to the EU. The effect of being in a low-income group on support for the EU is significant merely in Turkey. Low-mid and mid-high income groups are significant in several CEECs, but not in Turkey. Lastly, in Hungary and Latvia, citizens were more likely to vote for EU membership, but less likely to vote for the EU in Lithuania in 2002 than in 2003.

## 6. Discussion and Conclusion

In this study, I compared the determinants of support for EU membership in Turkey and the former communist candidate countries in Central and Eastern Europe. The aim was to understand whether theories formerly developed for the CEECs could be generalized and applied to a country, like Turkey, lacking a similar communist background to the CEECs. More specifically, I examined whether, in all countries studied, those who are satisfied with the political and economic changes in their country support EU membership. The logit regression results revealed that those who benefited, or thought they would benefit in the future, were more likely to support their country's accession to the EU. However, the results also revealed that satisfaction with how democracy works did not have a significant impact on individual support for EU membership.

Nevertheless, the results of this analysis imply that it is not merely citizens of post-communist CEECs who might feel like winners and losers as a result of economic changes. Turkey might not be going through a similar transition process from communism to democracy and market economy; however, its citizens still think that relations with the EU have affected the course of economic developments in Turkey. The Turkish economy has become more transparent, competitive and open. Citizens' evaluations of the EU's contribution to these changes to the Turkish economy, and their perception of their own economic circumstances, are associated with how they view Turkey's EU membership. In contrast, attitudes toward democratic transition do not affect how Turkish, Hungarian, Polish and Romanian citizens view the EU. This result might be because the effect of EU conditionality has been challenged by other domestic factors in these countries. For example, Schimmelfennig et al. argued that "the weakness of society vis-à-vis the state" has limited the influence of civil society organizations supportive of EU membership and instead has given "governments and parties ample space for discretionary decision-making".<sup>37</sup>

This study also expanded understanding of how opinion about the EU is formed in Turkey. In contrast to the proliferation of research on why Turkey has so far failed to become a member of the EU and what Turkish elites think about EU accession, there is limited empirical research on Turkish public opinion about the EU. The existing studies do not provide a comparison of Turkish public attitudes with other candidate or member state citizens. This study is the first to investigate Turkish public opinion from a comparative perspective. Future studies might focus on how aggregate factors such as the strength of society vis-à-vis the state mediate the impact of attitudes toward democratic transition on support for EU membership. Moreover, research on the determinants of support for EU accession is needed in recent candidate countries, including Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Iceland, Montenegro and Serbia.

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<sup>37</sup> Frank Schimmelfennig, "Strategic Calculation and International Socialization: Membership Incentives, Party Constellations, and Sustained Compliance in Central and Eastern Europe," *International Organization* 59 (2005): 498.

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## China Reaches Turkey? Radio Peking's Turkish Language Broadcasts During the Cold War\*

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### Abstract

*A young socialist regime with few diplomatic ties in the 1950s and 1960s, the People's Republic of China (PRC) made significant attempts to reach foreign audiences through the use of mass media. Shortwave broadcasting was a particularly significant means of disseminating the PRC's worldview abroad. Radio Peking's Turkish language section, which was established in 1957 along with Arabic and Persian broadcasts, signaled China's desire to reach countries in the Middle East. Predating official Sino-Turkish ties and providing a direct cultural link between China and Turkey at a time when few such channels existed, Radio Peking's Turkish language broadcasts should be regarded as a significant aspect of Sino-Turkish relations during the Cold War years. Based on recently available Chinese language sources, as well as interviews with retired staff, this article examines Radio Peking's Turkish language section with regard to its organization, program content and audience from 1957 to 1976. It is significant that the PRC regime continued its Turkish language broadcasts amidst various challenges, such as administrative instability, lack of trained personnel, poor technical equipment and unsatisfactory audience numbers.*

**Keywords:** Radio Peking, propaganda, China, Cold War, Turkey

### 1. Introduction

The People's Republic of China (PRC) remained alienated from the West from its foundation in 1949 until the Sino-US rapprochement of the early 1970s. Its lack of diplomatic representation in most of the capitalist bloc worried the young PRC regime, which found it increasingly difficult to tackle the anti-China propaganda led by the US during the Cold War. The PRC regime's international isolation reached its peak in the early 1960s, when the Sino-Soviet ideological split put an end to their decade-long brotherly relations. Given China's lack of friendly official ties, the PRC regime emphasized "state-to-people" links, which included various types of propaganda and persuasion activities aimed at reaching overseas audiences.<sup>1</sup> Euphemistically called "people's diplomacy" in China during the Maoist decades (1949-1976), these activities sought to create a favorable image of the PRC regime and exert its ideological influence abroad. In this sense, China had various means at its disposal, including

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<sup>1</sup> The relationship between China's isolation and the regime's emphasis on "people's diplomacy" is noted in various studies. For example, see Anne-Marie Brady, *Making the Foreign Serve China: Managing Foreigners in the People's Republic* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003), 89.

international student exchanges, delegation visits, overseas exhibitions, etc.<sup>2</sup> The country's most significant external propaganda activities, however, relied on the use of mass media, i.e., publications and radio broadcasts in foreign languages. Operating within the larger foreign propaganda establishment in China, the Foreign Languages Press and Radio Peking were the two central organs assigned this task. Whereas the former organization published and disseminated China's foreign language publications (books, magazines, albums, posters and souvenir items), the latter was responsible for preparing and broadcasting China's shortwave radio content. Working under the strict guidelines of the highest party and government authorities, the Foreign Languages Press and Radio Peking produced the bulk of China's foreign propaganda content during the Maoist decades.<sup>3</sup>

This article focuses on the workings of Radio Peking's Turkish language section, which was established in 1957 to propagate China's achievements to Turkish-speaking people in Turkey and the surrounding region.<sup>4</sup> The launch of these broadcasts predated the establishment of official Sino-Turkish ties, which began only in 1971. In this sense, China's attempt to reach Turkish audiences is a significant but neglected aspect of Sino-Turkish relations in the 1950s and 1960s.<sup>5</sup> At the height of the Cold War, China and Turkey stood at opposite ends of the ideological spectrum. Turkey had become a NATO member in 1952, when Turkish soldiers under UN command were fighting in the Korean War against Chinese and North Korean troops. Throughout the 1950s, the anti-communist sentiment in Turkey was at its peak, with "Red China" being largely perceived as a communist tyrant. Reciprocally, the PRC regime considered Turkey to be an "American puppet", under the continuous influence of Western propaganda.<sup>6</sup> Whereas Turkey did not have a central place in China's foreign policy discourse, Turkey's policies concerning her neighborhood and her participation in pro-American regional alliances did raise eyebrows in China.<sup>7</sup>

In retrospect, the Sino-Turkish relationship (or the lack thereof) in the 1950s and 1960s was determined by the larger Cold War atmosphere and the antagonistic mutual perceptions associated with it. This was the case even after the establishment of an official relationship in 1971, a decision which had more to do with the Sino-US rapprochement than a drastic shift in Sino-Turkish perceptions. This article argues that, despite its negligible audience size, Turkish language broadcasts provided an important cultural link between China and Turkey at a time when few such channels existed. Based on recently published sources in Chinese and English, as well as interviews with retired Radio Peking staff, this article examines the Turkish broadcasting section in terms of its staff and organization, editorial tasks and program content and audience and feedback from 1957 to 1976.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>2</sup> For an in-depth examination of these activities, see United States Information Agency, *The External Information and Cultural Relations Programs of the People's Republic of China* (Research Service: 1973).

<sup>3</sup> Chinese foreign propaganda undertaken by Radio Peking and the Foreign Languages Press have been analyzed by various scholars in China. See, for instance, Tong Zhixia, *Zhongguo guoji xinwen chuanbo shi* [A History of International News Communication of China] (Beijing: Zhongguo chuanbo daxue chubanshe, 2006); Gan Xianfeng, *Zhongguo duiwai xinwen chuanbo shi* [History of China's foreign news broadcasts], (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2004); Huang Zecun, *Xin shiqi duiwai xuanchuan lungao* [Draft discussion of the foreign propaganda in the new era] (Beijing: Wuzhou chuanbo chubanshe, 2002); Zhang Kun, *Guojia xingxiang chuanbo* [Disseminating the Image of the Country], (Shanghai: Fudan Daxue Chubanshe, 2005); Zhang Kun, *Chuanbo guannian de lishi kaocha*, [Historical analysis of propaganda concepts] (Wuhan: Wuhan daxue chubanshe, 1997).

<sup>4</sup> Turkish-language broadcasts were also received in Bulgaria, Romania, Azerbaijan and Cyprus.

<sup>5</sup> Other channels included China-related publications, which circulated in Turkey during the 1960s. These were made available by the Turkish leftists who became interested in the Chinese Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) and Mao Zedong Thought – a Chinese version of Marxist-Leninist theory, which rivaled Soviet-style socialism.

<sup>6</sup> See Barış Adıbelli, *Osmanlı'dan Günümüze Çin-Türkiye İlişkileri*, (İstanbul: IQ Kültür-Sanat Yayıncılık, 2007), 184-185.

<sup>7</sup> Beijing siding with Syria in the Turkish-Syrian border issue of 1957 and Chinese criticism of Turkey's participation in Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) and other US-backed security organizations are major examples. See Yitzhak Shichor, *Ethno-diplomacy: the Uyghur Hitch in Sino-Turkish Relations*, (Washington: East West Center, 2009), 10-11.

<sup>8</sup> The period 1949 to 1976 signifies Mao Zedong rule in PRC history. Although the Cold War ended in 1989, the "opening

As will be elaborated on below, the Turkish language section worked under extremely difficult conditions during this period. While some of its problems originated from the larger propaganda machine in China (i.e., a huge bureaucracy) others were due to unfamiliarity with the Turkish language (i.e., lack of dictionaries, trained personnel, educational facilities, etc.). Given the serious challenges associated with broadcasting in Turkish, which had few speakers in China at the time, Radio Peking's continued efforts to reach Turkish-speaking audiences during the Cold War years is even more noteworthy. Before focusing on the Turkish language section, however, a few words are necessary about the workings of the Chinese foreign propaganda establishment during the Mao Zedong era (1949-1976).

## 2. Chinese Foreign Propaganda and Radio Peking

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) was engaged in propaganda activities from its foundation in 1921. While the party drew its initial propaganda guidelines from Leninist Russia, there is scholarly consensus that the CCP adapted these guidelines to suit local needs.<sup>9</sup> While the general objectives of Chinese communist propaganda changed over time due to new challenges faced by the party in each historical segment, the CCP's reliance on propaganda for mass mobilization remained one of its key precepts.<sup>10</sup> In terms of winning the hearts and minds of foreign audiences, the party's initial efforts at propaganda can be traced back to the Anti-Japanese War (1937-1945) and the Civil War fought against the Nationalist Party (1945-1949).<sup>11</sup> Systematic efforts in Chinese communist foreign language broadcasting only began after the foundation of the PRC in 1949, with the establishment of the Central Broadcasting Administration in 1950.<sup>12</sup> More commonly known by its call sign "Radio Peking", the short-wave broadcasts undertaken by this government agency became a major tool for Chinese propaganda and persuasion activities during the Cold War.

As one of the central organs in the Chinese foreign propaganda apparatus, Radio Peking operated under the dual authority of the CCP's Central Committee Propaganda Department and the State Council.<sup>13</sup> External propaganda sections were closely monitored by Chairman Mao Zedong and Premier Zhou Enlai, who overviewed organization's day-to-day operations as well as the general editorial lines to ensure they met with the PRC regime's domestic and

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up reforms" led by Deng Xiaoping in the post-1978 era represented economic, political and social change in China. Because the workings of Radio Peking and the Turkish broadcasting section changed drastically in the post-reform era, this study's focus is limited to the Maoist decades.

<sup>9</sup> For a comparative analysis of Chinese and Soviet propaganda, see Julian Chang, "The mechanics of state propaganda: The People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union in the 1950s" in Timothy Cheek et al. *New Perspectives on State Socialism in China*, Armonk, (NY: London, M.E. Sharpe, 1997), 76-124. Also see Marianne Bastid-Bruguere, "Patterns of Propaganda organization in the national-revolutionary movement in China in the 1920s" in Leutner, Mechthild, et al., eds. *The Chinese Revolution in the 1920s: Between Triumph and Disaster* (London: New York: Routledge Curzon), 2002.

<sup>10</sup> For a detailed examination of CCP propaganda objectives in each historical segment, see Lin Zhida, *Zhongguo gongchandang xuanchuan shi*, [Chinese Communist Party Propaganda History] (Sichuan: Renmin Chubanshi, 1990).

<sup>11</sup> The CCP launched broadcasts in Japanese (1941) and English (1947) to win overseas supporters in its fight against Japanese troops, and later, its political rival, the Nationalist Party (Guomindang). See Hu Yaoting "Zhongguo renmin duiwai guangbo tan yuan ji" [Record of discussion on the origins of Chinese People's foreign broadcasts] in Huang Daqiang ed. *Zhongguo guoji guangbo huiyilu* [Recollections of Chinese International Broadcasting], (Beijing Zhongguo Guoji Guangbo Chubanshe, 1996), 25-35. For propaganda activities in the 1930s, see Gan Xianfeng, *Zhongguo duiwai xinwen chuanbo shi* [History of China's foreign news broadcasts], (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2004), 2 and Tong Zhixia, *Zhongguo guoji xinwen chuanbo shi* [A History of International News Communication of China] (Beijing: Zhongguo chuanbo daxue chubanshe, 2006), 67.

<sup>12</sup> See Li Dan, Chen Minyi eds. *Zhongguo guoji guangbo diantai bumen zhi*, [Departmental Record of China International Broadcasting Station] (Beijing: Guoji guangbo chubanshe, Volume 1, 2001), 5.

<sup>13</sup> While these two agencies were central to the Chinese foreign propaganda leadership, the larger network included many other party and state bodies. The International Propaganda Leadership Small Group (*Guoji Xuanchuan Lingdao Xiaozu*), established in 1961, was composed of the State Council Foreign Affairs Office, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the CC Liaison Department, the CC Propaganda Department, the International Culture Committee, *People's Daily*, the Xinhua Agency, the Foreign Languages Press and Radio Peking. See Gan Xianfeng, *Zhongguo duiwai xinwen chuanbo shi*, 142-143.

international priorities.<sup>14</sup> Throughout the Cold War years, Radio Peking saw gradual growth in terms of its total broadcasting hours, number of broadcasting languages and its target audiences. This expansion was also reflected in its administrative growth. Radio Peking began with only 34 people in 1949; the number of staff grew to 58 in 1950; 84 in 1952; 214 in 1956 and 685 in 1966.<sup>15</sup>

Radio Peking's initial broadcasts were aimed at the country's immediate neighborhood in East and Southeast Asia.<sup>16</sup> This focus was related to the regime's desire to convince its Asian neighbors of its peaceful intentions, which became suspect after China's participation in the Korean War (1950-1953).<sup>17</sup> Radio Peking saw its first major expansion in target audiences subsequent to the Bandung Conference (1955), which signified the PRC regime's growing desire to act as a leader of developing countries.<sup>18</sup> This growth necessitated launching new broadcasting languages aimed at audiences in Latin American and Middle Eastern countries, including Turkey.<sup>19</sup> By the early 1960s, following the Sino-Soviet split, Radio Peking broadcasts also reached Eastern Europe and Africa, areas which had been long considered to be under the Soviet sphere of influence.<sup>20</sup> Having added several foreign languages to its broadcasts by the mid-1960s, Radio Peking became a world leader in shortwave broadcasting, along with Radio Moscow (the Soviet Union) and Voice of America (the US).<sup>21</sup> The global reach of Radio Peking broadcasts coincided with the launch of China's Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in 1966, which made "export of Mao Zedong Thought" a top priority in foreign propaganda.<sup>22</sup>

The next section examines Radio Peking's Turkish language section and focuses on the specific decision to launch these broadcasts.

### 3. Turkish Broadcasting Section

As noted, Turkish language broadcasts were launched in 1957 alongside Persian and Arabic. While some observers attribute this move to the "Third World" spirit emanating from the

<sup>14</sup> The influence of Chairman Mao Zedong and Premier Zhou Enlai on foreign propaganda is acknowledged in many Chinese- and English-language sources. For Mao Zedong's involvement, see Anne-Marie Brady, *Marketing Dictatorship: Propaganda and Thought Work in Contemporary China*, (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2008), 37. On Zhou Enlai, see Huang Zecun, *Xin shiqi duiwai xuanchuan lungao* [Draft discussion of the foreign propaganda in the new era] (Beijing: Wuzhou chuanbo chubanshe, 2002), 97-100; Morris R. Wills, J., Robert Moskin, *Turncoat: An American's 12 Years in Communist China: the story of Morris R. Wills as told to J. Robert Moskin*, (Englewood Cliffs N.J.: Prentice Hall Inc, 1966), 134-135; Pu Shiyu, "Chaoyu guangbo chuangjian shiqi de diandi huiyi" (Bits of memories from the time of the establishment of Korean language broadcasts) in *Zhongguo guoji guangbo huiyilu*, ed. Huang Daqiang, 339.

<sup>15</sup> See Li Dan, Chen Minyi, eds. *Zhongguo guoji guangbo diantai zhi, (shang)* [Record of the China International Broadcasting Station, Vol. 1.] (Beijing: Zhongguo guoji guangbo chubanshe, 2001), 23-26.

<sup>16</sup> Radio Peking launched Korean, Burmese, Thai, Indonesian and Vietnamese broadcasts in the early 1950s, which led to the establishment of the Eastern Languages Department. See the organizational chart for 1950 in Li Dan, Chen Minyi, eds. *Diantai zhi*, Vol. 2, 854.

<sup>17</sup> In 1954, Asian broadcasts propagated "five principles of peaceful co-existence" and anti-US sentiment. See Li Dan, Chen Minyi, eds. *Bumen zhi*, Vol. 1, 17-18.

<sup>18</sup> See *The external information and cultural relations programs*, 33.

<sup>19</sup> Radio Peking launched Spanish broadcasts aimed at Latin America in 1956 and Persian, Turkish and Arabic broadcasts aimed at the Middle East in 1957. China's target audiences in Asia were also broadened with the launch of Malay, Hindi, Lao and Cambodian broadcasts in the second half of the 1950s.

<sup>20</sup> See *The external information and cultural relations programs*, 100. Radio Peking's language broadcasts aimed at the Soviet sphere of influence included German (1960), Russian (1962), Mongolian (1964), Czech (1968), Polish (1968) and Romanian (1968). In its African broadcasts, Radio Peking used indigenous languages such as Hausa (1963) and Swahili (1961), in addition to English and French. Other languages added to Radio Peking broadcasts during the Maoist decades included Tamil (1963), Esperanto (1964), Filipino (1965), Urdu (1966), Bengali (1969), Pashto (1973), Bulgarian (1974), Nepalese (1975) and Hungarian (1976). See *Zhongguo Guoji Guangbo shiliao jianbian (1947-1987)* [Short edition of China Radio International Historical Materials (1947-1987)], ed. Zhongguo Guoji Guangbo Diantai Tai shi bian bianzu (editorial board for the history of China Radio International) (Beijing: Zhongguo guoji guangbo chubanshe, 1987), 395-396.

<sup>21</sup> According to a BBC report released in the early 1960s, Radio Peking occupied the third place in international broadcasting in terms of total broadcasting hours. See Li Dan, Chen Minyi, eds. *Diantai zhi Vol. 1*, 9.

<sup>22</sup> See Huang Zecun, *Xin shiqi duiwai xuanchuan lungao*, 71; Gan Xianfeng, *Zhongguo duiwai xinwen chuanbo shi*, 198.



Geneva (1954) and Bandung (1955) conferences, others attribute it to the Suez Crisis of 1956.<sup>23</sup> Whereas the above theories have some explanatory value, the evidence concerning the specific decision to launch Turkish language broadcasts suggests that it was not a calculated move on the part of the PRC regime. Although it is clear that China's interest in developing countries was growing at the time, as of early 1957, Radio Peking was not planning on launching Turkish broadcasts.<sup>24</sup> This particular decision seems to have originated from a twist of events following the arrival of Iranian experts from Radio Moscow to help with the launch of Radio Peking's Persian language broadcasts.<sup>25</sup>

This small team of Soviet-affiliated Iranian experts, three of whom were also fluent in Turkish, suggested that Radio Peking could also launch Turkish language broadcasts.<sup>26</sup> As Radio Peking heavily relied on the linguistic assistance of the Soviet experts posted to China throughout the 1950s, this was a viable proposal, and welcomed by the Chinese side.

The paper next explores the organization, cadres and working routine in the Turkish broadcasting section between 1957 and 1976.

### 3.1. Organization and cadres

Thanks to the organic link between the Persian and Turkish language sections, they began operation under the common label "Iran-Turkey" (*yi-tu*, in Chinese) broadcasts.<sup>27</sup> It was not until 1963 that the Turkish section acquired its own section with a separate organizational structure.<sup>28</sup> The section structure reflected the general administrative framework at Radio Peking, which clearly divided the tasks of senior and junior staff. The senior staff was primarily responsible for maintaining the ideological line of the program content, whereas the junior staff was responsible for technical duties, such as translation, proofreading, recording and broadcasting. Senior employees were chosen for their ideological standing and trustworthiness rather than for their linguistic expertise.<sup>29</sup> The junior staff, on the other hand, had to be fluent in at least one foreign language, although it was also common for inexperienced staff to enroll in language courses or receive on-the-job training. In the junior cadres, Radio Peking distinguished among foreign experts, who came either directly from the Soviet Union or from affiliated communist parties around the world; "Overseas Chinese" who were born or raised in a foreign country and returned to the mainland to help with reconstruction efforts,<sup>30</sup> and regular Chinese staff, who received their foreign language education in China. Among these, the returned overseas Chinese and foreign experts had privileged status in terms of salaries and other benefits.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>23</sup> According to United States Information Agency (USIA) experts, the Suez Crisis was instrumental in drawing China's attention to the Middle East. See *The external information and cultural relations programs*, 100.

<sup>24</sup> See Li Dan, Chen Minyi, eds. *Bumen zhi*, Vol. 2, 311; also see Li Ruheng, "Kaiban bosi yu he tuerqi yu guangbo de youlai he jingyan" [Origins and experiences of launching the Persian and Turkish broadcasts] in *Zhongguo guoji guangbo huiyilu*, ed. Huang Daqiang, 211.

<sup>25</sup> Tuerqi yu zu (Turkish language section) "Tuerqi yu guangbo" (Turkish language broadcasts) in *Zhongguo Guoji Guangbo shiliao jianbian (1947-1987)*, 97.

<sup>26</sup> See Li Ruheng, "Kaiban bosi yu he tuerqi", 211.

<sup>27</sup> See Li Dan, Chen Minyi, eds. *Bumen zhi*, Vol. 2, 315.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> According to a retired Radio Peking employee, because some of the editors could not speak the relevant foreign languages but guided the junior staff in terms of the correct ideological line, translating items from and into Chinese resulted in a considerable waste of time. A retired cadre from the Burmese language section. Interview by author. Beijing, December 11, 2007.

<sup>30</sup> See Xu Yongsheng, "Zui nanwang de san zhi duiwu" (Three most unforgettable ranks) in *Nanwang suiyou* [Unforgettable Years] ed. Gao Jiming (Beijing: Zhongguo guoji guangbo chubanshe, 2001), 88.

<sup>31</sup> See Sidney Shapiro, *An American in China: Thirty Years in the People's Republic*, (New York: New American Library, 1980), 214.

Recruiting Chinese staff was a major challenge for the Turkish broadcasting section in the 1950s. At the time, Turkish speakers were rare in China, in striking contrast with speakers of major Western or East/Southeast Asian languages. As Turkey was not a conventional destination for Chinese immigrants, the Turkish language section was not able to employ any Overseas Chinese. Further, China did not offer any educational prospects in the 1950s for mastering this difficult language in a relatively short time. Due to the lack of Turkish speakers, Radio Peking's Turkish language section had to rely on the Iranian (Soviet) experts during its formative years (1957 to 1960).<sup>32</sup>

The Turkish language section broadcasted its programs twice a day, each for half an hour.<sup>33</sup> A typical work day at the section necessitated translating, proofreading, recording and broadcasting. The staff also had to participate in daily political study sessions and physical exercises. Similar to other understaffed language sections, the working routine in the Turkish section was arduous, with minimal vacation time.<sup>34</sup> An additional burden for staff was the excessively centralized bureaucracy of Radio Peking. The news items and political reviews, which constituted the bulk of the program content, were drafted in Chinese by the central administration and disseminated to each language section to ensure that all sections used the same ideologically appropriate content. The Turkish broadcasting section, similar to other language sections, had to choose relevant news items from this centrally prepared draft, on which they were allowed to make only small changes.<sup>35</sup> Most of the broadcasting content were derived from the news items and articles originally released by the Xinhua News Agency or official publications like *People's Daily (Renmin Ribao)* and *Red Flag (Hong Qi)*. The derivative nature of the items, together with the careful editing and translation process, caused substantial delays. As a result, Radio Peking's Turkish language section often broadcasted news items two or three days after the actual event, which decreased the station's competitiveness vis-à-vis its Western counterparts.<sup>36</sup>

In its formative years, another major setback for the Turkish language section was its excessive dependency on foreign expert assistance. During this period, due to the Chinese cadres' limited Turkish proficiency, the Soviet experts had the upper hand in broadcasting work. As the Chinese were not fluent in Turkish and the Soviets had no proficiency in Chinese, the central drafts had to be translated first from Chinese to Russian, and then from Russian to Turkish.<sup>37</sup> Because the language employed in the Chinese foreign propaganda content was extremely complex, few could perform these tasks without difficulty. Further, the staff had to work without access to most fundamental reference sources, including a Turkish-Chinese dictionary.<sup>38</sup> But the greatest challenge derived from ideological disagreements between Chinese staff and their Soviet counterparts.<sup>39</sup> As Sino-Soviet ideologies became increasingly

<sup>32</sup> See Tuerqi yu zu (Turkish language section) "Tuerqi yu guangbo" (Turkish language broadcasts), 97.

<sup>33</sup> This was expanded to four times a day in the early 1970s. See Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> See Li Dan, Chen Minyi, eds. *Bumen zhi*, Vol. 2, 334.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid, 320.

<sup>36</sup> This state of affairs caused much frustration among the staff. A former employee of the Turkish broadcasting section recalls how angry she was upon hearing news items on Western radio stations ahead of Radio Peking's broadcasts. A retired announcer in the Turkish broadcasting section. Interview by author. Beijing, October, 26, 2007.

<sup>37</sup> See Tuerqi yu zu (Turkish language section) "Tuerqi yu guangbo", 97.

<sup>38</sup> A former editor in the Turkish broadcasting section describes his experience as follows: "They were handing us the full articles (usually very long) or excerpts from domestic journals like *Red Flag (Hong Qi)*. The idioms and long expressions were very hard to translate. Sometimes we broadcasted them in parts, not as a whole. I was using a Russian-Turkish dictionary [because] there was nothing else available". A former editor and director in the Turkish broadcasting section. Interview by author. Beijing, November 5, 2007.

<sup>39</sup> Chinese cadres devised creative methods to bypass their Soviet colleagues. For instance, a former editor in the Turkish

disparate, by the late 1950s the working environment in the Turkish language section was tense.<sup>40</sup> By 1961, Soviet experts working in the Turkish section refused to edit and translate items that disseminated China's "anti-revisionist" stance.<sup>41</sup>

In 1960, the Soviet Union suspended its financial and technical aid to China and withdrew its experts from the country. This was a huge blow to Radio Peking and other Chinese institutions, which had relied on Soviet assistance since the early 1950s.<sup>42</sup> In the immediate aftermath of the Soviets' departure, Turkish language broadcasts were off the air for 12 days.<sup>43</sup> As the broadcasts were closely associated with the survival of the PRC regime, this was a major humiliation for Radio Peking administration. As a result of the interruption, the Turkish section received letters from listeners asking whether the PRC regime had collapsed or if Mao Zedong had died.<sup>44</sup> The break in Turkish language broadcasts alarmed even Premier Zhou Enlai, who, according to Chinese sources, took a personal interest in the case and paid a visit to Radio Peking's general director, Mei Yi<sup>45</sup>. Upon the request of Zhou Enlai, the director summoned a young radio employee -a Uyghur (a Turkic group from Central Asia) woman with little modern Turkish proficiency- to take over announcing duties.<sup>46</sup>

After the departure of the Soviets, the Turkish language section began to train its own staff. Radio Peking's senior management decided that the most likely candidates to master modern Turkish were Chinese citizens of Uyghur ethnicity. In 1961 the Turkish section employed three Uyghur cadres who had completed a short training program at the Beijing Broadcasting University (*Beijing Guangbo Xueyuan*).<sup>47</sup> In this period of extreme staff shortages, Radio Peking leaders also devised other ways to cope, such as re-assigning personnel from one government office to another.<sup>48</sup> Such remedies produced results. Academic training offered in Beijing's educational institutions, as well as on-the-job training at Radio Peking gradually increased the Chinese cadre of foreign-language speakers.

Other challenges in the section resulted from disruptions caused by radical political campaigns in China, which added to the burdens of Radio Peking's staff as a whole. The Anti-Rightist campaign (1957), for instance, was considered a major impediment to broadcasting

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section used to omit words from the rough drafts (like revisionism) that he thought might offend the Soviet experts and replace in the final draft, after translation. A former editor and director in the Turkish broadcasting section. Interview by author. Beijing, November 5, 2007.

<sup>40</sup> See Li Ruheng, "Kaiban bosi yu he tuerqi", 214.

<sup>41</sup> See Li Dan, Chen Minyi, eds. *Bumen zhi*, Vol. 2, 312

<sup>42</sup> The Turkish section was not alone in its difficulties. The departure of the Soviet experts had the worst impact on the language sections that needed full or partial guidance from foreign experts, such as Portuguese, Italian, Swahili, Hausa, Serbian, Malay, Arabic, Persian, Turkish, French, German, Hindu, Spanish and Lao. See Li Dan, Chen Minyi, eds. *Diantai zhi* Vol. 2, 569.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> A former announcer in the Turkish broadcasting section, Interview by author. Beijing, October, 26, 2007.

<sup>45</sup> Premier Zhou Enlai's interest in broadcasting work was hardly limited to the Turkish section. He was in charge of the day-to-day operations in Radio Peking and he guided propaganda on various occasions. For instance, it was upon the instructions of Premier Zhou Enlai that the Korean broadcasts section started monitoring South Korean radio. Before then, this was considered inappropriate as it was the "enemy station." Zhou Enlai believed that the foreign propagandists needed to know their enemy thoroughly in order to counter the threat. See Pu Shiyu, "Chaoyu guangbo chuangjian shiqi de diandi huiyi" (Bits of memories from the time of the establishment of Korean language broadcasts) in *Zhongguo guoji guangbo huiyilu* (Recollections of Chinese International Broadcasting) ed. Huang Daqiang (Beijing Zhongguo Guoji Guangbo Chubanshe, 1996), 339.

<sup>46</sup> Her name was Rukiye Hacı. Although she hesitated to accept the offer due to her poor language skills, she ultimately became the first Chinese announcer in the Turkish broadcasting section. Her language proficiency was so low that initially she could only announce the titles of musical pieces. See Li Dan, Chen Minyi, eds. *Bumen zhi*, Vol. 2, 312.

<sup>47</sup> See "Tuerqi yu guangbo", 97.

<sup>48</sup> In the early 1960s, someone with even meager knowledge of Turkish was precious in the eyes of the Radio Peking leadership. During this period, it was common for junior cadres to find themselves assigned to the Turkish language section without their prior knowledge or consent. A former editor in the Turkish broadcasting section who started at Radio Peking in the 1960s is a good example. He was educated at the Moscow Law and International Relations Institute on a government scholarship and aspired to become a diplomat. However, due to the staff shortages after the departure of the Soviet experts, and regardless of his minimal Turkish skills, he was assigned to Radio Peking. A former editor and director in the Turkish broadcasting section, Interview by author. Beijing, November 5, 2007.

work in general.<sup>49</sup> Radio Peking staff was also affected by the famine following the Great Leap Forward (1958-61), when all cadres were issued small food rations and many suffered illnesses due to malnourishment.<sup>50</sup> During the violent phase of the Cultural Revolution (1966-1969), the working routine at Radio Peking was disrupted by ongoing meetings and criticism sessions, where cadres were reprimanded for even trivial matters.<sup>51</sup> One announcer was criticized for eating too many sweets, which was considered a bourgeois habit<sup>52</sup>. In this period, leading cadres in the Turkish broadcasting section had to step aside, as they became the subject of investigations. Although programs did not entirely go off the air in the late 1960s, the working routine became even more challenging.

Next, the study examines how China's domestic politics and foreign policy shaped the editorial guidelines and program content of Turkish language broadcasts during the Maoist decades.

### 3.2. Editorial guidelines and program content

Radio Peking worked under the strict guidance of the CC Propaganda Department and the State Council, which formulated the general objectives of foreign propaganda in conformity with the PRC regime's domestic and international priorities at a given time. This general editorial guideline dictated the individual language sections' content. As each section had to work from centrally-prepared drafts in Chinese, staff in the Turkish broadcasting section had little leeway in terms of changing the program content to suit Turkish-speaking audiences. Given the ideological nature of Chinese foreign propaganda work, Radio Peking broadcasts emphasized high politics during the Mao Zedong era. Not surprisingly, the bulk of the broadcasting content was composed of news and review items dealing with China's domestic situation and foreign policy. Turkish language broadcasts also included a number of specialized programs, although these were put on hold during staff shortages and in the disruptions of the mass mobilization campaigns.

In the early 1950s, Radio Peking's editorial guidelines aimed at propagating "New China" and its socio-economic achievements to the world, countering American imperialism and emphasizing China's solidarity with the Soviet Union.<sup>53</sup> When Turkish language broadcasts were launched in 1957, the Anti-Rightist campaign has already started to radicalize Chinese foreign propaganda discourse. The exaggerated emphasis on China's industrial and agricultural growth peaked during the Great Leap Forward, although the campaign ultimately resulted in a nationwide famine.<sup>54</sup> While the Turkish broadcasting section followed the general editorial line of propagating revolutionary changes in China, it also placed special

<sup>49</sup> For discussions on the negative impact of the Anti-Rightist campaign on foreign propaganda work, see Huang Zecun, *Xin shiqi*, 70-71 and Gan Xianfeng, *Zhongguo duiwai*, 193-195. For its impact on the Turkish broadcasting section, see Li Ruheng, "Kaiban bosi yu he tuerqi", 213.

<sup>50</sup> For the negative impact of the Great Leap Forward on foreign propaganda work, see Ding Ganlin, ed., *Zhongguo xinwen shiye shi* [History of China's journalism work], (Beijing: Gaodeng jiaoyu chubanshe, 2002), 445.

<sup>51</sup> For the negative impact of the Cultural Revolution on foreign propaganda work, see Tong Zhixia, *Zhongguo guoji xinwen chuanbo shi* [A History of International News Communication of China], (Beijing: Zhongguo chuanbo daxue chubanshe, 2006), 77-80.

<sup>52</sup> A former announcer in the Turkish broadcasting section. Interview by author. Beijing, October, 26, 2007.

<sup>53</sup> In February 1950, a work report prepared by the editorial department of international broadcasts at Radio Peking summarized these objectives under four headings: 1. Propagating the victorious liberation struggle of the Chinese people; 2. Propagating China's revolutionary experience; 3. Propagating the strength and development of the peaceful revolutionary front led by the Soviet Union; 4. Revealing the US-led anti-democratic front's threats and plots. See Li Dan, Chen Minyi, eds. *Bumen zhi*, Vol. 1, 16-17.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid*, 18.

emphasis on religious freedoms.<sup>55</sup> Its specialized program, “Muslim Life in China”, for instance, primarily focused on winning Turkish people’s sympathies.<sup>56</sup> Launched upon the recommendation of the Iranian-Soviet experts, this program was prepared with the assistance of various Chinese academics and religious scholars.<sup>57</sup> To ensure the program’s success, radio staff often visited Beijing’s Niujie Mosque and reported on the lives of Hui Muslims from China’s Hebei province.<sup>58</sup> However, after the departure of the Soviets in the early 1960s, the remaining staff found it difficult to continue the program and it was abandoned, reducing the Turkish content to news and review items. Another attempt to gear Turkish content to its audience was through musical scores, which included folk songs and dance pieces from the Xinjiang region, as well as Turkish traditional music.<sup>59</sup>

Following the Sino-Soviet split of the early 1960s, the foreign propaganda agencies were assigned new tasks of “propagandizing Mao Zedong Thought, anti-imperialism and anti-revisionism”, in addition to the original task of informing overseas audiences about China’s social and economic achievements.<sup>60</sup> This shift in the editorial line overlapped with the staff shortages in the Turkish broadcasting section, so it was only in 1965 that cadres were able to begin broadcasting specialized programs such as “China in Construction”, “Chinese Countryside”, “China’s Minority Nations”, “Listener Letterbox”, “New China, New Things”, “Sports Program” and “Music Program”.<sup>61</sup> This relatively rich program content was available to Turkish-speaking audiences for just a year, however, until the launch of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in May, 1966.

During the Cultural Revolution (1966-1969), Chinese foreign propaganda discourse was pushed to its extreme, prioritizing the propagation of Mao Zedong thought and anti-revisionism.<sup>62</sup> The Turkish broadcasting section, similar to other sections in Radio Peking, had to abandon its regular programming during these years. The growing emphasis on the revolutionary struggle in China took its toll on all cultural and artistic items, including music programs.<sup>63</sup> In accordance with the new regulations, the Turkish section was allowed to play only revolutionary songs,<sup>64</sup> which probably had little appeal for the average Turkish listener. Likewise, regular specialized programs were replaced by programs propagating Mao Zedong Thought. It became customary to read quotations from Chairman Mao Zedong at the start of each program.<sup>65</sup> In August 1966, Radio Peking launched “Imperialism and Reactionaries are Paper Tigers” to introduce its overseas listeners to Mao’s writings.<sup>66</sup> “Selected Readings from Mao Zedong’s Works”(1968) also served the purpose of exporting China’s revolutionary experience and Maoism to its listeners.<sup>67</sup>

<sup>55</sup> See Li Dan, Chen Minyi, eds. *Bumen zhi*, Vol. 2, 317.

<sup>56</sup> This program was also broadcasted in Persian. See Li Dan, Chen Minyi, eds. *Bumen zhi*, Vol. 3, 61, 322.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> See Li Dan, Chen Minyi, eds. *Bumen zhi*, Vol. 2, 319.

<sup>60</sup> See Li Dan, Chen Minyi, eds. *Bumen zhi*, Vol. 1, 17-19.

<sup>61</sup> See Li Dan, Chen Minyi, eds. *Bumen zhi*, Vol. 2, 322.

<sup>62</sup> See Li Dan, Chen Minyi, eds. *Bumen zhi*, Vol. 1, 17-19.

<sup>63</sup> See, Zhang Zhigen, “Yinyue bansui zhi xingjin de zuji” (Footsteps marching forward in the pursuit of music) in *Zhongguo guoji guangbo*, ed. Huang Daqiang, 110.

<sup>64</sup> Such as “Yellow River” or “The Legend of the Red Lantern”. See Li Dan, Chen Minyi eds. *Bumen zhi* Vol. 2, 323. and Li Dan, Chen Minyi eds. *Bumen zhi* Vol. 3, 166.

<sup>65</sup> A former announcer in the Turkish broadcasting section, Interview by author. Beijing, October, 26, 2007.

<sup>66</sup> See Li Dan, Chen Minyi eds. *Bumen zhi*, Vol. 1, 233-234.

<sup>67</sup> See, Li Dan, Chen Minyi eds. *Bumen zhi*, Vol. 3, 61, 322.

In the early 1970s, there was a return to relative normalcy at Radio Peking. Following the Sino-US rapprochement and the end of China's diplomatic isolation, Radio Peking's propaganda gradually adopted a more moderate tone.<sup>68</sup> In the meantime, the establishment of diplomatic ties with Turkey facilitated bilateral communication and made timely news items about Turkey more available. Despite the moderation of the early 1970s, however, the ideological nature of Radio Peking's content persisted until Mao Zedong's death and the official end of the Cultural Revolution in 1976. Radio Peking's official propaganda line altered only after the launch of Deng Xiaoping's reforms, which reshaped Chinese economy and society in the post-1978 era. Turkish language broadcasts, likewise, began offering more colorful content, including specialized programs and music pieces. Using the new call sign "China Radio International", which signifies a break from the Maoist decades, Radio Peking continued broadcasts to Turkey. While today's broadcasts have less emphasis on ideological issues, China is still keen on propagating the country's economic, cultural and technological modernization.

The paper next discusses the reception of Turkish language broadcasts during the Cold War.

### 3.3. Audience

Radio Peking leadership paid enormous attention to audience liaison during the Maoist decades. From the early 1950s onwards, it assigned a number of people the task of replying to listener letters.<sup>69</sup> Audience letters were valued as a measure for estimating the size of the audience, and Radio Peking's replies were used as an extra tool to win the hearts and minds of listeners abroad. Each letter was carefully responded to by staff in the relevant language section and listeners were often sent a small souvenir item with their reply.<sup>70</sup> Between 1949 and 1976, Radio Peking saw a gradual expansion of its target audience, measured by a growing number of listener letters. With a meager 650 letters in 1951, Radio Peking's annual listener letters had grown to 7,000 by 1955.<sup>71</sup> An even more significant growth was achieved after 1957, subsequent to the rise in total broadcasting hours and languages. While the total number of listener letters in 1957 was 29,398, this number grew almost tenfold by 1965 to 286,163, its peak for the whole Maoist period.<sup>72</sup> Although the number of listener letters dwindled during the Cultural Revolution years to as low as 21,833 in 1970, Radio Peking's global outreach remained substantial during the Cold War.

Based on listener letter statistics, it is safe to conclude that the Turkish language section failed to reach a mass audience during the Cold War years; according to official figures, the yearly listener letter count for the Turkish language broadcasts ranged between 1 and 60.<sup>73</sup> This figure included letters from Turkish-speaking listeners in Bulgaria, Cyprus, West

<sup>68</sup> A directive which circulated in July 1972 advised radio staff to "pay attention to truthfulness"; "respect foreign propaganda principles"; "avoid one-sidedness" and "write easily understandable propaganda pieces." See Li Dan, Chen Minyi eds. *Bumen zhi*, Vol. 1, 20.

<sup>69</sup> Radio Peking established a listener letters department (*tingzhong laixin zu*) in August, 1953. By the late 1950s, as the number of broadcasting languages increased, individual language sections set up their own listener liaison offices. See Li Dan, Chen Minyi, eds. *Diantai zhi*, Vol. 1, 306.

<sup>70</sup> At the end of each Christian year, it was also customary for audience liaison departments to send a New Year's card and a calendar to their correspondents. See Han Yuejing, "1958 nian-1969 nian yingyu guangbo laixin gongzuo diandi" (A bit of English broadcasts listener letters work in 1958-1969) in Huang Daqiang ed. *Zhongguo guoji guangbo huiyilu*, 133.

<sup>71</sup> See Li Dan, Chen Minyi, eds. *Bumen zhi*, Vol. 4, 530.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>73</sup> Between 1957 and 1959, the Turkish language section received a total of 11 letters; in 1960 and 1961, none. 1975 and 1976 saw the highest letter counts in the time period of this study, at 50 and 60, respectively. See Li Dan, Chen Minyi, eds. *Bumen zhi*, Vol.

Germany and Azerbaijan.<sup>74</sup> Although making comparisons between different language sections in terms of listener feedback is problematic for a number of reasons,<sup>75</sup> it is clear that the Turkish section was among the poorest performing sections at Radio Peking. This state of affairs led Chinese propagandists to examine the case of Turkish language broadcasts and offer a number of insights as to the reasons behind the poor listener feedback.

According to many, the major reason why China could not reach mass audiences in Turkey was the popularity of Turkey's anti-communist ideology.<sup>76</sup> Because Turkey was a US ally, Chinese staff considered the country to be under the continuous influence of Western propaganda.<sup>77</sup> While this assessment fails to credit Turkish sources of anti-communist discourse, such as nationalism and pan-Turkism, Chinese propagandists were right in noting the role of mainstream ideology in Turkey. When Radio Peking launched its Turkish language broadcasts, Turkey had been under the Democratic Party's (DP) rule for almost a decade. The Democrats were known for their advocacy of capitalist development and urbanization, with vows to "create a millionaire in every neighborhood". Having pursued a pro-American line in foreign policy since 1950, the DP government was instrumental in solidifying Turkey's geopolitical position in the Western hemisphere during the Cold War. Despite the rise of the political left after the mid-1960s, anti-communist discourse continued to dominate mainstream public opinion. Except for brief intervals, Turkey was ruled by right-wing political parties with nationalist or religious undertones until the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. The average radio listener, therefore, was not likely to tune into Radio Peking to hear the other side of the story from "Red China".

Another explanation provided by China's propagandists was the predominance of religious conservatism in Turkey. Chinese foreign propaganda staff was fully aware of the difficulties of penetrating a predominantly Muslim country through communist ideology, which is known for its atheistic values. Although Radio Peking's broadcasts emphasized the "religious freedom" among China's Muslim minorities, Uyghur immigrants who fled from China's Xinjiang province to settle in Turkey during the 1950s and 1960s presented a rather different picture. During the Cultural Revolution, the suffering of "Muslim Turks" in China was largely publicized in the Turkish media and presumably intensified the negative perception of the People's Republic.<sup>78</sup>

Although it is clear that Radio Peking had no mass appeal in Turkey during the Cold War years, it is not easy to conclude that the launch of Turkish language broadcasts was a futile effort on the part of the PRC leadership to win the sympathies of Turkish people. For a couple of reasons, it is probable that the Turkish audience was broader than what is implied by the number of listener letters. First, the few letters received by Radio Peking staff show that these

2, 343.

<sup>74</sup> See Li Dan, Chen Minyi, eds. *Bumen zhi*, Vol. 2, 336.

<sup>75</sup> First, some of these languages were regional languages spoken by different people in various countries (e.g. Spanish). Therefore, the number of listener letters was likely to be much bigger than say, Turkish, which is spoken in a limited geographical area. Second, the number of listener letters originating from one country was very much related to that country's political system, geographical location as well as its bilateral relations with China. Therefore, listeners who lived in neighboring countries (especially those with large Overseas Chinese minorities) or countries that maintained neutral or friendly relations with China were more prone to send letters to Radio Peking.

<sup>76</sup> See Li Dan, Chen Minyi, *Bumen zhi*, Vol. 2, 336.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> See "Kızıl Çin'den kaçan 13 Türk yurda sığındı", *Yeni İstanbul*, March 30, 1967; Çin Türkistanında kanlı savaşlar şiddetlendi", *Ulus*, Jan. 30, 1967, s.8; "Kıta Çin'inde Müslümanlar zor durumda", *Ulus*, Jan. 23, 1967, 4; "Çin Doğu Türkistanı Mao'ya karşı direniyor", *Cumhuriyet*, Jan. 29, 1967, p.3; "Moskova'ya göre Çin, idaresindeki Türkleri imhaya çalışıyor", *Cumhuriyet*, Jan. 26, 1967; "Kızıl Çin'den gelen Doğu Türkistanlılar çektiklerini anlattı", *Milliyet*, May 29, 1968.

broadcasts were received even in the remotest parts of Turkey. Additionally, some listeners wrote on behalf of a village or neighborhood.<sup>79</sup> A number of local sources also suggest that these broadcasts had ardent followers in the Turkish countryside.<sup>80</sup>

Second, given the implicit dangers associated with sending mail from Turkey to a communist broadcaster, one might safely assume that most Turkish listeners chose to avoid the possible consequences of writing a letter to Radio Peking.<sup>81</sup> This was most probably the case in the late 1950s, when the DP government's increased censorship measures left no room for ideological dissent. Even in the mid-1960s, when Radio Peking had loyal followers among Turkey's left-wing youth, only a few probably felt the need to correspond with its Chinese staff. Members of the Maoist-leaning *Proleter Devrimci Aydınlik (Proletarian Revolutionary Illumination)*, for instance, tuned into these broadcasts on a regular basis to follow developments in China.<sup>82</sup> Such examples indicate that the PRC regime was able to reach and influence a more significant number of Turkish people through its radio broadcasts than the paltry letter count would suggest. Although an accurate estimate of the size of this audience requires further study, the available evidence indicates that these broadcasts provided a direct channel between China and Turkey at a time when few alternatives existed.

#### 4. Conclusion

The story of Radio Peking's Turkish language broadcasting section is an exemplary case of China's larger propaganda and persuasion activities during the Cold War years. This article's primary aim, however, was to highlight an unexplored aspect of Sino-Turkish relations in the 1950s and 1960s. Turkish language broadcasts were launched at a relatively early date by Radio Peking to reach audiences beyond China's immediate neighborhood. Since its launch in 1957, broadcasting in Turkish proved a difficult task for Radio Peking administration. Unlike Western and East/Southeast Asian languages, which had many speakers on the mainland, Turkish was an unfamiliar language whose broadcasting necessitated continuous guidance from Iranian-Soviet experts. After the departure of those experts in the early 1960s, the lack of trained personnel proved a real challenge for the section. In addition to staff shortages, the Turkish language section lacked main reference works on Turkey, including a Chinese-Turkish dictionary. Amidst huge bureaucracy, technical inadequacies and shortage of personnel, it is significant that Turkish broadcasts experienced an almost uninterrupted flow during the Maoist period.

A predominantly Muslim country with a strong anti-communist sentiment, Turkey offered little prospects for Radio Peking in terms of recruiting a mass audience. Although there is only scattered information with regard to audience feedback, it is clear that China had limited success in reaching average Turkish listeners during the Cold War. By the mid-1960s,

<sup>79</sup> According to a retired staff member, listener letters mostly originated from rural areas, villagers and workers: "Among the listeners, there were some who wanted to come to China because of the poverty conditions they faced in Turkey. One listener wrote that not only he himself but his whole village was following our broadcasts. Some wanted [us to send them] a tape or a radio. There were also letters from Azerbaijan, Iran and Turkmenistan. Most letters would praise us. They would ask questions about our policies and about the social conditions in China. Especially during the Cultural Revolution there were many...letters [curious about China]. We would answer the letters and our answers would be double-checked by senior cadres". A former announcer in the Turkish broadcasting section, Interview by author. Beijing, October, 26, 2007.

<sup>80</sup> Such as the group of villagers who regularly tuned in to Radio Peking's Turkish language broadcasts in Söke, Aydın. See Durmuş Uyanık, *Aşılı Zeytin: Devrimci Köylünün 12 Mart Anıları*, (Istanbul: Kaynak Yayınları, 2003), 31.

<sup>81</sup> This was suggested by a former member of the Turkish leftist movement during a conversation with the author.

<sup>82</sup> For a detailed examination of this group, see Cagdas Ungor, *Impact of Mao Zedong Thought in Turkey: 1966-1977* (M.A. thesis, Istanbul Bilgi University, 2004).



however, these broadcasts seemingly influenced Turkish leftist youth, particularly those with Maoist sympathies. Therefore, Turkish language broadcasts provided a link between China and Turkey during the Cold War, albeit for a small circle of people.

Predating the establishment of official Sino-Turkish ties in 1971, Radio Peking's Turkish language broadcasts were one of the few direct channels between China and Turkey during this period. As of today, the section continues its work under its new call sign "China Radio International".<sup>83</sup> Although the radio's dominant position in Chinese foreign propaganda work has now been eclipsed by TV and the internet, the PRC regime's efforts to win the hearts and minds of Turkish audiences continue to this day. With the launch of China's economic reforms in 1978, Turkish-language broadcasts lost their Marxist-Leninist jargon, but the legacy of the Cold War has not entirely disappeared. Similar to earlier days, CRI's Turkish language broadcasts propagate China's economic and social modernization, and now with an aim to improve Sino-Turkish ties. Another thematic legacy is the emphasis on the religious freedoms "enjoyed" by Uyghur residents in the China's autonomous Xinjiang province. Chinese broadcasters are also advised to avoid sensitive topics such as domestic party rivalries in Turkey or the Cyprus problem.<sup>84</sup>

The change in Sino-Turkish relations in the post-Cold War era is significant. Since the 1990s, China and Turkey have seen exponential growth in their trade volume, with China becoming Turkey's number one trading partner in the Asia-Pacific region. The increased number of official exchanges, the signing of their "strategic partnership" treaty in 2010 and the launch of "2012 -Year of China" in Turkey suggest that the political and cultural dimensions of Sino-Turkish relations will acquire new significance in the twenty-first century. In this sense, the story of Radio Peking's Turkish language section, which struggled to reach Turkey against all odds during the Cold War, is an important footnote in the history of Sino-Turkish relations.

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<sup>83</sup> CRI's online broadcast content can be found at the official website for Turkish broadcasts (<http://turkish.cri.cn/>).

<sup>84</sup> See, Li Dan, Chen Minyi, *Bumun zhi*, Vol. 2, 318

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## The Arab Spring – Contemporary Revolutions in Historical Comparison

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### 1. Introduction

In 1971 it was apparently “too early” for Zhou Enlai to give Henry Kissinger his assessment of the significance of the French Revolution. It is certainly too soon to sum up the importance of the events in the Arab world since January 2011.<sup>1</sup> However, it seems reasonable to attempt an interim assessment of how the “Arab Spring” fits into the pattern of major revolutions and waves of upheaval since 1789. Such a review of similarities and contrasts between current events and past developments should provide some historical foundations for comparative analysis of the contemporary revolutionary wave in the Middle East.

The French Revolution of 1789 was often taken as the template for subsequent revolutions, both by revolutionaries and their opponents in the years following.<sup>2</sup> But, of course, no successor – even in France – conformed to type. Although many participants in subsequent upheavals were influenced by memories and interpretations of French events after 1789, subsequent upheavals there diverged from the pattern set after 1789. The revolutions in France itself in 1830, 1848 and 1871 were full of echoes of 1789, even conscious role-playing,<sup>3</sup> but did not replicate the events or consequences of the period 1789-99. The revolutions in Russia in 1917 and China in 1949 are often viewed as the greatest political, social and economic upheavals since the “classic” French model, with similar global reverberations. However, the Europe-wide upheavals in 1848-49, along with aspects of another “Springtime of the Peoples”, i.e., the collapse of Soviet-style Communism between 1989 and 1991, may offer more fruitful comparisons with current events in the Arab world since December 2010.<sup>4</sup>

The uprisings of 1848-49 and 1989-91 involved multi-national simultaneous outbreaks of revolution, and they seem more ambiguous than 1789, 1917 or 1949. Both 1848-49 and the recent experience of the post-Communist revolutions suggest that the process of revolutionary

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<sup>1</sup> Supplementing the premier’s apparent caution, Giovanni Arrighi reviews the unfulfilled predictions about China in his *Adam Smith in Beijing. Lineages of the Twenty-First Century* (Verso: London, 2007), 13-14. It is worth noting that mistranslation may have led Kissinger to think that Zhou was reflecting on 1789 rather than the more recent events in 1968, revealing the Chinese Communist to have been less concerned with the *longue durée* than the American conservative. See “Letters” in *Times Literary Supplement* (29 June 2012), 6.

<sup>2</sup> For a review of the typology of revolutions on the bicentennial of the French revolution, see Matthew Soberg Shugart, “Patterns of Revolution” in *Theory and Society* 18 (1989), 249-71. On the eve of his fall in March, 1848, Metternich gloomily compared current events to the progress of the French Revolution year by year, thinking his Europe was at the 1792 stage: “Can 1793 fail to follow?” But events played out differently. See M.S. Anderson, *The Ascendancy of Europe., 1815-1914* (Longman: London, 1972), 97.

<sup>3</sup> For Tocqueville’s sense that the men of 1848 were sometimes playing roles premiered in 1789, see Hugh Brogan, *Alexis de Tocqueville. A Biography* (Profile: London, 2006), 427-28.

<sup>4</sup> The most important study of the impact of revolutions on international relations since the later eighteenth century, David Armstrong, *Revolution and World Order. The Revolutionary State in International Society* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1993), neglects 1848-49 and was written, though not published, before 1989-91.

change is not linear but filled with twists and turns. After 1848's sudden collapse of the old order, 1849 saw restorations, but they could not completely turn back the clock. Similarly, within a few years of 1989, old faces were back in high office across the ex-Soviet bloc but the planned economy was dead nonetheless. Progress and regression intertwined after 1848 and 1989 alike.

Assessing degrees of change and continuity is often highly subjective. Whether considering the specifics of one state's contemporary experience or a comparison across time and space, the distinction must be kept in mind between what outside observers and commentators make of possible comparisons and what locals think. (Of course, the particular commentators or locals and their interpretations are themselves sub-dividable into component sectors analysed by political, social and religious affiliations and so on.)

How far events in the past outside the Arab world impinge on and influence people in the contemporary Middle East is debatable, but as physicists have pointed out, it is not necessary to know about something for it to have an effect. Equally, "knowing" something which is not actually the case can influence one's behaviour or interpretations.<sup>5</sup> Lessons which may seem obvious to one group are imperceptible to another, and so it was in the past, when transferring experiences across boundaries proved more difficult than merely hearing the news from "over there".

Of course, any discussion of the Arab Spring, even in comparison, must take account of the Middle East's own historical and cultural peculiarities even if lack of space precludes exploring them. It is also true that only with the passage of time will a full and multi-sourced account of these events be available to provide detailed resources for archive-based research on the specific mechanisms of political change – or the frustration of it – from Morocco to Bahrain. But, even in the absence of open archives, a preliminary attempt to put the Arab Spring into an international historical comparative perspective can still be useful as a means to help illuminate the unique and specific features of recent events.<sup>6</sup> Any given Arab society's current crisis can be considered against possible models and alternative types of political revolution, if only to point out what is incomparable about contemporary events.

## 2. From Immobility to Fluidity – the Pace of Change

It is generally agreed upon by scholarly and media commentators alike that, after decades of apparently unshakeable rule, Arab regimes collapsed with remarkable speed. The fall of Zine el Abidine ben Ali, who had ruled Tunisia since 1987, and then that of Hosni Mubarak, who had been president of Egypt since Anwar Sadat's assassination in 1981, removed icons of Middle East politics. Not since the fall in rapid succession of Eastern Europe's Communist regimes in the latter half of 1989, when similarly immobile regimes imploded, had such a wave of revolution been seen.<sup>7</sup> The violence in Libya, Yemen and then Syria added to

<sup>5</sup> "Every school pupil knows..." things that are wrong. For instance, it was not the French Revolutionaries of the 1790s who asserted the sovereignty of the elected parliament – for them sovereignty still resided in the People – but, ironically, the ultra-reactionary majority in the 1815 Chamber, which found themselves "more royalist than the king" when Louis XVIII chose to appoint ex-revolutionary and imperial ministers. The radical, Louis Blanc, noted, "It is they who proclaimed the dogma of the absolute sovereignty of the legislature". When the King dissolved the Chamber, "those who called themselves *ultra-royalists* were dismayed, and those who called themselves *liberals* applauded. It should have been the other way round". Quoted in Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System IV: Centrist Liberalism Triumphant, 1789-1914* (University of California Press: Berkeley, 2011), 48.

<sup>6</sup> For instance, the study of sociology of crowds in 2011 is still in its infancy and highly impressionistic. It was not until the 1950s that George Rudé pioneered the use of police records to begin to classify who was on the streets of Paris in the key days of 1789. See George Rudé, *The Crowd in the French Revolution* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1959).

<sup>7</sup> Comparisons with the wave of so-called "colour-coded" revolutions in Georgia (2003), Ukraine (2004) and Kyrgyzstan

the drama of events, but also complicated interpretation. If successful street protests in Tunisia, then Egypt seemed to mirror the “People Power” of 1989 in East-Central Europe, the internecine bloodshed in Libya, Syria and Yemen contradicted the neat comparison with the virtually bloodless collapse of Communism.<sup>8</sup> However, even if we take into account the 600 casualties in Romania in December 1989 – the only violent revolution in Europe that year – it is clear that the death toll involved in removing Muammar Qaddafi from power after 41 years or sending Ali Abdullah Saleh into retirement after 30 years in power was far greater and the in-fighting far more bitter than in Bucharest two decades earlier.

The civil conflicts in Libya, Yemen and Syria naturally raise the argument that these are societies so different in their social structure, group loyalties and political dynamics from the non-Arabic communities experiencing revolution in the previous quarter century as to render comparative analysis fruitless and sterile. Critics of comparison will argue that the unique features of Arab culture make comparisons artificial when not misconstrued, but, without comparisons showing up the contrasts, how can what is actually unique be identified and separated from what is falsely assumed to be peculiar to a particular culture?

So far, the revolutions in the Arab world have been largely confined to republics, with Bahrain the only monarchy under serious pressure from street protests. The failure of street protests in Morocco, Jordan, Oman and eastern Saudi Arabia to “take off”, the very modest political reforms in the first three monarchies and the successful rejection of concessions in Saudi Arabia suggest that hereditary monarchies enjoy either more legitimacy in general or a stronger cohort of institutional supporters than the would-be “republican-monarchs” in Egypt, Tunisia and Libya. (Only Syria had successfully transferred power from father to son in a “republic”). Nonetheless, despite the limits to change in the Arab world experienced so far, future historians will certainly record the instant judgement of the world media and external commentators that the changes in North Africa and Yemen as well as the civil conflict in Syria marked a turning point in regional if not global affairs. Even if contemporary perceptions turn out to be mistaken, they certainly are impacting current policymaking.

### 3. Instant Assessments, Past and Present

A brief review of the “instant” books listed on Amazon.com under the rubric “Arab Spring” reveals widely differing interpretations as well as the priorities of English-language publishers. Has the Arab Spring been hijacked by Islamists, and so is it a blow to US influence? Or is it steered by US agents? What are the social, generational or technological components of the upheaval? The titles seem to say it all: John R. Bradley, *After the Arab Spring: How Islamists Hijacked the Arab Revolts*, Hamid Dabashi, *The Arab Spring: The End of Postcolonialism*, The *Guardian’s* Toby Manhire, *The Arab Spring: Rebellion, Revolution and the New World Order*, Bruce Feiler, *Generation Freedom...*<sup>9</sup>

Instant verdicts, even if proven wrong, tell us much about a revolution’s immediate international impact. It is worth remembering how, for instance, in 1789 the news of the storming of the Bastille was taken at once to be earthshaking even if its consequences were often misjudged. News of the collapse of the absolute monarchy in France was greeted as

(2005) as well as Serbia (2000) are considered below.

<sup>8</sup> It should also be remembered that more than 300 people died in Tunisia and more than 600 in Egypt, in addition to the as many as 30,000 casualties in Libya and more than 10,000 in Syria.

<sup>9</sup> The reader may wish to determine the current “favourites” in the publishing stakes by entering “Arab Spring” in the Amazon.com search engine.

a good thing across Europe, from London to St. Petersburg to Vienna: idealists saw it as a hopeful sign for human liberty, while realists thought turmoil in France would remove any chance of her causing international trouble for the foreseeable future and of her posing a challenge to their own state's interests. Both were wrong about the short-term consequences, given the onset of both the Terror and international war in 1792, but not necessarily foolish in their judgements.<sup>10</sup>

The speed with which assessments of the French Revolution were revised, dropped and forgotten is worth remembering by anyone assessing the Arab Spring today. Future conservative counter-revolutionary critics forgot their initial positive assessments. The British House of Lords was so taken by the storming of the Bastille and France's evident steps to imitate George III's constitutional monarchy that it immediately voted to make 14 July a public holiday in Britain. But the House of Commons did not reassemble from its summer break to consider the matter until after Louis XVI and his family had been forcibly dragged by the mob from Versailles to Paris, which was a constitutional development less obviously to be celebrated at Westminster, so Britons never got that midsummer Bank Holiday.<sup>11</sup>

Mistaken assumptions about the trajectory of revolutionary events were not confined to 1789. In 1917, the fall of the Tsar was welcomed by his allies. The British and French hoped that a "democratic" Russia would be a revitalized ally in the First World War, just as the French Republic had rallied people to its cause in the war against Berlin and Vienna after 1792. President Wilson used the argument that a democratic Russia was a natural ally of the United States to justify US entry into the war against Germany in April 1917, just as Lenin was returning home. In his War Message to Congress (2 April 1917), President Wilson referred to "the wonderful and heartening things that have been happening within the last few weeks in Russia". Wilson rejected any claims to legitimacy that Nicholas II had had, declaring, "The autocracy... was not in fact Russian in origin, character or purpose; and it has now been shaken off and the great, generous Russian people have been added... to the forces that are fighting for freedom in the world, for justice, and for peace".<sup>12</sup>

Wilson can be forgiven for thinking this. The leaders of the new Provisional Government took the same view. Searching for a precedent for the upheaval they were witnessing in Russia, they could only see what happened in France after 1789 as the appropriate model. Educated men like Prince Lvov, the new prime minister, or Kerensky, the energetic war minister, recalled that the French people had rallied to defend their new republic in 1917 against enemies who seemed familiar to them: the Prussians and Austrians had invaded France in 1792 to stifle the revolution, only to arouse a hornets' nest of popular resistance. Why should the events of 1792 in France then act as an inspiring precedent to Russians in their own time?<sup>13</sup> Everybody remembered Goethe's verdict as part of the defeated Prussian

<sup>10</sup> For those taking a long-term view, it is possible to argue that despite the casualties of the Revolution, it laid the foundations of future freedoms by setting an example for idealists to follow – and realists might argue that after 25 years of Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars France's international position was weakened. Many of those living in the short term might have found the consequences of the French Revolution less satisfactory compared with the widespread hopes in 1789.

<sup>11</sup> See Norman Hampson, *Will and Circumstance* (Duckworth: London, 1983), 3. Britain became the *locus classicus* of state-sponsored counter-revolutionary activity, but only as the 1790s progressed. By 1797, for instance, the British secret service spent more money on subverting the elections in France than the ruling Directory there spent on managing them! See Donald Sutherland, *France, 1789-1815: Revolution and Counter-Revolution* (Fontana: London, 1986), 300-303.

<sup>12</sup> Quoted in Cynthia Weber, *Simulating Sovereignty: Intervention, the State and Symbolic Exchange* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1995), 72.

<sup>13</sup> This kind of reasoning brought into the open the culture gap between the educated leaders of the Provisional Government and the illiterate masses, which was then exploited by Lenin, similar to the way that secular opponents aware of 1989 or the colour-coded revolutions after 2000 have failed to grasp that these events are not lodged as models in the minds of most Arabs.



army at Valmy: “Gentlemen, this is the beginning of a new epoch in history, and you can claim to have witnessed it”.<sup>14</sup>

Nowadays anybody with a television, a computer terminal or the appropriate mobile phone app can be “present at the time”.<sup>15</sup> But as police officers are only too well aware, eyewitnesses are often limited in their perception of events because of their standpoint.

Academic historians have cast doubt on Goethe’s eyewitness attribution of the French victory to revolutionary *élan*, emphasising the Republic’s inheritance of Louis XVI’s inflated bankruptcy-inducing military budget, not least his unparalleled artillery. But Goethe was no more wrong about the morale-boosting effects of revolution than the Allies and the Russian Provisional Government itself were in 1917 in reading into their contemporary situation the lessons of 1792. Ninety-five years ago the problem with the received wisdom was that the vast majority of ordinary Russians – unlike their Francophone elite – knew nothing about the parallels between the French Revolution and their own situation, nor did they want to carry on with the Tsar’s foreign policy, only minus the autocrat, as provisional foreign minister Paul Miliukov promised the Allies. On the contrary, they wanted “peace, land and bread”, though in fact Lenin would give them civil war and famine, so ordinary folk were no wiser about the future than their “betters”. But what 1917 suggests is that outsiders or social groups cut off from ordinary people by status, education or sectarian background often see a pattern of events based on a reading of history, which is invisible or irrelevant to the bulk of people experiencing their own revolution.

#### 4. Foreign Inspirations or Foreign Interference?

Today, outsider interpreters of the Arab Spring often bring their own knowledge of revolutionary precedents, like the largely bloodless collapse of Communism in 1989-91, or the original “People Power” revolution in the Philippines in 1986, to interpret current events in the Middle East. They rarely ask, however, what Arabs know or think about these “precedents”.<sup>16</sup> Suspicion of foreign models seems to have been widespread in Egypt, for instance, as evidenced by the few expressions of public sympathy when foreign NGO representatives and their local partners were arrested there.

Only Egyptians with an internet connection and an interest in accessing international NGO activities seem to have been aware of the precedents for anti-Mubarak web-based protest groups. When representatives of foreign NGOs came to Egypt who had experience in training activists and devising anti-regime propaganda exercises in countries like Milošević’s Serbia before 5 October 2000 or Shevardnadze’s Georgia in 2003, it was anti-Mubarak activists from the well-educated, secular “linked-in” generation who welcomed their support.<sup>17</sup> But many other anti-Mubarak protestors were suspicious of American activists or US-backed NGOs from Serbia or Georgia. The subsequent crisis between Cairo and Washington in February, 2012 over the arrest warrants for foreign NGO activists operating in Egypt without formal

<sup>14</sup> Quoted in Colin Jones, *The Great Nation: France from Louis XV to Napoleon* (Penguin: London, 2003), 462.

<sup>15</sup> In another way of rendering Goethe’s famous “*ihr seid dabei gewesen*” (“and you can claim to have been present”): what people see on their screens has immediacy but does not necessarily convey the complexity of events even when they seem to have been witnessed.

<sup>16</sup> Given the large number of Filipino “guest workers” in the richer Arab states, it would make an interesting study to see what – if any – the impact from their experience of the Philippines’ recurrent mass protests since 1986 that removed two presidents has had on their hosts. If anything, the fact that the Philippines remains a primary exporter of people rather than a political model is likely to dampen enthusiasm for imitating that model.

<sup>17</sup> For the role of Serbian-trained graduates of the Qatar-funded “Academy of Change”, see Jeffrey C. Alexander, *Performative Revolution in Egypt. An Essay in Cultural Power* (Bloomsbury: London, 2011), 35.

authorization was acute, but it also revealed the limitations of support for such activities even among street protestors.

It was striking that although Egypt's Tahrir Square was the scene of recurrent demonstrations against the continuing influence of ministers and high-ranking officials of Mubarak's regime in the post-revolutionary government of Field Marshal Tantawi, there was no widespread protest against the detentions of the American and other foreign activists. Apart from his status as the long-serving Minister of Defence, until he gave the *coup de grace* to Mubarak Tantawi had also retained in office the chief accuser against the foreign activists under Mubarak-era regulations, Fayza Aboul Naga, a surviving minister from Mubarak's cabinet. Most Egyptian public outrage was, however, not directed at her but at the decision to release the foreigners on bail, giving them their opportunity to leave the country and effectively scuppering any Egyptian legal process.

### 5. Turncoats, Weathercocks and Other Survivors

The survival in high office of former dignitaries of the old regimes in Egypt, but even in countries with a violent upheaval like Libya, is not a peculiarity in the Arab Spring revolutions. If high-ranking officials of the old regime in France and Russia disappeared from their posts soon after 1789 or 1917, the recent revolutions in the ex-Soviet bloc have seen former Party secretaries and communist-era ministers return to high office, some through elections, some through street protests. In Libya, it was Qaddafi's longstanding comrades-in-arms over decades who led the uprising under the chairmanship of his Minister of Justice, Mustafa Abdul Jalil. The assumption of the *de facto* presidency of Egypt by Mubarak's previously loyal lieutenant, Mohammed Hussein Tantawi, was merely a bloodless example of the role of such insider regime changers. The well-connected US commentator on both the "Rose Revolution" in Georgia in 2003 and contemporary Arab affairs, David Ignatius, postulated that a key rule for contemporary revolutions was "Burrow from within. Like many reformers, [Georgia's] Saakashvili began as an insider with the regime he later toppled".<sup>18</sup>

Two and a half thousand years ago, Plato recognised that splits inside a regime were an essential precondition for successful revolution: "Is it not a simple fact that revolution in any form of government always starts from the outbreak of internal dissension in the ruling class? The constitution cannot be upset so long as that class is of one mind, however small it may be".<sup>19</sup> Indecision and disagreement over how to handle street protests were fatal in the classic revolutions in France in 1789 and in Russia after 1917, but these revolutions by contrast with today's uprisings rapidly dispensed with the old regime ministers and high-ranking officers. Emigration, led by Louis XVI's brothers, started within days of the fall of the Bastille and the King's government was run by ministers with no past experience of high office.<sup>20</sup> Similarly, in Russia, the Tsar's ministers and aides fell with him and were often arrested. By contrast, in Ukraine, Georgia and Kyrgyzstan, the new leaders were former ministers of the fallen regime<sup>21</sup> who had reinvented themselves as the crowds' heroes, criticising the corruption

<sup>18</sup> See David Ignatius, "Six Rules for a Peaceful Democratic Revolution" in the *Ottawa Citizen* (13 July 2004).

<sup>19</sup> Quoted from *The Republic* in Mark Almond, *Revolution* (DeAgostini: London, 1996), 30.

<sup>20</sup> How different was the Restoration in 1815: who can forget Chateaubriand's evocation of the grotesque scene of Napoleon's former Minister of Police, Fouché, who had voted for Louis XVI's execution in 1793, and the Emperor's ex-foreign minister, the renegade bishop Talleyrand, kissing the restored Louis XVIII's hands on resuming office under the monarchy?

<sup>21</sup> Georgian, Ukrainian and Kyrgyz insiders played ongoing roles, both when the Soviet regime fell in 1991 and then in the successor regimes overthrown in 2003, 2004 and 2005 – and in the case of Kyrgyzstan, overthrown again in 2010.

and incompetence of the old regime with the authority of insiders – though not necessarily changing too much of its *modus operandi* once re-ensconced.

However drastic the fate of the leaders of the old regimes after 1789 or 1917, focussing on what happened to the former elite after revolution or regime change as an index of how fundamental a revolution has been can be misleading. The executions of Louis XVI or Nicholas II certainly symbolised the far-reaching upheaval initiated by the revolutions in their countries. However, reflecting on the sea change in economic policies and property ownership in the former Soviet bloc after 1989 shows that even though – with the exception of Romania’s Ceaușescu – no blood-letting took place, clearly a revolution in the socio-economic order occurred. However, this socio-economic upheaval confirmed that many former members of the ruling *nomenklatura* became the political and economic elite of the new system. Many ministers of the old regime could rise to the top under the new democratic order, such as Aleksander Kwasniewski, elected president of post-Communist Poland as early as 1995. Multi-candidate elections since 1989 have transformed the way leaders were chosen but have not prevented many beneficiaries of the old order from providing much of the pool of candidates to run the new regime. Only time will ensure a generational change.

Even in the classic violent and apparently root-and-branch revolutions, a large part of the old order’s personnel below the highly visible top rank remained in place. What distinguishes a revolution from a regime change is precisely that it affects more than personnel. Indeed, all manners of officials can remain in place but policy can be radically different. In Russia, for instance, it is true that the Provisional Government abolished the police, the gendarmerie and the *Okhrana* within days of Nicholas II’s abdication, but as late as 1932 half of the Soviet civil servants employed then had worked for the old tsar – Lenin had admitted to the *Comintern* in 1922 that Communism could not function without them, “We pleaded, ‘Please come back.’!” Trotsky remarked that a revolution changes everything – except the police. For instance, Nicholas II’s expert codebreakers soon found they were indispensable to his murderers.<sup>22</sup> The new state required skills acquired under the old one. And men accustomed to serving are willing to carry on under new masters. Ceva Grimaldi warned his tyrannical master, Ferdinand II, King “Bomba” of Naples, not to trust his bureaucrats to act as a pillar of his monarchy in 1848: “Public employees are generally happy to watch revolutions take place from the window, so long as someone goes on paying their wages”.<sup>23</sup>

## 6. “Lustration” – to purge or not to purge?

People outside the old system, especially victims of informers and secret police arrests, often call for the “truth” about what went on before the revolution. After the collapse of Soviet-style Communism between 1989 and 1991, similar calls for “lustration” were heard from East Berlin to Moscow as now echo in Tunis and Cairo. How can a revolution be complete if servants of the old regime remain in place, particularly if its secret servants, the small army of informers and undercover agents who paralysed opposition for decades, are not exposed and rendered impotent to influence politics in the future? Yet experience suggests that secret

<sup>22</sup> For Lenin’s Report to the Fourth Congress of *Comintern*, see Carollee Bengelsdorf, *The Problem of Democracy in Cuba. Between Vision & Reality* (OUP: Oxford, 1994), 59. For the ex-*Okhrana* functionaries in the Cheka, see Richard Pipes, *Russia under the Bolshevik Regime, 1919-1924* (Harvill/Harper Collins: London, 1994), 505, and Frederic S. Zuckerman, *The Tsarist Secret Police and Russian Society, 1880-1917* (New York University Press: New York, 1996), 247.

<sup>23</sup> Quoted in John A. Davis, *Naples and Napoleon: Southern Italy and the European Revolutions, 1780-1860* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2006), 321.

policemen and informers are the last people to threaten the new regime. On the contrary, they are natural collaborators with power, the last people to rock the new boat, provided their interests are not directly threatened.<sup>24</sup> In any case, the compromising information which they have gathered remains potent under the new order, as the role of *Kompromat* in the internecine political warfare of Yeltsin's Russia suggested.

## 7. Disappointed Expectations and Passive Revolutions

Much more dangerous for a new post-revolutionary leadership are the disappointed expectations of their followers who helped them launch the upheaval. Engels pointed out 150 years ago that “[p]eople who boast that they have made a revolution always realise the next day that they did not know what they were doing, that the revolution they had made was quite different from the one they intended to make”.<sup>25</sup> Engels had in mind the illusions guiding the leaders of the 1848 revolutions across Europe.

The so-called Springtime of the Peoples seems a much better analogue with the Arab Spring than the classic revolutionary upheavals of 1789 and 1917. For all the international consequences of the French and Russian revolutions, they were – as common use of the “national” adjective suggests – primarily national events. Of course, Russia was a multi-national state, but like it or not – and many “Russians” were dissatisfied – it was a single entity on the geo-political map in 1917.

There were of course foreign sympathisers with the French Revolution. Revolutionary émigrés flocked to Paris in the 1790s, much as fellow travellers went on pilgrimage to Moscow in the 1920s and 1930s – each sometimes regarded with suspicion as potential agents of the reactionary states that they had left. Certainly the symbols of the French Revolution became internationalised: tricolour flags – and the fasces that still decorate the French Republic's coat of arms (though they disappeared from Italy's after 1945) became republican emblems worldwide. The Marseillaise was a subversive song for at least another century. But when the revolutionary state tried to spread its model by force, the “armed missionaries” (to use Robespierre's phrase) encountered resistance more often than welcome.<sup>26</sup>

The French revolutionary model was too French for the Spanish, and stirred up nationalism in reaction to attempts to impose it. The same thing happened in Central Europe after 1917, because although identifying the events of 1917 as a “Russian” revolution overlooks the role of non-Russians in the fall of the Tsar and the coming to power of the Communists, most of the neighbours viewed it as a “Russian revolution”. It is commonplace to categorise that what happened in the old Tsarist Empire was an illustration of a major factor in limiting the new regime's international appeal. Poles, for instance, have regarded Russia as the source of their country's loss of independence since the eighteenth century. As Catholics, they were in religious opposition to the Orthodox Christian Tsarist regime but were even less likely to look favourably on an atheistic movement coming from Moscow. Hungarians' bitter experience of Tsarist intervention to suppress their national cause in 1849 meant that the Soviet model had

<sup>24</sup> See Mark Almond, *Still Serving Secretly: Soviet Bloc Spies under New Masters* (I.E.D.S.S.: London, 1992). To be fair, it should be admitted that scholars, too, often seem to show an innate ability to adapt to new regimes.

<sup>25</sup> Quoted in Mark Almond, *Retreat to Moscow: Gorbachev and the East European Revolution* (Institute for European Defence & Strategic Studies: London, 1990), 23.

<sup>26</sup> Revolutions installed from abroad tended to be “passive revolutions”, to use Neapolitan republican Vincenzo Cuoco's term), about the short-lived French-imposed republic that he served in 1799. See Davis, *Naples and Napoleon*, 3. The Communist regimes in Eastern Europe would not have come to power without the Red Army's presence there in 1945.

limited appeal. Most Germans, too, were unlikely to regard Russia as a model for how their country should develop after its monarchy collapsed in 1918.

Of course, there were minorities of various kinds who saw hope in the Soviet experiment. But, for instance, if East European Jews had hoped that the Russian revolution would mark an end to religious discrimination, majorities in Poland, Hungary or Romania feared that outcome. Bigotry to the west was reinforced by the success of the Red Army inside Russia. Many of the fleeing Whites after 1920 brought anti-Semitic as well as anti-Communist ideas with them. In Germany, Adolf Hitler's pre-existing anti-Semitic and anti-revolutionary views were reinforced with stories of Soviet atrocities brought by émigrés who accused the Communist leadership of being Jews. Even German Social Democrats regarded the civil war and famine which beset the ex-Russian empire after 1917 as a warning of what they must avoid at all costs – even if it meant allying with the ex-Imperial army against more radical leftists like the Spartacists.

### 8. 1848-49 – the Forgotten Precedents

The wave of revolution across Europe 70 years before the upheavals at the end of the First World War anticipated features of today's changes in the Middle East. In 1848, common grievances existed across Central and Southern Europe against entrenched regimes and poor social conditions and the disruptive effects of technological change as populations grew explosively despite these difficulties. Comparisons between the Arab world in 2011 with 1848 may also be more apposite because levels of literacy and availability of higher education are closer to mid-nineteenth century European standards than those in Central Europe in 1989. However, the availability of handheld communications technology is so widespread as to make the nineteenth century rumour mill seem decidedly primitive, at least in terms of the speed of communication across whole societies, but we should not forget the “electrifying” effect of telegraphic reports of the fall of the French King on the nascent protest movement in Berlin already squatting around the “Tents” in the Tiergarten in March 1848.<sup>27</sup> The domino effect in 1848 was striking, much as the subversive effect of the news from Tunisia in January 2011 cut immediately across boundaries in the Middle East.

In 1848, the revolutions were concentrated in capital cities. Of course, that is where the regimes' headquarters were too, but the mass of the population was still rural. This proved decisive. Religion rather than revolutionary ideology was the dominant intellectual force in the minds of peasants then. The first democratic elections on a universal (male) franchise in 1848 were held on Sundays, and often the clergy led voters from church services to public voting places where, to the disappointment of radical activists who had introduced “one man, one vote” a few months earlier, the majority voted for conservative candidates. This phenomenon was most obvious in France, where the “friends of the people”, as the new provisional government saw themselves, not only proclaimed a republic but introduced genuine adult male democracy, only to see the swarms of newly enfranchised voters follow their Catholic priests from mass to the polling stations on the Sunday set down for voting and to elect a huge conservative majority.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Long before Tahrir Square was occupied, or even Kiev's Maidan in 2003, tent camps were a revolutionary feature. See Hagen Schulze, *The Course of German Nationalism*, 7, and Christopher Clark, *Iron Kingdom*, 468, for Berlin in 1848.

<sup>28</sup> Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte built his power base on that model and urged Prussia in 1861 to introduce democracy because “in this system the conservative rural population can vote down the liberals in the cities”. Quoted in Anderson, *The Ascendancy of Europe*, 115.

Today, in both Tunisia and Egypt, secular liberals have been disappointed by how the mass of the population has voted when street protests in the capital have produced democracy. The victory of religious parties from *Ennahda's* plurality on a low turnout (52%) in Tunisia to the absolute majority of candidates drawn from the Muslim Brotherhood and Salafist groups in Egypt's parliamentary elections, and of Muhammad Morsi in the presidential election (also on a low turnout) in June 2012, suggest that about half the population is not politically mobilised despite the dramatic events and also that among the politically active electorates religiously oriented candidates hold an edge over secularists, whether they are anti-regime as in Tunisia or ex-regime as in Egypt. These electoral majorities, along with the Islamist nature of many of the decrees issued by the Libyan transitional authorities, for instance, suggest that religion broadly understood to include a socio-economic agenda as well as narrower *Sharia* concepts is the key component of the new dispensation, at least so far as voters are concerned. This has put the Twitter generation of younger and maybe more literate, but also decidedly secular, activists in a dilemma: their protests played a key role in bringing about regime change, but a big crowd in Tahrir Square can turn out to be a modest minority in the ballot box.<sup>29</sup>

The nature of the newly elected majorities in Tunisia and Egypt, however, differs from the French model in 1848 in an important respect: even if secular radicals were downbeat about the victory of their religiously inspired opponents in the recent elections, their programmes and election promises were quite radical for the existing economic system, especially about ending the intertwining of business with the state apparatus. It remains to be seen whether the interwoven strands of Egypt's military-industrial complex will be unravelled. The decrees issued by the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces on the eve of the presidential poll there in June restricted the president's powers and retained to the generals wide authority, including over who would draft the country's new constitution. This echoed the decision in Prussia in 1849, after the army had suppressed street protests, to keep the forms of democratic elections but to drain them of potency by adapting the constitutional order to a hierarchical and authoritarian reality.

The 1848 Springtime of the Peoples is reasonably presented as the closest European historical precedent for the Arab Spring but the reactionary backlash in 1849 was too easily forgotten, despite forming part of the process. Keith Simpson, a former Sandhurst historian who is now the British foreign secretary's parliamentary aide, says: "The historical parallel for the Arab spring is not 1989, it is 1848-51. It is the European revolutions which saw in some cases regimes being overthrown and in other cases reactionary forces... able to hold on to power. I think it is the same with the Arab spring. It is mixed".<sup>30</sup>

## 9. People Power or Personality-driven Protests?

Revulsion concentrated on a single person makes for a powerful motivating force for a popular movement. Allegations of corruption at the top in 2011 corroded military loyalty in Tunisia and Egypt. Different in the Middle East from Central Europe in 1848 is how much the personification of popular discontent in 2011 was focused on one person as head of state

<sup>29</sup> The crowds in Tahrir Square have had differing compositions over the months, but the Western media naturally tended to reflect the views and presence of English-speaking secular-minded demonstrators.

<sup>30</sup> Quoted in Patrick Wintour and Nicholas Watt, "David Cameron's Libyan War" in *The Guardian* (2 October 2011): <http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2011/oct/02/david-cameron-libyan-war-analysis>.

and head of government. Although in France from the 1780s on, scurrilous rumours and cartoons of the King undermined royal authority, in Central Europe in 1848 it was ministers like Metternich, not the Habsburg emperor or the King of Prussia, who were the targets of popular anger.<sup>31</sup> The mistake of Mubarak or ben Ali was not to have a front man to take the blame for the regime's failings and to be able to play the role of the benign monarch who "if he had only known" would have acted earlier to redress the people's grievances.<sup>32</sup> Where monarchs retain legitimacy, they can sacrifice ministers and survive in power. But the clan nature of many of the Gulf states – like Qaddafi's "republic in one family" – undercuts the distance between monarch and people because ministerial and executive posts are often held by family members, who can be less complacently thrown to the wolves. The role of members of the al-Khalifa family in the day-to-day repression of Bahraini protestors meant that there was no clear firewall between the King and his agents. Richer rulers, like those in Riyadh, had cash reserves to buy off popular discontents – at least for the moment – unlike Bahrain, which has dwindling energy exports and whose role as a financial and tourist centre was hurt by the protests.

The lack of solidarity among authoritarian republican rulers in 2011 was striking. Monarchs in 1849 rallied together, but Mubarak stood paralysed as ben Ali fell. Algeria's generals and Bashar al-Assad abstained from the Arab League vote over taking military action in Libya. The Arab rulers split into monarchs led by the King of Saudi Arabia, and maybe bankrolled by the Emir of Qatar, against upstart republican despots whose families had not had the chance to entrench their clans or tribal members in key positions and locales over many decades, as had the more traditional monarchies.

Apart from Nicolae Ceaușescu's grooming of his son, Nicu, to be a future leader of Romania, nepotism was not a serious issue in the 1989 revolutions.<sup>33</sup> Popular antagonism to the privileges and assumed corruption of the *nomenklatura* as a whole was certainly a big factor in the erosion of its authority across Eastern Europe, and then in the Soviet Union itself. But even East European Soviet-era elites were not family based in the way that the Arab regimes toppled in 2011 had become.

The revulsion at the inversion of once-republican or even radical regimes into increasingly clan or even family regimes was a key unique ingredient in the Arab Spring. The question of who would succeed decades-long presidents was becoming acute as old age marched towards its inevitable finale. Simmering succession crises preceded the outbreak of popular protest in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Yemen. So-called "republican monarchies" had been established. Long-term rulers like ben Ali, Mubarak, Qaddafi and Saleh were presumed to be grooming family members – usually sons – for the succession. This produced tensions with other key regime members. In Egypt, for instance, Mubarak's long-term defence minister, Field Marshal Tantawi, rejected the idea that son Gamal Mubarak, who had not done military service, had the qualifications for the presidency.<sup>34</sup> Particularly when non-family members

<sup>31</sup> See Anderson, *The Ascendancy of Europe*, 75-76.

<sup>32</sup> Among republican despots, both Hitler and Stalin achieved this psychological hold over their people, many of whom attributed bad decisions and cruel acts to subordinates rather than the leader, just as medieval Englishmen preferred to blame their woes on "wicked counsellors" rather than their kings.

<sup>33</sup> It is worth noting, however, that the two most in-bred Communist regimes, the Castros' Cuba and the Kim dynasty in North Korea, have proved that the Stalinist "socialism in one family" is a great survivor.

<sup>34</sup> Although in both Tunisia and Egypt the army provided the *coup de grace* to the president, the scale of the military establishment in the two countries was strikingly different. Tunisia's army was small (even for a small country) with no more than

in the power ministries defected from supporting the would-be president dynast, the regime tottered. Qaddafi managed to unite his quarrelling sons around him in the last six months of his regime but his veteran defence chief, Abdul Fatah Younis, deserted the leader whom he had supported since their coup in September 1969.

## 10. The Syrian Exception

It is not by chance that Bashar al-Assad's dynastic succession to the Syrian presidency occurred a decade before the Arab Spring; it gave him the opportunity to establish his own power base. At the same time, the distribution of key security posts to clan members or fellow Alawites cemented the regime's command-and-control so that defections or mutiny could neither paralyse it nor establish a rival centre of authority. Al-Assad's resilience under pressure recalls the monarchs of 1848, who made concessions to liberal demands and permitted parliamentary elections but kept a firm hold over the army. Prussian or Austrian officers could turn their largely peasant soldiers on rebellious urban centres, relying on rigid discipline but also the resentment of the countryside against the demonstrators in the cities seen as the privileged and often as children of landowners, rent collectors or tax officials.<sup>35</sup> Parliamentary legitimacy had little power to set against the generals when they acted to suppress the newly elected assemblies in 1849.

## 11. Democratic Peace Theory under Test

The international aspects of the sudden victory of democracy in 1848 may be a warning about the future of the Middle East today. The idea of democratic peace is likely to be tested in the region as never before. For decades, Israel argued it was the only democracy there, and even when Lebanon was put forward as another one, the internal fissures of Lebanese society could explain away the state of war between Israel and its northern neighbour. However, since only autocrats like Mubarak and King Hussein of Jordan had the power to push through peace with Israel, the democratisation of Egypt with the Brothers of Hamas in the lead position will test the Camp David accords. Back in the springtime of Europe's peoples 160 years ago, it was widely expected that nationalism would be fulfilled by democratic states full of respect for each other's rights. A French liberal participant in the 1848 revolutions, Etienne Garnier-Pagès, wrote up his hopes for a Europe of free and independent nations: "There will be no more wars on questions of partition, domination, nationality and influence. No more weak and strong, oppressed and oppressors. Every country, free to enjoy its liberties and to live its own life, will hasten to join the life and liberty of all... The reign of peace, order and harmony will be founded".<sup>36</sup> But as Edward Mansfield and Jack Snyder remind us, it was not only in 1848-49 that democrats fought to establish democracy, but also that new democracies are frequently belligerent and their peoples unwilling to countenance the idea that the rulers of another country are anything other than knaves and tyrants with whom engaging in diplomacy is wasted breath.<sup>37</sup>

40,000 service personnel. Maybe it could not have controlled countrywide protests even if it was willing to try. Egypt's armed forces were the tenth largest in the world, disposing of at least the equivalent of 10% of the country's GDP by comparison with Tunisia's meagre 1.4% on defence spending.

<sup>35</sup> See Alan Sked, *The Survival of the Habsburg Empire: Radetzky, the Imperial Army and the Class War 1848* (Longman: London, 1979).

<sup>36</sup> From his *Histoire de la révolution de 1848* in Anderson, *The Ascendancy of Europe*, 95.

<sup>37</sup> See Edward Mansfield and Jack L. Snyder, *Electing to Fight: Why Emerging Democracies Go to War* (MIT Press: Cambridge, Mass., 2005).



The rival Central European nationalisms in 1848 shattered revolutionary unity against the reactionary revival. Liberal Germans would not help Poles or Czechs against autocrats unless they bowed to German national interests. All lost as a result.

Unlike Central Europeans in 1848, Arabs today are united by a language and overwhelmingly by a religion.<sup>38</sup> Identification with a particular state may be strong but pan-Arabic sympathies, or certainly the ability to follow via satellite TV and other media events from Maghreb to the Persian Gulf, are widespread. Of course, the Qur'an and Arabic literature are a unifying phenomenon, even if not readable by the tens of millions of illiterate Arabs.<sup>39</sup> But whether the Arabs on the street protesting against their national governments want pan-Arabic or even pan-Islamic unity has yet to be demonstrated. It may be that the revolution in Tunisia suddenly lifted parochial cares from the shoulders of Arabs across the region, especially in Egypt, where the discontented seemed to think if revolution was possible in Tunisia, why not in Cairo? This domino effect could be seen in Eastern Europe in 1989, too. But once the possibility of change was shown elsewhere, the actual revolutionary events were played out in a national context.

Will Arab revolutionaries today achieve what the revolutionaries of the old generation signally failed to establish – Arab unity? From Nasser to Qaddafi the anti-imperialist, pro-Soviet Arab revolutionaries of the post-colonial era dreamed, and certainly spoke, endlessly of their goal of pan-Arabism. But that dream failed because the leader of each Arab state presumed that his Egypt, or his Syria, even his Libya would be the heart of the new Arab commonwealth. Instead, they and their successors established the ossified regimes shaken in 2011.

Yet those regimes survived military debacles in 1967, for instance, without popular uprisings. Whereas defeat in war was the key spur to revolution in 1905 and 1917 Russia, Arab regimes had proved remarkably resilient in the face of military calamity. Saddam Hussein's regime survived his army's expulsion from Kuwait in 1991 and Nasser survived the loss of the Sinai peninsula in the Six-Day War. Even King Farouk took four years to fall after failing to stifle the birth of Israel in 1948. It was only after Mubarak's fall that the Camp David accords came into question in Egypt.

Apart from votes in the (toothless) Arab League, the post-revolutionary regimes have showed little enthusiasm for exporting their revolutions. Even the Libyan revolutionaries have confined their "internationalism" to sending a few volunteers and arms shipments to support the Syrian rebels. Despite the lack of warmth between Qaddafi and Hafiz al Assad, in the last days of the Colonel's regime, Syrian state media saw him as the victim of the same "international conspiracy" afflicting Bashar al-Assad's regime. But without the kind of NATO intervention that brought them to power in Tripoli, the Libyans' aid to the "Free Syrian Army" is gesture politics rather than a strategic input likely to impact in a decisive way on the conflict.

Wider conflict out of the revolutions in the Middle East seems unlikely. The cloud of war, more acutely over Iran's nuclear programme rather than Israel's existence, hung over the Middle East throughout the Arab Spring but not because of the revolutions. In fact, Iran's

<sup>38</sup> Although, of course, sectarian rivalries between Sunni, Shiite and Alawite are significant sources of conflict in the crescent from Lebanon via Syria through Iraq to eastern Saudi Arabia and Bahrain.

<sup>39</sup> The United Nations' Arab Human Development Report of 2002 is the *locus classicus* of data on the low levels of education and publishing in the Arab world, by contrast with neighbours like Turkey in all fields or even Iran in terms of female literacy and access to higher education.

elderly clerics seemed to hope that the fall of Mubarak was the start of revolutionary process like their own in 1979. Iranian media like *Press TV* continued to hail the Libyan uprising against Qaddafi even after NATO intervened and despite the leading hawks against Iran like Nicholas Sarkozy being in the vanguard. Given the failure of the Iranian revolutionary model to spread after the fall of the Shah in 1979 (despite the fears of Washington and Baghdad at the time), Teheran's belief that any religious component in the Arab revolutions must be similar to theirs back then was a triumph of parochial hope over international experience.<sup>40</sup>

External intervention as a counter-revolutionary force has been a recurrent feature of revolutions and the fear of it has often radicalised the interveners as alleged internal traitors; spies are rooted out as during the French Terror. It also weakens their international appeal; foreign sympathisers are often among the first to fall under suspicion.

With regard to external pressure for counter-revolution, it seems hardly likely that Saudi Arabia would have needed (putative) American prompting to see the preservation of a Sunni dynasty in Bahrain threatened by largely Shiite street protests as in its own immediate interest. Saudi Arabia also had the military power to act there, with the motive of warning off discontented Shiites in eastern Saudi Arabia from seeing Bahraini protests as a model.

## 12. Western Intervention – “Leading from Behind”?<sup>41</sup>

Pro-revolutionary intervention by the Western alliance in the Middle East may have followed the airpower model of NATO's Balkan interventions in 1995 and 1999; but unlike in Bosnia and Kosovo, or Afghanistan and Iraq, the Western powers have not taken control on the ground to install at least formal democratic structures and write the kind of inclusive constitutions guaranteeing the gender and minority rights that have been proclaimed there. The plethora of decrees issued by the interim Libyan authorities restoring polygamy, outlawing “glorification” of Qaddafi, etc. are a mixed bag of “Islamic” values and the de-Baathification instituted by the Americans in Iraq in 2003, but hardly fit any pattern of Western-imposed democracy.

The sudden decision to intervene in Libya in March 2011 took the world by surprise and certainly NATO's assets were not distributed as if a plan to act had been long prepared.

It has been commonplace for commentary on the collapse of Communism, or the fall of the Shah for that matter, to emphasise the failure of the US intelligence services to anticipate the upheaval.<sup>42</sup> After 1989, the CIA was routinely reproached for failing to foresee the implosion of Soviet domination. Some suggest that despite Washington's calls for reform and democratisation in the Middle East, the US government failed to foresee the crisis of the regimes there, even though the region had been a vital centre of US diplomacy and power projection for decades.

The fall of US allies – ben Ali and Mubarak – in the first wave of the Arab Spring did not silence critics of US policy, not least in the Middle East. That a foreign hand must be in play in any regime change was a given for many people. Fred Halliday noted the prevalence of

<sup>40</sup> Qaddafi's alleged role in the mysterious disappearance of Lebanon's Shiite Musa al Sadr 30 years' earlier was the ayatollahs' bone of contention with the author of *The Green Book*.

<sup>41</sup> For the much-disputed origins of this description of the US role in the NATO intervention in Libya, see Josh Rogin, “Who really said ‘Obama was leading from behind’?” in *Foreign Policy* (27 October 2011): [http://thecable.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2011/10/27/who\\_really\\_said\\_obama\\_was\\_leading\\_from\\_behind](http://thecable.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2011/10/27/who_really_said_obama_was_leading_from_behind).

<sup>42</sup> See, for instance, Robert Jervis, *Why Intelligence Fails: Lessons from the Iranian Revolution and the Iraq War* (Cornell University Press: Ithaca, 2010).

conspiracy theories in the Middle East as a reflection of the absence of democratic processes and the role of intrigue in autocratic regimes. But even a cataclysmic revolution like the fall of the Shah of Iran did not prevent a widespread belief among Iranians – shared in exile by Mohammed Reza Pahlavi – that the Americans *must have* pulled hidden strings to topple him for some nefarious stratagem of their own.<sup>43</sup>

But despite almost universal criticism of the role of the US in the Arab world and invectives against alleged “puppets” of Washington, at the outbreak of the Arab Spring the Americans’ only real military bases were ironically in Iraq, from which they were withdrawing as the revolutionary wave started, and in Bahrain. Standing by the King of Bahrain has been US policy over the last 18 months, not least because the Fifth Fleet is based there (just across the Persian Gulf from Iran), but Washington has left it to a regional power to intervene to maintain the al-Khalifa dynasty.

There is some indication that the Tunisian army, for instance, with years of military cooperation with the US, was encouraged by American contacts not to crack down on the anti-regime protestors there and even to ease ben Ali into exile.<sup>44</sup> Probably Washington decided that Mubarak was not salvageable and pressed the Egyptian Army not to intervene to protect the regime. But the officer corps had their own reasons for pre-empting any succession from Hosni to Gamal Mubarak. Shadowy British intelligence links built over decades with Qaddafi’s spy chief, Mousa Kusa, probably prompted his defection, which was an important symptom of the regime’s decay.

By contrast, the Syrian regime’s ability to utilise military force in its crackdown may indicate that Western intelligence penetration is much weaker there as well as being a sign of the Syrian Baathist movement’s own greater cohesion and resilience. Even Libya, after all, had undertaken military training links with Britain and America as well as with the now-notorious counter-Islamist intelligence cooperation, which gave western agents opportunities to penetrate Qaddafi’s system, lacking in Syria.

The role of Turkey is much-debated inside and outside the country. Is the Justice and Development Party (AKP) model conquering the Arab election scene from Morocco via Tunisia to Egypt, or is the blowback of the Arab Spring making “Turkey turn Arab as never before...?”<sup>45</sup> A return to the Ottoman past is sometimes glibly asserted in Western media that is not unsympathetic to seeing more Turkish influence in the Middle East, but fails to see how easily “neo-Ottomanism” can be used by, for instance, al-Assad’s propaganda machine to arouse negative memories of the old imperial ruler of Syria. That AKP spokesmen do not mean neo-colonialism by neo-Ottomanism is clear – at least to many in Turkey.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>43</sup> See Fred Halliday, *Islam and the Myth of Confrontation: Religion and Politics in the Middle East* new edition (I.B. Tauris: London, 2003), 64. It was not shared by the Shah’s doomed ex-Prime Minister, Amir Abbas Hoveyda, who in his last minutes on earth in April 1979, rejected the Islamic Court’s charge that he had been an agent of the US: “Your honour, if the Americans were really my masters, what would I be doing here now?” Quoted in Abbas Milani, *Persian Sphinx: Amir Abbas Hoveyda and the Riddle of the Iranian Revolution* (I.B. Tauris: London, 2000), 335.

<sup>44</sup> US military aid to Tunisia was doubled after the revolution. See “U.S. general in Tunisia warns of stability threats” *AP* (24 April 2012): <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2012/apr/24/us-general-tunisia-warns-stability-threats>.

<sup>45</sup> See Elias Harfoush, “The Arab Turkey” in *Al Arabiya* (30 November 2011), quoted in Kılıç Buğra Kanat, “America’s Asia-Pacific Strategy and Turkish-American Partnership” in *Insight Turkey* 14:2 (Spring, 2012), 166.

<sup>46</sup> Inside Turkey, Foreign Minister Davutoğlu’s speech to parliament in late April 2012 attracted a lot of attention. His assertion that “[a] new Middle East is emerging,... We will continue to be the master, the leader and the servant of this new Middle East”, was bitterly attacked by the opposition for advocating intervention, even “adventurism”. See “Davutoğlu: Turkey Poised to Lead in Syria and New Middle East”, *Middle East Voices* (27 April 2012): <http://www.middleeastvoices.com/2012/04/davutoglu-turkey-poised-to-lead-in-syria-and-new-middle-east-79775/#ixzz1uME2BhNH>.

In addition to the opposition, some members of minorities worry that promoting democracy in Arab states is a cover for backing one group of co-religious against others.<sup>47</sup> Whatever the truth of that, any intervention by Turkish forces, either to create humanitarian zones for refugees in border areas with Syria, or – more ambitious – to topple the Baathists from outside would risk Assad playing the ethnic card – Arabs, Armenians and Kurds versus Turks – and risk stirring up dissent among Turkey’s different branches of Islam. However, in practice, the difficulties faced by US forces in Iraq after 2003, as much as any historical reflections on the failures of interventions in revolutionary situations, is probably the chief limiting factor not only for Turkey but its NATO allies. Libya was an easier option than Syria, even if a more prolonged and complex operation than anticipated in March 2011, and still far from internally settled. Syria’s problems have the potential to spill over her boundaries, as threatened by Bashar al-Assad, though it could happen without his sponsorship. The outflow of weapons and ex-Qaddafi mercenaries from Libya has proved destabilising to regional neighbours like Mali more than to Syria.

Turkey’s sudden abandonment of the “zero problems with neighbours” policy was controversial at home and abroad, but it plays the role of model democracy and market economy in many eyes, rather as Britain did for Europeans in 1848. The US remains the elephant in the room in any discussion of Middle Eastern affairs, both because of its influence as a superpower and because of its activities as a global political and economic model.

America’s role as a revolutionary power has had its ups and downs since Lafayette’s presentation of the keys of the Bastille to his old comrade-in-arms, first US president George Washington, in 1789. Rural revolts in 1789 and radical manifestations in the French countryside often coincided with places where French soldiers who had served alongside the American rebels against George III had returned after 1783. The impact of the American republic’s establishment on French opinion should not be underestimated. Nor should Washington’s ambassador Thomas Jefferson’s admiration of the radical course taken by France after 1789 be forgotten, even if later revolutions, especially Communist ones, were seen as antithetical to the American model.<sup>48</sup>

Certainly, the promotion of democracy in the Middle East is one of the undoubted continuities in rhetoric and policy from George W. Bush to Barack Obama,<sup>49</sup> but how far the Arab revolutions were sponsored and influenced by American actions or agents is far from clear. The grandson of the founder of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, Tariq Ramadan, ties himself into knots trying to assess and rebut claims that Washington was behind its dramatic political rise after February 2011.<sup>50</sup>

Of course, Americans have long wanted the rest of the world to adopt, or at least adapt to, its model of market democracy. Becoming “like them” was supposed to guarantee peace and prosperity. For many people in Eastern Europe and the USSR in the late 1980s, adopting the Western model, “returning to Europe” and joining the EC quickly was seen as the high

<sup>47</sup> See Sami Kohen of *Milliyet*, quoted in Dan Bilefsky, “Despite Bold Talk on Syria, Turkey Sees Limits of Its Power” in *New York Times* (16 March 2012): <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/17/world/europe/despite-bold-talk-on-syria-turkey-sees-limits-of-its-power.html>.

<sup>48</sup> R.R. Palmer, in *The Age of Democratic Revolution. A Political History, 1760-1800* (Princeton University Press: Princeton, 1959) emphasised the trans-Atlantic political crosscurrents.

<sup>49</sup> Compare President Bush’s speech on the twentieth anniversary of the National Endowment for Democracy on 6 November 2003 (<http://www.ned.org/george-w-bush/remarks-by-president-george-w-bush-at-the-20th-anniversary>) and President Obama’s speech in Cairo on 3 June 2009 (<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/04/us/politics/04obama.text.html?pagewanted=all>).

<sup>50</sup> See Tariq Ramadan, *The Arab Awakening. Islam and the New Middle East* (Allen Lane: London, 2012).

road to freedom and prosperity – though the path has turned out more twisted and bumpy than anticipated.

Whether Arabs are as enthusiastic about joining the Western club remains to be seen. In the Arab world, the division between oil-rich emirates and poor-but-populous republics makes any kind of integrated “Arab Union” impossible without fundamental changes in Saudi Arabia and the other monarchies. But even change there might not produce more economic sharing. After all, the rich democracies of Western Europe were much less generous to their poor Eastern cousins after the collapse of Soviet domination than the United States was to the Western Europeans through the Marshall Plan at the height of Soviet power.

Although America’s ally, Saudi Arabia’s role in the Arab revolutions has been Janus-faced: the Saudis may be funding, even helping to arm, the Syrian rebels, but the Saudi Arabian army has been in the vanguard of counter-revolution in Bahrain. Without Riyadh’s military intervention, the al-Khalifa regime might have collapsed in the face of protests in Manama. To use NATO terminology, Saudi Arabia multitasks when it plays the role of Nicholas I’s Russia of 1849 and Lenin’s of 1919 simultaneously. It is a bold balancing act.

Russia today is certainly not the Russia of 1849, but since the colour revolutions in Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan, probably sponsored by, and certainly applauded in, Washington, Russia’s Vladimir Putin has viewed regime change as a threat to his system. China, too, is concerned about any wave of revolution.

The twentieth century’s two key centres of revolution have become the twenty-first’s stumbling blocks to revolution, at least in so far as they use their permanent seats on the UN Security Council to block intervention in favour of regime change. Russia’s abstention on Libya in March 2011 looks set to be as unique as Stalin’s boycott of the Security Council in the run-up to the Korean War in June 1950: it was a geo-political mistake not to be repeated.

The Americans urge the Russians to get on “the right side of history”, but whether the Arab revolutionaries want the kind of democracy and other reforms acceptable to Washington or are bent on a theocratic Muslim Brotherhood-run regime, there is unlikely to be much place for Moscow’s influence in the near future in post-revolutionary states. Partly because of Putin’s repression of the Chechen rebels, neither Arab secular liberals nor Muslim activists have any sympathy with the current Russian regime. Therefore, Moscow hopes to hold on to what is left of the influence inherited from the Soviet Union: Assad’s Syria and possible links with Algeria. Those pieces are all that remain of Russia’s revolutionary heritage in the Middle East, from the golden days of its alliances with Nasser at the heart of the region.

### **13. Interim Conclusions**

The unpredictability of revolutionary outcomes in the past suggests caution in making predictions of more recent ones; however, some sub-patterns are emerging across the Arab world.

In Tunisia, a parliamentary regime seems to have been established. In Egypt, the electoral process continues, despite occasional bloody clashes in the streets and rulings by the Constitutional Court and SCAF invalidating parts of the process. The existence of the state seems secure in those two cases, even if their internal forms are still to be determined. But despite regime change, quasi-civil war reigns in large parts of Yemen and Libya, where de facto self-government has been established in Benghazi and Zintan. The integrity of the state as well as its constitution is still contested in both places. If the Syrian regime suddenly

implodes, a quick consensus on a future political order is hard to imagine. Territorial division would also be an issue there, which would affect Syria's neighbours.

Instability has grown dramatically in the Sahel since the fall of Qaddafi. The Colonel's generosity with Libya's oil revenue to neighbouring regimes (as well as sub-Saharan Africa) means that his fall has contributed to the economic destabilisation of regimes to the south and west, which are also endangered by the repatriation of workers and mercenaries from Libya since the revolution. However, the upheaval in Mali, for instance, seems to be setting the country on a contrary course to the democratisation at least hinted at by the Arab Spring. Tuareg rebels and Islamist fighters in the north and a military coup in the capital, Bamako, have set Mali on a course of disintegration rather than revolution.<sup>51</sup>

Even in the Gulf, stirrings of unrest and rivalry between regimes that might seem to share the same forms make predicting continuing stability far from certain.

Regional powers, like Turkey and Israel, not affected by revolutionary challenges view the changes differently. What for Ankara is an opportunity for a dramatic growth in influence and cooperation across the vast southern region is a potential threat to Israel, since its democratic status was part of its unique legitimacy in the international public relations competition with the Palestinians and their Arab backers. Iran may face internal challenges as it approaches middle age, but the quiet revolution in Iraq is to its advantage, even if no new Shiite friends have come to the top elsewhere in the region.

For the US and Europe there is the question of whether their foreign policy interests will be best served by Arab democratic regimes more responsive to the man in the street than authoritarian rulers. Washington and Brussels have wanted democracy, but perhaps they should have been careful in what they wished for.

Foreign policy issues have played a remarkably small role in the public rhetoric of the Arab uprisings. Even in Egypt, the chief source of tension with Israel has been the terms of their gas deal rather than the Palestinian question. Allegations of corruption to the benefit of Mubarak's family by selling natural gas to Israel at a lower-than-market rate in return for kickbacks were corrosive before 11 February 2011, and have become explosive since. Sporadic attacks on the pipeline have repeatedly cut gas supplies to Israel. They also reflect the growing disorder in the formerly tightly controlled Sinai.

Ordinary Arabs in very large numbers have wanted freedom, democracy and prosperity, but now face the age-old problem of revolutionaries: toppling the old rulers does not immediately remove the legacy of bad policies or alter basic facts of economic life. Disappointment is a natural part of revolutionary enthusiasm. In his study of what went wrong in France after 1789, Norman Hampson emphasised the sincerity of the people in wanting to change everything for the better. The principle of hope was a key motor of willingness to take risks for change, then as now, but the French revolution was a tragedy precisely because the great hopes of a better world that it aroused, that in fact spurred it, were frustrated – at least in the short term. But Hampson concluded that the ambitious rhetoric of human rights and civic representation in 1789 should be taken seriously, even if the political actions disappointed: "From the bleak and cynical viewpoint of our own times, it may be difficult to take these professions [of faith] at face value, but those who dismiss them as insincere will never

<sup>51</sup> For a focus on the implications of counter-terrorism on the growing disorder around Libya, see the Heritage Foundation's "Crisis in the Sahel: Bitter Fruit of the 'Arab Spring'" (9 May 2012): <http://www.heritage.org/events/2012/05/crisis-in-the-sahel>.

begin to understand the French Revolution”.<sup>52</sup> A similar point should be made about the Arab Spring, as post-revolutionary difficulties and divisions appear, especially in Egypt and Libya, and despite the continuing anti-revolutionary campaigns in Syria and Bahrain. These unexpected, unpredicted revolutions will hardly follow a smooth course set out in social science textbooks.

The disappointed English romantic revolutionary William Morris reflected in his *Dream of John Ball* on the mysterious ways in which history developed and produced unanticipated results from the point of view of rebel and reactionary alike. What Morris concluded from his poetic review of the failure of the Peasants’ Revolt in 1381, and other failed revolutions in English history or even successes like the decapitation of the monarch in 1649, was that what happened in the long-term was not what anyone had expected: “I pondered all these things, and how men fight and lose the battle, and the thing that they fought for comes in spite of their defeat, and when it comes turns out not to be what they meant, and other men have to fight for what they meant under another name”.<sup>53</sup> After all, for good or ill, that is what happened decades after 1848-49 to the nationalist dreams that had motivated many democrats. Perhaps those contending in the Arab world today will conclude in time that their confused struggles produced a similar result – over the long term, which not everybody lives to see or to enjoy.

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<sup>52</sup> See Norman Hampson, *Prelude to Terror: the Constituent Assembly and the Failure of Consensus* (Blackwell: Oxford, 1988), ix.

<sup>53</sup> Quoted in Christopher Hill, *Society and Puritanism in Pre-Revolutionary England* (Peregrine: Harmondsworth, 1986), 485.





## **The Dynamics of Turkish-Israeli Relations\***

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### **Abstract**

*This article examines Turkish-Israeli relations from 1948 to 2012 in light of domestic and international events that have impacted the two countries throughout the years. The article examines each country's threat perceptions, which emanate from developments in the Middle East. The author points out commonalities and confrontations between the two countries, and discusses how the latter can be avoided. The article explores how to improve relations in view of the rapid changes occurring in the region, and discusses how the two countries are positioning themselves in the current restructuring of the Middle East and emerging new power balances, some of which are created by these two major regional players themselves.*

**Keywords:** Threat perceptions, confrontation, strategic alliance, axis shift, Arab Spring

### **1. Introduction**

Given the current state of affairs globally, and particularly in the Middle East, to evaluate Turkish-Israeli relations, and particularly in which direction they are headed, is a phenomenal task. Although generally considered allies, it can either be argued that the two countries' relations have always been friendly and smooth, or that the troubled and fragile aspects have been overlooked for the sake of convenience. One could also take the view that, while initially affable, relations soured over time and became confrontational. If the latter is true, what factors played a role and what does the future hold?

### **2. The Turkish Perspective**

Turkey is a long-standing regional power, something relatively rare in world history. The Ottoman Empire reigned in the region for centuries, leaving a legacy and heritage shared by all states in the Middle East. Although Turkey is now in the form of a republic, and no longer has the geographical reach of the Ottoman Empire, it maintains strong cultural, religious and historical ties with the people of the region. Although Turkey does not necessarily reference this history in formulating her foreign policy towards the region (and at times it has worked to her disadvantage) it makes Turkey an integral part of the Middle East equation in many aspects, particularly in regards to her geo-strategic position. To consider a Middle East

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equation without Turkey would constitute a short and inept assessment of the current and previous state of affairs. Turkey has changed greatly over the past two decades, becoming richer, more self-confident and no longer dependent on the US and the EU. She will at times pursue shared goals with other countries, but using her own tactics, her own methodology and on her own terms. Over time, her foreign policy has become partially disengaged from the West, stemming mostly from and motivated by, according to some, her heritage, geography and unique identity. Recently especially, signs indicate that Turkey is heading towards a more pro-Islamic identity. Some are inclined to define this tendency as neo-Ottomanism, which broadly stands for rebuilding influence in former Ottoman lands. There is no doubt that Turkey's foreign policy is shifting from a static, pro-*status quo* policy to a more dynamic, pro-active policy.

Shifts in form rather than essence, these changes are influenced by *ad hoc* crises and Turkey's reaction to them, and to changing priorities in foreign policy; they are not, however, necessarily luring her from the West, with whom she shares many common values. Today, a power center and actor on her own, Turkey attempts to pursue diversified, assertive, rhythmic and results-oriented policies focused on her national interests. She aims at achieving "zero problems" with neighbors by applying soft-power politics: dialogue, soft balancing, sharing and forming an umbrella identity, establishing common interests and establishing interdependence through finding solutions to problems by considering the interests of all actors. As such, it is said that Turkey's foreign policy in its present form has gained *strategic depth*. In the final analysis, Turkey's engagement in the dynamics of her geography has the sole aim of building regional peace and prosperity. When an opportunity arises to resolve a conflict, she does what she can in a practical way. However, whether or not she acts in cooperation with others and/or without becoming party to regional disputes under the influence of Islamic ideology is questionable. Moreover, the recent developments in the Middle East and beyond suggest that Turkey's new foreign policy may need to be further adapted to cope with the rapid changes. Particularly, there is a need to examine whether her policies strain relationships rather than solve problems. If badly managed, these policies can decrease rather than increase confidence and make her an unpredictable power center instead of a credible mediator. The policies may even create confusion, by giving the impression that they are ideologically motivated.

How Turkey's policies are perceived by Israel, herself one of the region's major actors may lay the groundwork for an undeclared power struggle between the two countries. With the region's new and changing threat perceptions, Turkey may no longer be considered a dependable ally for Israel and others. The same could be said for Turkey's perceptions of Israel. Regional dialogue suggests that the area may have been transformed into a land of "friendly enemies". If this is true, it is very difficult to determine the reasons for this change: which actor(s) is at fault, and more disturbing, whether the changes have been purposely engineered or whether they stem from the dynamics of the region, which appear to be out of control. These factors must be explored to understand the Middle East, and particularly Turkish-Israeli relations in the past, present and future.

### 3. The Israeli Perspective

As to how Israel fits into the Middle East equation, it is sufficient to say that she fits because she exists. This fact cannot be ignored, overlooked or set aside. Israel is a part of the equation,

and that recognition is what she has been striving for since her foundation in 1949. Surrounded and rejected from the outset by a pile of highly hostile neighbors, survival has become a *sine quo non* priority, and thus security is her top concern. Her domestic and foreign policies are motivated, formulated and executed to serve that objective. Consequently, she is, above all, a military state, a politico-military regime. Her existence and survival is guaranteed first and foremost by the US, if not also by others. Her aggressive and relentless policies towards her adversaries, however (albeit usually in self-defense), further exacerbate existing animosities and undermine attempts at lasting peace and stability in the region. In addition to resolving her security concerns, Israel must find ways to remedy some of the shortcomings she faces as a country. She may be strong in terms of military power and economic, financial and technological standing, but she lacks sufficient fertile land, water supplies and natural resources, particularly oil reserves. Therefore, in addition to military security, her foreign policy focuses on compensating for these deficiencies.

Finally, there is Israel's religion, which is the source of all her motivation. She is a religiously conservative country and strongly committed to Zionism in terms of ideology, which, unfortunately, alienates her from her Islamic neighbors. On the other hand, notwithstanding hardships and challenges, she has, since her inception as a sovereign state, made significant progress in eliminating some of her formidable enemies. Her success lies first in her own military and economic strength, and second in the unwavering support of the US. In many areas the two countries' national interests and strategies pursued in the region, and even the entire geography, coincide, which makes them strongly allied. Adversaries and unresolved issues include Syria, Iran the state of affairs in Lebanon and a Palestine under the administration of Hamas, which Israel and others consider a terrorist group committed to the destruction of Israel. Israel refuses to recognize Hamas a legitimate party with whom to negotiate a peace process, although it came into power by democratic election. For now, it seems Iran, Syria (although in domestic turmoil) and a Hamas-led Palestine continues to form an axis against Israel, with Iran having uncurbed potential to develop nuclear weapons. Although possessing other nuclear capabilities, Iran declares that weapons development is not her intention. She acknowledges, however, that if she had them, she would use them if necessary. Whether this declaration is an offensive or defensive stance is open to debate. As much as Iran's regional role and bargaining power in regional affairs appears to have increased, whether or not this is in Iran's favor is also debatable; such a situation makes Iran a target for any eventuality, military or otherwise. Lebanon has the potential to destabilize politically by falling further under the influence of Hezbollah, which Israel must seriously consider and follow such developments closely.

#### **4. The Dynamics of Turkish-Israeli Relations**

In three phases, the paper next examines how Turkey and Israel have positioned themselves in the constantly changing dynamics of the Middle East and how this positioning has affected their bilateral relations.

##### **4.1. Phase I (1949-1991)**

Although Turkey had voted against the 1947 UN resolution to partition Palestine to Arabic and Jewish sectors, on March 28, 1949 Turkey became the first Muslim country in the

Middle East to recognize the State of Israel and establish diplomatic relations with her. This acknowledgement gave Israel and Turkey a much-needed boost, although for different reasons.

Turkey remained inactive when Arab forces from Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq invaded the new nation immediately after her inception in 1948, and Turkey did not react when, as of the ceasefire on January 7, 1949, Israel had increased her original territory by 50 percent, taking Western Galilee, a broad corridor through central Palestine to Jerusalem, and part of modern Jerusalem. With these non-responses, Turkey had, in addition to recognizing the State of Israel, not only given passive support to Israel against her hostile Arab neighbors but also won prestige in the eyes of Western powers; Turkey had proven to be Israel's only dependable regional ally. A predominantly Muslim, but secular, non-Arab country, democratic and fully integrated into Western institutions, Turkey was, and even with her recent Islamic shifts still is, a unique balancing factor in the region, an "anchor" state.

Turkish-Israeli relations remained devoid of problems until the Suez Crisis in 1956. When Egypt nationalized the Suez Canal in that year and barred Israeli shipping, coordinating with Anglo-French forces, Israeli troops seized the Gaza strip and drove through the Sinai Peninsula to the East Bank of the Suez Canal, but withdrew under US and UN pressure. In response, Turkey downgraded her diplomatic representation in Tel Aviv; Israel then did the same in Turkey, which effectively froze relations. However, "reel politics" eventually forced Israel to re-establish relations with Turkey. David Ben Gurion, Israel's founder and her first prime minister, fluent in Turkish as a graduate of Istanbul University, secretly visited Ankara on August 29, 1958 to meet with Turkish Prime Minister Adnan Menderes. The two countries forged a top-secret pact that established relations between their military bodies and that has since played a crucial role in bilateral ties. Subsequently, military-intelligence and economic relations began to significantly improve. Relations on the political front, however, began to worsen in the 1960s. The intensification of the Palestinian crisis and the outbreak of the Cyprus problem dealt a serious blow to the new relationship. A lack of international support for Turkey on the Cyprus issue pushed Turkish leaders to seek better relations with Arab countries, while Israeli support for the Greek Cypriots led to deep resentment in Turkey, especially within the military. Israel tried to compensate by increasing her secret support to Turkish military and intelligence matters, but relations between them continued to be troubled. In the Six-Day War of 1967, Israel made simultaneous air attacks against Syrian, Jordanian and Egyptian air bases, defeating the Arabs. Expanding her territory by 200 percent, Israel held the Golan Heights, the West Bank of the Jordan River, Jerusalem's Old City and all of the Sinai, including the East Bank of the Suez Canal. In the face of Israeli reluctance to even discuss the return of occupied territories, another Arab-Israel war erupted on October 6, 1973, with a surprise Egyptian and Syrian assault on the Jewish holy day of Yom Kippur. Initial Arab gains were reversed when a ceasefire took effect two weeks later, but this time Israel suffered heavy losses.

Turkey had never sanctioned the territorial expansion of Israel as such, and maintained her even-handed policy towards the region by not allowing the US to use her military bases in Turkey to aid Israel and by sending food supplies to Syria, Jordan and Egypt. Turkey also supported Resolution 242 of the United Nations Security Council, which foresaw the withdrawal of Israel to her pre-war borders, but neither joined in identifying Israel as the "aggressor state" nor in "condemnation" statements against her. Turkey allowed her air

space to be used by Soviet planes carrying military equipment to Arab countries, but in Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) meetings, she did not participate in any of the resolutions toward or condemnations against Israel.

Later in the 1970s, Turkey pursued pro-Palestinian policies, recognizing the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in 1974 and allowing it to open an office in Ankara in 1976. Following Israel's decision to declare a united Jerusalem as the capital of Israel in 1980, Turkey reduced her diplomatic representation in Israel to the level of second secretary and closed the Turkish General Consulate in Jerusalem. While this was the lowest representation level ever in Turkish-Israeli relations, diplomatic relations were never severed.

#### 4.2 Phase II (1991-2000)

1991 marks the beginning of normalizing relations between Turkey and Israel. The first half of this decade, until 1996, can be considered the "golden" years, when relations flourished and reached their peak. The reasons for this development constitute one of the most important aspects of Turkish post-Cold War foreign policy.

The Middle East was at a critical juncture at the outset of the 1990s; the repercussions of the Cold War were just beginning to be felt, and the Gulf War, where Turkey had indirectly but actively participated in the US-led coalition against Iraq, had changed the politico-strategic environment. Reconciliation with Israel mainly resulted from Turkey redefining her regional security concerns as well as from her reactions to international and regional developments. Consequently, during the 1990s, Turkey began abandoning her traditional policy of strict neutrality in the Arab-Israeli contest by developing an entente with Israel. There was widespread disillusionment in Turkey with the Arab countries, which had failed to support the Turkish cause over Cyprus and, in the case of Syria, gave active support to the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). Conflict over the waters of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, flowing from Turkey to the Middle East, added to these tensions. The beginning of the Arab-Israeli peace process in 1991, followed by the signing of the Declaration of Principles by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat in September 1993, made it possible for Turkey to develop closer relations with Israel without rupturing her relations with the PLO and the main Arab states.

The expectation that good relations with Israel would increase Turkish influence in Washington and that both countries stood to gain from technical, military and economic cooperation, were additional incentives for a bilateral understanding. This rapprochement was indeed welcomed and supported by the US. With these considerations in mind and in support of launching the peace process, the Demirel government restored relations with Israel to ambassadorial level in December 1991 and reactivated the Turkish General Consulate in the Palestinian quarter of Jerusalem at the highest level. The embassy was reinforced by appointments of military, commercial, tourism and information attachés. The 1993 Oslo Accords between the actors in the Middle East peace process provided further impetus for improving relations. Various diplomatic high level visits between Turkey and Israel ensued including the Presidents and Prime Ministers of both countries, but it was the visit of Tansu Çiller (head of Turkey's right-of-center *Doğru Yol Partisi* (True Path Party; DYP)) to Israel in November 1994, the first by a Turkish prime minister, that solidified the positive direction of relations between the two countries.

The Kurdish issue and the perceived threat of Islamic radicalism had become dominant

elements in Turkey's relations in the Middle East. Turkey's decision makers emphasized Syria and Iraq's increasing support for the PKK, while linking the domestic Islamic fundamentalist threat to Iran. The Turkish politico-military leadership considered these issues directly tied to Turkey's territorial integrity and the survival of its regime. Under a 150- billion-dollar, 25-year defense modernization program, the Turkish military requested high-quality military hardware and technology from her Western allies, but was turned down because her human rights issues were increasing and her relations with Greece deteriorating. Israel, on the other hand, had the technology and the arms and did not tie their availability to political or human rights issues. Turkey realized that she could also provide US military hardware and technical knowledge via Israel. Thus, during Çiller's 1994 visit, she supported *inter alia* increased security cooperation arrangements and several agreements were signed, with the most important allowing Israel Aviation Industries to modernize Turkey's F-4 and F-5 Phantom fighter aircrafts. In February 1996, a framework for the Turkish-Israeli security cooperation was set by the Military Training and Cooperation Agreement (MTCA). Valid for five years, with subsequent renewal at annual intervals, it provided for acquiring military know how, as well as for mutual military visits, joint exercises, joint training, sharing training information, observing one another's training exercises, air force training missions in each other's airspace, training Turkish pilots in electronic warfare technology in Israel and port visits. The MTCA had far-reaching consequences for Turkey, Israel and the region as a whole.

The second key framework agreement was signed in August 1966. It provided for technology transfer, training technicians and researchers, intelligence sharing and biannual "strategic dialogue" meetings of the two countries' security and foreign policy officials. In late 1997, a second contract was awarded to modernize Turkey's F-5s. The first Turkish-Israeli military exercise, Operation Reliant Mermaid, was held with the US off the coast of Israel in January 1998. To much of the world, this exercise became a symbol of deepening strategic alignment between Turkey and Israel; although not directed against any third party, it nevertheless drew angry protests from Iran and some Arab countries. Jordan took part as an observer but Egypt rejected a similar invitation. Operation Reliant Mermaid II, again with the US, was held in December 1999, this time off the Turkish coast. Again, Jordan attended and Egypt did not.

Military sales constituted another important aspect of Turkey and Israel's security cooperation. They agreed to co-produce the sophisticated Popeye air-to-ground missile. Turkey had bought 50 Popeye I missiles for her F-4s; the Popeye II deal involved a consortium with two Turkish firms to produce a smaller version of the Popeye I and with more advanced technology. There was also ongoing discussion regarding co-producing Israeli-developed Arrow II anti-missile missiles and Merkava III tanks, upgrades to Turkey's M60 main battle tanks and manufacturing an assault rifle to replace Turkey's G-3s.

Cooperation between Turkey and Israel was not limited to the military; a Turkish-Israeli business council established on March 1, 1993 significantly improved bilateral economic relations. A free-trade agreement covering all sectors was signed in March 1996, becoming effective on May 1, 1997. Turkish businessmen saw this agreement as important not only as it provided access to the Israeli market, but also as a steppingstone to other markets, such as those in the US, Palestinian areas and Jordan. Another agreement, on preventing double taxation, was signed in March 1996 and entered into force on May 27, 1998. Finally, an agreement for mutual encouragement and protection of investments was signed in March

1996, effective August 27, 1998. Trade volume increased approximately 600 percent between 1990 and 1998, and there was interest in and opportunity for launching Turkish-Israeli ventures in agricultural and other sectors of the Transcaucasian and Central Asian republics. Israel's advanced agricultural technology also created possibilities for such cooperation in Turkey, especially in the southeast. In 1992, during the first visit to Israel of a Turkish minister of tourism, a tourism agreement was signed that led to an increase (from 40,000 to 400,000) in the number of Israeli tourists to Turkey in the following years. In the political field, during Turkish foreign minister Hikmet Çetin's 1993 visit to Israel, a memorandum of understanding was signed that defined the parameters of political relations and areas of cooperation between the two countries.

These developments between Turkey and Israel, unprecedented and nonexistent with any other country in the region before or since, show how close their relations had become, not only in vital fields but also between the peoples of both nations. A solid base had been established in a trilateral relationship between Turkey, Israel and the US. In Washington, the Jewish lobby had become almost like a Turkish lobby. Although Israel's influence on the EU itself was likely weaker, Israeli president Shimon Peres is said to have influenced his European colleagues in Socialist International to shelve their objections to Turkey's EU membership. Turkey and Israel had reached a point of "strategic partnership", with their people and official and unofficial organizations closely integrated.

Shared security concerns about the region, although different in context, particularly with respect to Syria, Iraq and Iran, played a crucial role in achieving this close relationship. During this period, policymakers, especially the military, believed that the defense of Turkey's territorial integrity was linked to the defense of her regime and its secular nature, which had implications for the policymaking process. The security-defense establishment became more prominent in formulating Turkey's policies, particularly with respect to the Middle East, and exercised its influence through the National Security Council, which increasingly became the central organ for policymaking. The "national military strategic concept" changed. The new concept identified two internal threats, separatism and Islamic fundamentalism, mainly fed by two external actors, Syria and Iran. Paralleling this change, emphasis fell on building security arrangements with Israel. The military particularly believed that Turkey's strategic cooperation with Israel might pose a deterrent to Syria and Iran. The Turkish-Israeli alignment produced its first fruit when a military showdown with Syria in October 1998 resulted in PKK leader Öcalan's removal from Damascus and Syria's agreement to end her support to the PKK. Despite Israel's attempts to disassociate herself from the crisis, Damascus and the Arab League accused Israel of fomenting the row.

By the end of the 1990s, Turkish foreign policy had become heavily intertwined with domestic issues. More conservative parties found ways to share power, at first within coalition governments and then, by the early 2000s, on their own, challenging the domestic and foreign policies of the "old school" politico-military establishment. Leftist and rightist political parties, except the ultra-nationalist religious *Refah Partisi* (Welfare Party; RP) led by Necmettin Erbakan, supported the growing Turkish-Israeli relationship. Before coming into power in 1997 (in the so-called *Refahyol* coalition with Çiller's DYP), the RP was openly and harshly critical of Israel in general and of Turkish-Israeli relations in particular. Once in power, however, *Refah* began to approach the issue with pragmatism and a sense of national interest. Its influence did not alter the pace of relations between Turkey and Israel, partly

because the military allowed the government little room for maneuver. Erbakan bowed to military pressure by reluctantly accepting the military cooperation and free trade agreements with Israel. He also tried to steer an independent course by keeping Israel at arm's length, supporting militant Palestinians who opposed the peace process and pursuing a program to develop an "Islamic" foreign policy. In the RP's opposition to the peace process, it invited representatives of the Palestinian Hamas movement and the Lebanese Hezbollah to its party congress, as well as gave verbal support to the Egyptian Islamists of the Muslim Brotherhood. Secularists, particularly in the military and the foreign ministry, strongly opposed Erbakan's policies, mainly because they alienated Turkey from the West, but also because Turkey needed to preserve a balance in her relations between Israel and the Arab states, and because an Islamic foreign policy conflicted with the country's Kemalist commitments. The RP's alignment with Iran and militant Palestinians certainly played a part (though probably not a decisive one) in Erbakan's fall from power in June 1997 after repeated warnings from the military-dominated National Security Council and mounting public protests. In February 1998, the RP was closed down by Turkey's Constitutional Court and Erbakan was banned from running for public office for five years. A successor party was rapidly formed in the shape of the *Fazilet Partisi* (Virtue Party; FP), nominally under the leadership of Recai Kutan. After the RP, no party was able to construct a sustainable government, and thus Parliament voted to hold early general elections on April 18, 1999. All parties suffered serious setbacks in the polls, and a tripartite coalition government was formed under the leadership of premier Bülent Ecevit's *Demokratik Sol Partisi* (Democratic Left Party; DSP), deputy premier Devlet Bahçeli's *Milli Hareket Partisi* (National Action Party; MHP) and Mesut Yılmaz's *Anavatan Partisi* (Motherland Party; ANAP). The coalition emerged because many Turks felt that many of the domestic and foreign issues Turkey faced were related to her survival; however, the coalition's installation did not end the continual internal political upsets.

During this period, Turkey wanted to continue benefiting from her relations with Israel, but without driving the Arab states into united opposition and without taking on military commitments in the Middle East that would have little support at home. The Turkish military profited from its access to Israeli military weaponry and intelligence, and in economics, both countries almost certainly gained from the free trade agreement. Turkey was still heavily dependent on trade with the Arab countries, however, mainly for imports of oil and natural gas, though also for exports of food stuffs and light industrial products. In the broader political sphere, the most significant gain for Turkey from her entente with Israel was incrementing her relationship with the US.

Turkey was also careful to maintain contacts with, and support for, the PLO and the Arab-Israel peace process in general, which was made easier by the return of Israel's Labor Party to power in 1999 and the re-launch of the peace process that the Likud-Labor coalition government had begun in 1991. The process had faltered after the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin, the center-right Likud party leader and Israeli prime minister, by a fanatic Israeli youth in 1995. In the interim, with right-wing governments under Benyamin Netanyahu and others, it was not possible to make meaningful progress in the peace process. Moreover, apart from Turkey's disagreements with the Netanyahu government over the basic aims and scope of their relationship, Turkish and Israeli policies did not entirely overlap on other issues. Israel has always refused to support Turkey against the PKK, and while Turkish secularists did not support Erbakan's embrace of Iran, they still needed to preserve relations with her.



Turkey refused Israel's suggestions to denounce the Iranian regime on the grounds that its nature was purely a domestic affair for Iran. When Israel warned Turkey that Iran might acquire nuclear weapons, Turkey replied that she opposed nuclear proliferation in any part of the Middle East, implicitly a criticism of Israel as much as of Iran.

### 4.3 Phase III (2000-2012)

Between 2000 and today, Turkey and Israel have been dramatically influenced by internal and external factors, all of which have had an adverse impact on their relations. During this period, relations have been evasive and strained, if not confrontational. In both countries, right-wing ultra-conservative governments have come into power unchallenged and with different agendas. In Israel, the so-called second *Intifada* was launched towards the end of 2000 pursuant to the failure to reach an agreement for lasting peace between then-Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak and then-Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat at Camp David under the leadership of US president Bill Clinton. Right-wing parties, under the leadership first of Ariel Sharon, later Ehud Olmert, and now (although in a broad-based coalition that makes it highly fragile) under Benjamin Netanyahu, have consecutively come to power since 2001. In addition to stalling the peace process, this state of affairs has forced Israel to engage in hard-power politics towards her neighbors (such as military operations against Hezbollah militants in Lebanon in 2006) and to sometimes use force disproportionately (as in the case of the Gaza bombardment in 2008). These actions have resulted in negative reactions from Turkey and the international community alike.

Israel's internal and external politics are motivated by a single concern: survival. Any situation with the potential to threaten this concern is subject to elimination. This position is valid for any country; however, the appropriateness of means used and ways exercised in reaching or safeguarding survival are debatable. Israel often chooses hard-power politics to ensure her survival, and this is where she differs from many other countries that are willing to first apply soft-power politics in a given situation.

After the collapse of Turkey's DSP-MHP-ANAP coalition in 2002, the conservative right-wing *Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi* (Justice and Development Party; AKP) swept to power under the leadership of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. The AKP won 34.26 percent of the votes and obtained 363 of the 550 seats in the Grand National Assembly. It is still in power, unchallenged and increasing in popularity. Erdoğan's agenda differs from his secular predecessors in internal and external issues. The AKP's roots stretch back to Erbakan's *Refah* and Kutan's *Fazilet* parties, giving the impression that it may have Islamist agendas for its domestic and foreign affairs; some even claim the AKP has a hidden agenda.

These radical political shifts have severely strained Turkish-Israeli relations, with military actions contributing to the situation. Israel's war on Hezbollah has always been viewed as a covert struggle against Iran and Syria, since according to Israel, Hezbollah is supported and armed by these two "rogue" states. On August 3, 2006, the Turkish Grand National Assembly declared that Israel was exercising "state terror" and called on the International Criminal Court to act. In February 2006, Khaled Mashal, the official representative of Hamas in Damascus, met with Turkish officials, including President Abdullah Gül, an action criticized by Israel and the international community alike. Turkey maintains that the purpose of the visit was to mediate between Israel and the Hamas leadership, but Israel felt the meeting provided Hamas with undeserved legitimacy. Israel cannot accept Hamas because it has expressed the desire

for extermination of the State of Israel. American Jewish lobby representatives indicated that, from that incident, Turkey had lost her credibility to mediate Israel-Palestine talks. Even civilian actions are at issue, such as Turkey's airing of anti-Semitic Turkish TV series, namely *Kurtlar Vadisi* (Valley of the Wolves) and *Ayrılık* (Separation). As regards other contributing factors affecting the deterioration of bilateral relations, one can cite the war launched by Israel on 27 December 2008, where disproportionate force was indiscriminately used on the Palestinians, Israel was officially and harshly condemned by Turkey and an immediate cease fire was called for between the parties. Furthermore, Erdoğan severely criticized Israel's war on Gaza in a debate with Israel's President Shimon Peres at the 2009 World Economic Forum meeting in Davos, Switzerland, and walked off the stage in protest. This incident has been interpreted by various circles as a new configuration of Ankara's foreign policy in the region.

The last straw, as it were, occurred on May 31, 2010, when Israel Defense Forces intercepted six humanitarian aid ships en route to Gaza. The ships had been sent by a Turkish relief agency (*İnsani Hak ve Hürriyetleri ve İnsani Yardım Vakfı*) with the intention of breaking through Israel's blockade of the Gaza Strip. Nine activists (eight Turks and one Turkish-American) were killed in the conflict. This incident, known as the Mavi Marmara affair, brought Turkish-Israeli relations to the brink of crisis. Despite Turkish demands, Israel has not officially apologized to Turkey and is reluctant to compensate families of the victims. In reaction, Ahmet Oğuz Çelikkol, Turkish ambassador to Israel, was reprimanded by Avigdor Lieberman, the foreign minister himself. Further, Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Danny Ayalon called Çelikkol to a meeting with the media present, where, out of contempt, he was seated lower than Ayalon. In protest, Turkey recalled Çelikkol, downgrading her representation in Israel to a second secretary, one political action short of severing diplomatic relations. These happenings aptly demonstrate how quickly Turkish-Israeli relations have deteriorated; the only sign of amelioration has been to extend humanitarian assistance during natural disasters, such as the December 2010 Mount Carmel forest fire in Israel and the October 2011 Van earthquake in Turkey.

This freeze in relations occurs as the US withdraws her military presence from Iraq and during visible turmoil and civil strife in the region in the wake of the recent Arab Spring. Further, at the beginning of the 2000s, the US initiated a "restructuring" of the Middle East and its surrounding geography under a project named "The Greater Middle East", chairing it with Turkey. The project is nebulous but apparently continues; some claim that the Arab Spring may even be a byproduct. The US War on Terror launched after the 9/11 attacks has also affected Turkish-Israeli relations. The Iraq war opened the way for Iran, a prominent regional state, to intervene and spread her influence in the region by taking sides in sectarian strife and supporting Shiite opposition leaders and their strongholds in Iraq and elsewhere. Finally, ongoing events, particularly in Syria and Egypt, further complicate the state of affairs in the Middle East. How Turkey and Israel perceive these events and evaluate developments from the viewpoints of national interest and security inevitably sets the tone of their relations. In other words, whether the threat perceptions of the two countries continue to correspond or whether a shift has occurred must be carefully examined to fully understand the source of the rift between the two countries.

## 5. Assessment

In this author's view, the deterioration of relations between Turkey and Israel stems from structural changes in the countries' internal and external environments.

### 5.1. Internal changes

1. From the outset, no matter how strained relations became between Turkey and Israel, the countries continued to cooperate, particularly in the military and intelligence fields, because of similar security concerns in view of the regional policies pursued by Syria and Iran. This cooperation was possible because in both countries the politico-military establishment had a strong influence in domestic and foreign affairs. Their links began to weaken in 2002, as military influence in Turkey diminished after the election of the AKP under the leadership of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. Today, the military is almost non-existent in Turkish politics, due to AKP policies toward a more “civil democracy”, as called for by EU norms. No such transformation took place in Israel. She remains a military state; her threat perceptions regarding Syria and Iran have not changed, nor have her strategy and policies towards them. The same applies to her security concerns about anti-Israel radical groups like Hezbollah, Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood stationed in Lebanon, Gaza, Egypt and elsewhere in the region. Turkey, on the other hand, with her new foreign policies of zero problems with neighbors, soft balancing and establishing dialogue with all parties concerned, has become more flexible and lenient in her approach towards Syria, Iran and the associated radical groups. Turkish-Israeli relations have changed from a concentrated military and intelligence relationship to a civil-political relationship, with Turkey also solidly conservative in regards to religion. Israel has also shifted from relatively secular to more conservative governments, but under the circumstances, it is difficult to say whether the security concerns of the two countries continue to overlap. Each country’s threat perceptions may have changed over time, particularly in view of the rapid structural changes in the region from the Iraqi War and the Arab Spring. Through these changes, Israel may have lost her dependable ally.
2. The loss of two visionary leaders, namely Turgut Özal (1993) and Yitzhak Rabin (1995), has severely undermined the Middle East peace process. Radical religious elements in Israeli conservative parties have strongly opposed the peace process and Turkey’s AKP government has abandoned the previous governments’ even-handed outlook towards the Arab-Israeli conflict, most probably in reaction to Israel’s harsh and uncompromising policies towards the Palestinians. Because Turkey has chosen to openly support the Hamas administration, she has legitimized a radical political group that Israel (and others) considers a terrorist organization bent on destroying her, and has alienated Israel in the process.

### 5.2 External changes

1. Military and non-military interventions in the Middle East have caused the collapse of political systems, an increase in terrorist and asymmetric activity and an undesired security vacuum in the region, all of which has led to a fluid and unstable internal and external environment. Events after the Iraq War and, more recently, the Arab Spring have exposed the region to possible further decomposition, fragmentation and deconstruction.
2. In the circumstances, it is possible that Turkey and Israel have felt the need to separately position themselves against old and new threats because their security concerns no longer mesh. In the past, both countries’ foreign policies were set in a

common security front against Iran, Iraq and Syria. Now, Iraq has been dismantled, the Saddam regime has fallen, and the PKK conducts terrorist operations in Turkey from its bases in Northern Iraq unchecked. Iran is threatening Turkey by openly declaring that the NATO missile shield in Eastern Turkey would be the first target in the event of a military intervention against her. Syria is in civil strife and close to collapse. Further, establishing a Kurdish state in Northern Iraq is being considered as a buffer against Iran; such a state could also include parts of Iran, Turkey and Syria, and as such, those countries' territorial integrities are at stake. The disintegration of Iraq and the establishment of a Kurdish state there is unacceptable to Turkey; such developments would give new momentum to the PKK. Turkey is apprehensive, however, about US and Israeli support of Kurdish nationalism in Iraq. There are 50,000 Jews of Kurdish origin in Israel and a considerable number of Jewish Kurds in northern Iraq. Israel supported Kurdish nationalists in Iraq in the 1960s and 1970s and now supports the formation of a Kurdish buffer state. Israel would not be terribly disturbed by the division of Iraq or any other country with the potential of threatening her security; for her, Iran and her associates are the ultimate target. For Turkey, however, Iran is not a target; reestablishing Iraqi territorial integrity has become a cornerstone of her security policies. Other areas of tension have existed as well. Israel has fretted over the constant possibility of being dragged into Turkey's problems and has seemed particularly wary of being seen as a party to the Greek-Turkish disputes, while Greece has openly declared her discontent with Turkish-Israeli ties. Israel also does not want to be seen as party to the Kurdish dispute and thus become a PKK target. And then there is the Arab-Israeli peace process. Turkey has played the role of "facilitator" in the ongoing Israel-Syria issue and Arab-Israel conflict but, particularly since Israel's 2008 Gaza incident with its disproportionate use of force, she is no longer willing to do so. Any setback in or breakdown of the peace process would create further problems in Turkish-Israeli relations, despite the fact that their alignment developed largely independently. Breakdown would also provide more fodder for critics of Turkey's relations with Israel and increase Turkey's problems with other countries in the region. These developments beg the question of whether the two countries have, as a result of conflicting national interests, become merely competitive, or whether they have become confrontational. If one is a derivative of the other, is there a limit to amicable Turkish-Israeli relations?

3. In the 1990s, the US was considered the only effective outside actor in the Middle East. Today, we face a new Middle East, with other actors sharing the spotlight. The Russian Federation is involved in military and political arenas, and China is entering into economic and political cooperative relations. Under her new vision of balanced and soft-power politics in the 2000s, Turkey became a power center in the region, causing Israel (apparently through the American Jewish lobby) to accuse her of turning away from the West. Although this may sound like an exaggeration, it should not be minimized, since it shows that the Jewish lobby can cut both ways - for or against Turkey -depending on the circumstances. Turkey's foreign policy has become more focused on developing common interests rather than common security. It is pro-active, working on transforming economic and military power into politico-diplomatic power, and Israel appears to be having difficulties coping with it. The

Iraq War has exposed conflicts of interest between Israel and Turkey, while political developments in the region have weakened conditions that previously drew the two countries together. Israel's disproportionate use of force against the Palestinians has drawn strong reaction from Turkey and strained relations. Turkey's lack of support for policies aimed at neutralizing Iran, which is Israel's objective, makes her apprehensive of Turkey. Similarly, Turkey is concerned by Israeli-US policies to control power balances in the Middle East.

4. To counter Turkey's growing influence, Israel appears to be searching for other allies within the region and peripherally. Israel provides military assistance to Azerbaijan and improving relations with it is of particular interest, because it has a dimension of containing Iran. Azerbaijan has a Shiite population and 12,000 Azeri Jews. She has rich oil reserves and is geographically somewhat captive between Russia, Iran and Armenia. Israel has some problems with Armenia but she could be a potential ally. With Greece and Cyprus, despite Turkey's protests, Israel is exploring oil and natural gas reserves in the Eastern Mediterranean basin.
5. Within the framework of NATO's new outlook on its global role and strategy, a new development is emerging in the Middle East. This change, i.e., "partnership" with non-member countries, was discussed at NATO's Chicago Summit in May 2012. Japan's involvement in NATO operations in Afghanistan was the catalyst for this approach. Some may be thinking about associating Israel with NATO to better ensure her security against possible attacks. The installation of a missile shield in Turkey, attempts by Israel to join NATO military exercises and, more recently, inviting Israel to the Chicago Summit, can be taken as indications of that direction. Whether such developments will result in further confrontation between Turkey and Israel and what the consequence of that confrontation will be (if any) within and outside NATO, remains to be seen.

## 6. Conclusion

1. Despite the embedded tensions and differences of opinion on Turkish-Israeli relations, the author is of the opinion that their relations should be complimentary, not confrontational. While turbulent at times, the two countries have enjoyed close and harmonious relations in the past, and there is no reason why, with appropriate dialogue, these could not be rekindled. It is true that both countries encounter internal and external difficulties given the dynamics of the region, and must balance internal pressures with external realities. This is the same for any country, but these two face unique challenges. Therefore, regardless of the diplomatic nomenclature, Turkish-Israeli relations have been defined by the media sometimes as an "alliance", sometimes a "partnership" and sometimes merely as a "relationship", depending on the regional dynamics and the leadership at the time. Despite strained periods, when it comes to safeguarding common interests, the underlying relationship between the two countries appears solidly intact. This author ventures to argue that survival for both countries rests heavily on a close tripartite relationship between Turkey, Israel and the US, as long as this does not provoke counter-alignments that would further destabilize the geography.
2. If recent regional and bilateral events have caused a loss of mutual confidence, this

- situation must be resolved as quickly as possible by resuming cooperation in the military, security and intelligence fields. This author's considered view is that Turkey is the only anchor country in the region for Israel and the US for the following reasons: 1) she is militarily aligned to the West under a NATO membership, 2) although having a predominantly Muslim population, politically she is a Western-oriented, democratic and secular state and 3) she is a non-Arab country. In that context, she is irreplaceable.
3. Despite setbacks, the political, economic, technological, scientific and military relations between Turkey and Israel have always exhibited overall progress, mainly because their structures, economies, political systems and military hardware are complementary. However, with the foreign policy vision of the AKP government, a new episode has been initiated; rather than changes in the relationship stemming from Israel using force as a political instrument, they stem from Turkey's increased political and economic interests in the Middle East under existing and new power balances. Bilateral relations will likely continue at a stable but low level in the near future; but regional dynamics over the next few years could draw the two countries closer together or drive them farther apart. The latter scenario would likely have grave consequences; however, this author feels that such an outcome is improbable because Turkey and Israel do not have the luxury to ignore or negate each other. Events in the Middle East continue to change the region's power balances and are dangerously connecting its security system to the international security system. A Middle East without Turkey or Israel is unthinkable, as is a Middle East where the two are in open conflict with each other. There are indications that Turkey has been making an effort to safeguard Israel's security despite their current cool relations. She agreed to the NATO missile shield over protests from the Russian Federation, and over protests from and threats of becoming a target for Iran. Turkey has also been pressuring Syria's Iranian- and Russian-supported leaders to end the turmoil in that country and step down. Such actions deserve appreciation and reciprocity from Israel. In the final analysis, this author believes that in the interests of both countries, and of the region, Turkey and Israel should engage in quiet diplomacy to improve their strained relations, with support from the US. One can conclude that how Turkey and Israel see their roles in the present and the future of the Middle East and the methodology used in any restructuring of the region will set the tone of their relations.

## Can Iran be Contained?

### Thoughts on the Possibility of Extended Deterrence in the Middle East

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#### 1. Introduction

“Extended deterrence,” or “active deterrence,” as it is sometimes called, threatens a nuclear-strategic response in case of a nuclear attack on the territory or troops of one’s allies. This paper aims to explore the possibilities of extended deterrence in the Middle East in light of an Iranian nuclear military capability. Two preliminary remarks are necessary in order to frame the line of reasoning on the issue.

First, discussion of the possibilities and pitfalls of extended deterrence in the Middle East does not intend to insinuate that diplomatic efforts to stop the Iranian regime from constructing a nuclear device have failed or that a nuclear Iran is already a given. Exploring the possibilities of extended deterrence in the Middle East is, rather, an attempt to be intellectually honest and anticipate that all the efforts underway for almost a decade will fail because the Iranian regime is determined to produce nuclear warheads or reach the breakout point, in which it will become a “virtual nuclear power.” Either trajectory will have a decisive impact on the nuclear realm, but even more so, on the political balance of power in the region; each has the potential to reshuffle relations not only between Iran and Israel but also between Iran and the Arab states in the Middle East. If either development is perceived as detrimental to the already fragile security situation in the Middle East, academics and practitioners must start thinking about a “Plan B”.

The second preliminary remark that must precede any analysis of extended deterrence and its applicability to the Middle East concerns the nature of the subject to be explored. Although for about six decades there has been a profusion of literature on the mechanisms of deterrence and extended deterrence (in conjunction with the same number of critical studies on why deterrence and extended deterrence might not work),<sup>1</sup> we still don’t know much about these two concepts. This paradox can be explained by the simple fact that so far we have not experienced the failure of a deterrence relationship, i.e., resulting in a nuclear war between two powers. Proponents and opponents of deterrence believe – in the theological sense of the word – that deterrence either works or doesn’t, respectively, but neither camp knows for certain. The consequences of this highly unsatisfying state of the art is that neither the “more may be better” nor the “dead end of deterrence”<sup>2</sup> approach provides any form of guidance for policymakers. If academics want to speak truth to power they need to be aware

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<sup>1</sup> Lawrence Freedman, *Deterrence* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004).

<sup>2</sup> Kenneth N. Waltz, “The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: More May Be Better,” *Adelphi Papers* 171 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1981), p. 15.

of, first, the limitations of their theories, and second, that the real world can't be grasped with parsimonious concepts.

With these words of caution the essay proceeds as follows: It first approaches the topic by defining extended deterrence, which in the twenty-first century is much broader in its instruments than the old East-West conflict concept. The essay then argues that for extended deterrence to work it must be able to resolve three conceptual problems related to the credibility of a threat. After this conceptual clarification, the essay introduces the two extended deterrence models familiar from past and present, namely, the European and the Asian models. They differ slightly but decisively. The purpose of presenting these two models is to determine if they are applicable to the Middle East, and it will be shown that for different reasons neither the European nor the Asian model seems to be a viable approach.<sup>3</sup> The last section of this paper looks at different ways deterrence can be extended to the Middle East. It argues that for the time being only unilateral US guarantees can pave the way for something that comes close to extended deterrence in this highly volatile region.

## 2. The Definition and Difficulties of Extended Deterrence

During the Cold War extended deterrence was a public good provided by the US and the USSR to some of their allies. Usually extended deterrence materialized in a system of formal alliance relationships among states, with either the US or the USSR as a guarantor. At the time, extended deterrence was mainly nuclear. Stretching a nuclear umbrella over allies served two purposes: first, preventing allies from going nuclear themselves, and second, preventing an adversary from attacking an ally (either in a conventional or a nuclear strike). It might seem surprising that extended deterrence is also mentioned here as a tool against conventional aggression, but in the early days of the Cold War, NATO's strategy of massive retaliation threatened the USSR and its allies with a nuclear attack in the case of conventional aggression. Extended nuclear deterrence as an instrument against conventional aggression is essential if the opponent is perceived as a predatory, revisionist state that wants to shift existing balances of power to its own advantage by all available means.

The main purpose of extending nuclear guarantees, however, was to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. With the demise of the Soviet Union, the concept of extended deterrence occupied a smaller academic focus, and especially with the rise of violent non-state actors, the question has arisen whether deterrence, and thereby also extended deterrence, plays any role in the security politics of the twenty-first century.<sup>4</sup> Interestingly, this academic debate is out of sync with political reality. In light of existing or emerging nuclear powers, states in Asia as well as in the Middle East are exploring the possibilities of sheltering under a renewed or new nuclear umbrella to gain more security vis-à-vis a potential nuclear threat.

Today, extended deterrence is only partly nuclear; it also entails missile defense and, to a certain extent, means such as prompt global strike (PGS) capabilities.<sup>5</sup> If provided to prevent a nuclear attack on an ally, extended deterrence rests on a mix of instruments that make it at

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<sup>3</sup> Bruno Tertrais, "In Defense of Deterrence: The Relevance, Morality and Cost-Effectiveness of Nuclear Weapons," (Paris: Institut français des relations internationales, 2011).

<sup>4</sup> Tertrais, "In Defense of Deterrence."

<sup>5</sup> Prompt global strike is a US effort to develop a system that can deliver a precision conventional weapon strike anywhere in the world within one hour, in a similar manner to a nuclear Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM).



least theoretically possible to tailor it more precisely to regional needs or to the needs of the guarantor and the guarantee.

### 3. Conceptual Problems of Extended Deterrence

If we turn to the question of essential prerequisites for viable extended deterrence, it must be kept in mind that three problems must be solved before the concept can be considered valid.

- a. In extended deterrence, there must be a credible threat to an adversary on behalf of or in collaboration with a third party:

Virtually all efforts at extended deterrence face credibility problems, which is probably a major source of collective actor difficulties on this score, rather than the nature of a specific actor being an issue. Striking a credible balance between the identical imperatives of pursuing a vision of a world free of nuclear weapons and that of maintaining credible extended deterrence in the eyes of US allies poses political challenges to third parties. Since credibility is in the eye of the beholder, the credibility of the balance being struck will depend on the audience and a changing international security environment. Allies will be closely watching the US's efforts to balance the imperatives of pursuing global nuclear disarmament and maintaining effective deterrence as long as nuclear weapons exist. Moreover, as long as this balance is managed effectively, these seemingly contradictory objectives are actually mutually reinforcing, because credible and effective extended deterrence commitments will provide stability at sharply reduced levels of nuclear weapons, which is a necessary waypoint to the elimination of all nuclear weapons.

The credibility of extended deterrence currently depends on stationing American forces in Europe, which must be balanced by forces from the European states. If the European states were to fail in their part of the bargain they could end up without the protection of American extended deterrence. The alternative would be providing a purely European deterrent, although there is little likelihood of this at present since most Arab states do not want Sub strategic weapons stationed on their soil. To strike this balance, the US must consistently educate the public about the importance of extended deterrence to maintain adequate support for the capabilities, actions, and statements of intent that are necessary for credibility.<sup>6</sup>

- b. The elite of the guarantor and the guarantee must be convinced on a bipartisan basis that extended deterrence is credible:

As a state moves along a continuum from outright aggression to terrorism, deterrence becomes harder for a collective actor. In essence, consensus for deterrence is weaker when the challenge is less clear-cut and the guilty party is harder to ascertain. Most of the important alliance dynamics pose true dilemmas, with factors pulling in opposite directions. Depending on the political context, any single adjustment in an alliance can undercut either deterrent threats or assurances. Keeping smaller allies weak and dependent does more than increase the burden of the alliance on the alliance leader; this strategy can undermine deterrence for the alliance as a whole if it makes it seem weak or irresolute, particularly in the regions where the weaker allies reside.<sup>7</sup> Efforts to get allies to do more, however, can trigger negative reactions among allies and adversaries alike. For example, a more robust military posture by a local ally as part of burden sharing can send provocative signals to regional adversaries

<sup>6</sup> George Fink, ed. *Stress of War, Conflict and Disaster* (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 2010), 76.

<sup>7</sup> Fink, *Stress*, 76.

about long-term dangers posed by the ally in question and the alliance as a whole. Such signals might undercut coercive diplomacy if an adversary's perception of an increase in the ally's power over time undermines the alliance's efforts at reassurance.<sup>8</sup> At other times, the dilemma might cut in the other direction. If the leader appears increasingly reliant on newly mobilized allies, this apparent need for military help can undercut deterrence by making the leader seem too weak or irresolute to get involved directly in a local conflict. To the degree that it looks like the leader needs its weaker allies to fight, its own ability to mobilize effectively for war might appear to be reduced, thus undermining deterrence for the overall alliance. But even should each of the actors be deterrable by the costs of war, they must also have sufficient respect for their opponent's resolve in order to make their retaliatory threats credible. Credibility in part reflects interests. Sometimes, the US's interests are so high that its credibility is not in doubt. At other times, its interests are so low that its reputation cannot enhance its credibility regardless of its capabilities. In between lurks the extended deterrence problem, where uncertainty about the US's interests and resolve can determine the level of credibility of the threats.

- c. The domestic audiences of the guarantor and the guarantee must believe that extended deterrence is necessary and practicable:

On a broader scale, the long-term viability of the nonproliferation treaty regime may hinge on the credibility of the existing official nuclear powers.<sup>9</sup> The main challenge with extended deterrence is to make retaliatory threats credible against a nuclear-armed opponent, as extended deterrence is in direct conflict with the requirements for stable central deterrence. Two main problems facing US strategists during the Cold War were how to deter a nuclear attack on the homeland and how to deter a conventional or nuclear attack on US allies. To illumine further, extended deterrence was extended in two senses: extended to less-vital US interests like protecting allies, and extended to cover non-nuclear attacks against these interests. Developing plausible strategies for each type of deterrence and resolving tensions between the requirements for each preoccupied American strategic thinkers throughout the Cold War.

Western Europe was of two minds about flexible response. They welcomed US nuclear guarantees for extended deterrence but were fearful that nuclear escalation would leave their homeland a smoking irradiated ruin, while the US and the Soviet Union stopped short of attacks against each other's homelands. To address this fear, western Europeans argued in favor of deploying US ballistic missiles and ground launched cruise missiles in Europe in the late 1970s.

These intermediate range nuclear forces had the capability to strike the Soviet homeland from European soil. If the USSR was attacked by US intermediate range forces stationed in Europe, the Soviet Union would retaliate against the US homeland, or so the argument went. These forces coupled the vulnerability of Europe to the vulnerability of the superpower homelands, thereby ensuring that nuclear war would not be confined to Europe. By deploying intermediate-range nuclear forces in Europe, US policy tried to strike a balance between deterrence and assurance.

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<sup>8</sup> Brian H. Reid, *The Science of War: Back to First Principles* (Burlington: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 1993), 34.

<sup>9</sup> Frank Zagare and Marc D. Kigour, *Perfect Deterrence* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 112.

#### 4. Extended Deterrence in the Middle East: Difficult but Possible?

With the nature of and the conceptual problems that accompany extended deterrence as a background, the paper now examines the applicability of extended deterrence to the Middle East given an Iranian nuclear capability. Broadly speaking, there are two familiar models of extended deterrence in the twenty-first century: the European and the Asian models. Both models rest on a significant number of conventional ground, air, and naval forces stationed in the respective regions. They differ with regard to the forward deployment of non-strategic nuclear weapons (NSNW). While nuclear deterrence to US allies in Asia is provided through capabilities stationed in the US, the European model rests on the forward deployment of NSNW as well as a form of nuclear participation within NATO.<sup>10</sup>

At first glance, both models are not applicable to the Middle East. It is neither thinkable that Arab countries will accept the deployment of US forces on their soil (especially given the anti-US sentiments among large parts of the population), nor is it likely that the US will deploy NSNW in the region (given the volatility of existing regimes). Although large numbers of US ground, air, and naval forces are already stationed in the Persian Gulf, extended deterrence rests on a country-based strategy, meaning that in every country that enjoys a nuclear umbrella, a tactical link such as US installations or US troops must be present. In today's political climate, it is hard to envision US forces stationed in Egypt or Jordan. Indeed, the already existing US ground presence in some countries of the Arabian Peninsula is a constant source of tension between the leaderships of those countries and their populations. As long as the population is not convinced that such a presence is needed to guarantee national sovereignty and survival, the credibility of extended deterrence is weakened.

Thus if both models are not applicable to the region, how can extended deterrence be tailored to the Middle East?

The answer depends partly on solving four "known unknowns." First, how will a nuclear Iran behave? Will it be a defensive status quo or an offensive revisionist power? Second, how can extended deterrence be provided to the region given the Arab-Israeli divide? Third, given their security cultures, will the Arab states and/or Israel trust external guarantees? And last, if Tehran develops long-range delivery systems, how can Iran be made to believe that the US will follow through on its commitments?

Based on these unknowns, four models on how extended deterrence can be guaranteed for the region are plausible: a multilateral agreement, a regional security system, the Holocaust declaration, and unilateral US guarantees. The paper discusses each model with regard to its applicability.

One possibility of providing the region with a kind of extended deterrence entails the great nuclear P5 powers (China, Russia, the US, France, and Great Britain) declaring their willingness and readiness to defend Israel and the Arab states, by nuclear means if necessary, if Iran attacks. Together with a declared willingness to use PGS capabilities and the Israeli Arrow system, this form of guarantee could either be provided by a joint P5 declaration or a Russian-US statement on the Middle East and nuclear weapons. At first glance this option looks appealing, since the top three nuclear powers would pool their capabilities and send a

<sup>10</sup> Clark A. Murdock and Jessica M. Yeats, *Exploring the Nuclear Posture Implications of Extended Deterrence and Assurance: Workshop Proceedings and Key Takeaways* (Washington, DC: CSIS Press, 2010).

clear and strong signal into the region. Even if Russia and China currently object to stronger sanctions than currently exist (not to speak of military action) against Iran, they both share a strategic interest in no nuclear escalation in the Middle East. From a mid-term perspective, it is possible that these three countries, together with the two European nuclear powers, would be willing to extend their deterring capabilities to the Middle East.

Such an option, however, would face an enormous credibility gap, which makes it unlikely to materialize. The likelihood that Israel would consider such a guarantee as credible must be considered extremely low. The option of multilateral guarantees might be appealing to some or all Arab states in the Middle East, but given Israel's historical record with Russia and France and the current behavior of China and Russia vis-à-vis the Iranian file, it is hard to imagine that the Israeli elite as well as public opinion would perceive such guarantees as credible. Multilateral agreements would also give Iran an opportunity to try to drive a wedge among those countries that would provide extended deterrence to the Middle East. The conclusion, therefore, is that multilateral agreements provided by the P5 or by a Russian-US consortium could not be implemented due to a lack of credibility.

A veteran idea that is frequently aired when it comes to Middle Eastern security is that of a regional security system. With regard to the purpose of extending deterrence, such a system would include the Arab states and Israel as well as external powers such as the US, and possibly Russia. Participants in such a system would commit themselves to defend any member of the system attacked by an outsider through all available means (nuclear, PGS, and missile defense). Such an arrangement would look very much like a formal alliance. A regional security system could be designed as single-purpose (exclusively against the external threat posed by a nuclear Iran) or multi-purpose (trying to create interdependencies among signatory states in the field of security). Although the theoretical literature on building alliances suggests that given an external threat, alliance building is possible even among states that have enmities, it seems unlikely that Arab states would be willing to form an institutionalized regional security system to oppose the Iranian threat. Furthermore, if issues between Israel and the Arab states were not settled beforehand, such a system would always have a high degree of instability, and intra-system balancing would impede its credibility in the eyes of the Iranian regime.

Charles Krauthammer has proposed the so-called "Holocaust declaration"<sup>11</sup> as one form of extending deterrence to parts of the Middle East. Within this framework, the US would state unilaterally that it would not allow a second Holocaust to take place, meaning that the US would be willing to use nuclear weapons to prevent Iran from exterminating the Jewish state. This kind of unilateral extended deterrence just for Israel would face two major obstacles. First, it would single out Israel as the only state in the Middle East of concern to the US and thereby potentially have a detrimental effect on US-Arab relations, and second, the Israeli elite might feel limited in its freedom to maneuver vis-à-vis Iran and beyond.

These three models on how to extend deterrence to the Middle East suffer from logical

<sup>11</sup> Charles Krauthammer, "The Holocaust Declaration," *Washington Post*, April 11, 2008, p. 8.

flaws given the political reality in the region. Currently, the major obstacles for establishing an overall (meaning including Israel and the Arab states) system of extended deterrence are the lack of trust among Arab states and Israel, and Arab security cultures, which make it hard to believe that Arab leaders and the Arab street could be convinced that the US would defend them in case of an Iranian assault.

Realistically speaking, the creation of a comprehensive and credible system of extended deterrence must start from unilateral US statements to Israel and the Arab states that the US will not allow any other country to blackmail or threaten its allies in the region. This means of extending unilateral deterrence guarantees is far from perfect. It is weak in the sense that there will be no link between the strategic nuclear capabilities of the US and the security of its allies in the region (as in the case of Europe or Asian countries) because of the opposition to US forces in those states. It will suffer from the basic credibility problem of extended deterrence,<sup>12</sup> which Charles de Gaulle captured so precisely in the 1960s when he asked Konrad Adenauer if the German chancellor really believed that the US would risk the destruction of New York for the liberation of Hamburg. The credibility problem nowadays has become even worse since the current US administration has shifted its attention to the Pacific and does not seem too determined to stop Iran “by all means necessary” from going nuclear. Added to this, US credibility and its commitment to get tough on Iran if the *mullah* regime, once nuclear, threatens US allies, might suffer from the fact that the US has lost two conventional wars in the broader region (Iraq and Afghanistan) and public opinion does not support getting bogged down again in the Middle Eastern quagmire.

But given the aforementioned obstacles facing other forms of extended deterrence in the Middle East, unilateral guarantees might currently be the only form of extending deterrence to the region. Those who point to the fact that Israel has sufficient deterrence capabilities of its own and does not need any kind of extended deterrence<sup>13</sup> are right from a purely military perspective, but utterly wrong given the political signal sent to Iran if the US extended its deterrence only to Arab states. This signal could be interpreted by the political and religious leadership in Tehran as a crack in US-Israeli relations and as an isolation of Israel in the Middle East. In turn, such a policy could cause Iran to step up its aggressive provocations (via its proxies in the region) to below the threshold of a direct attack against the Jewish state. For political reasons, it would thus be necessary for the US to also extend its deterrence to Israel.

## **5. Analysis of the Four Models and Their Applicability in the Middle East: A Critical Overview**

To critically evaluate and augment the four models discussed above, it is fundamental to pose the following questions: To what extent should or must US deterrence strategy depend on multilateral or collective security? Can US military supremacy be brought to bear without

<sup>12</sup> Vesna Danilovic, "The Sources of Threat Credibility in Extended Deterrence," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 45, No. 3 (2001): 341-69.

<sup>13</sup> Shen Dingli, "Extended Nuclear Deterrence: Fading Fast," *Interpreter*, February 3, 2011, <http://www.lowyinterpreter.org/post/2011/02/03/Extended-deterrence-fading-fast.aspx>.

coalition support? Will the ability of the US to act decisively unilaterally drive states to oppose it in order to retain some level of strategic independence? Indeed, the question of the role of nuclear weapons in extended deterrence and the level of multilateralism required in US strategy have stirred up great controversy in the policy analysis community.<sup>14</sup> Conversely, there is a more general agreement on the necessary criteria for US forces to underwrite a US deterrence strategy. In whatever form they may take, efforts to bolster the US's extended deterrence commitments against Iran are likely to persist for two reasons beyond the obvious one. First, doing so offers a plausible alternative to the certain costs, and almost certain failure, of the preventive war option. Second, it is hoped that US security commitments can dissuade Middle East allies from pursuing their own nuclear options. On a broader scale, the longer-term viability of the nonproliferation treaty regime may hinge on the credibility of the nuclear powers' positive assurances to non-nuclear weapons states that they will be protected from nuclear aggression and coercion. For example, Israel's confidence in the US's statements and actions regarding preventing Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons and coping with a nuclear Iran will make it less likely for Israel to feel compelled to pre-emptively attack Iran's nuclear facilities. Recent developments, particularly in missile defense cooperation, appear to be helping in this regard. In a stark change of tone, Israel seems to exhibit some strength based on its nuclear capabilities, the assumption that the US would stand behind it if it came under attack, and the calculation that enough of the country's air bases and military facilities would survive a first strike to retaliate effectively. Moreover, it is publicly acknowledged that Israel's nuclear response would make it politically difficult for Arab states to remain non-nuclear, thus unleashing a possible number of defensive forms: a bilateral defense treaty, a joint congressional resolution, an executive agreement, or a presidential declaration. The broader, more public, and more formalized the security guarantee, the greater its deterrent value, but also the greater the obstacles to the two sides' abilities to reach an agreement.

Extended deterrence thinking has also penetrated into the growth areas of international security, especially under the aegis of collective-actor deterrence. For instance, in the heyday of the 1990s, the new peacekeeping UN Security Council passed numerous resolutions concerning safe areas in the former Yugoslavia and elsewhere that explicitly tied deployment of peacekeepers to the goal of deterring attacks on civilian enclaves including, Srebrenica.<sup>15</sup> The frequently heard claims that the Rwandan genocide could have been averted by a timely deployment of just a few thousand robust UN peacekeepers rests on an implicit and heroic assumption about the effectiveness of extended deterrence. In recent years, from Eastern Europe to the Middle East, Africa, Central Asia, and Southeast Asia, the US has recruited new formal and informal allies, sinking money into these partners in the form of concrete based infrastructure, military-to-military training and exercises, and preferential arms sales, investing in prestige and political capital.<sup>16</sup> The conventional wisdom is that these efforts to

<sup>14</sup> Air Force Research Institute. *Deterrence in the Twenty-first Century: Proceedings* (London: Creative Commons CCO, 2010), 138.

<sup>15</sup> Antony H. Cordesman and Adam C. Seitz, *Iranian Weapons of Mass Destruction: The Birth of a Regional Nuclear Arms Race?* (California: ABC-CLIO, 2009), 315.

<sup>16</sup> Air Force Research Institute, *Deterrence*, 139.

shape the international environment through alliances and a forward presence will tend to discourage regional aggression; in other words, it will tend to encourage general deterrence.

If the only areas of conflict between Iran and the US were threats posed to each other's territory, deterrence alone might be sufficient. Iran certainly might commit money and effort to build nuclear weapons for status quo purposes, as the UK, China, and France have done. However, Iran is more likely to try to exploit the political value of nuclear weapons to jockey for advantage in other areas. The Iranian perception of itself as a natural leader in the Gulf, a cultural hegemon in the Middle East, and a challenger to the US presence and role as protector suggest that Iran would want to use the clout of its nuclear force to further its aims beyond the defense of its homeland.<sup>17</sup> While there is global uncertainty surrounding how Iran may evolve politically in the near to medium term, Iran's overall national security interests are broadly supported by its political elite and a large section of its population. These interests involve ensuring the survival of the current regime by deterring a US invasion of Iran, protecting the homeland against all external threats, and maintaining and expanding Iran's influence and power in the Middle East and beyond.

Most participants in Murdock and Yeats' study (commissioned by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS)) supported continued efforts to prevent Iran from going nuclear, though there was little support for preventive US or Israel military action. Moreover, study participants rejected the view that continued pursuit of a diplomatic solution is inconsistent with discussing options for how the US and its allies could cope with a nuclear Iran. To the contrary, such discussions could bolster the international community's negotiating leverage by shaping Iran's cost-benefit calculations. The Gulf Cooperation Council, in particular Saudi Arabia, would like to benefit from US extended deterrence and assurance.<sup>18</sup> General stability in the Middle East is important, but Saudi Arabia, because of its oil reserves, is the only country whose independence and survival is of vital interest to the US. Assurances to Egypt are often discussed (in part because Egypt has the most advanced civilian nuclear program among the potential Arab recipients) as well as arrangements with Jordan, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Syria, but because the political and credibility-related challenges would be amplified in each of those cases, Saudi Arabia is the litmus test for the spread of nuclear weapons if Iran will acquire a military capability.

Lack of the public support for deterrence also cautions against overly suggestive, high-level statements on extended nuclear deterrence in the Middle East in the media. Whereas the formalization or explicit nature of an assurance commitment has been identified elsewhere as a factor of assurance strengthening, unintended fallout may cause those reassurance mechanisms to backfire. Were such comments to provoke a prolonged domestic debate, the American public's lack of resolve would be projected internationally and the damage to US security commitments globally would exceed the value of the public reassurance.

Existing and potential extended deterrence and assurance relationships fall along a spectrum, encompassing varying degrees of formality, transparency, clarity, and relevance

<sup>17</sup> Murdock and Yeats, *Exploring the Nuclear Posture Implications*, 35

<sup>18</sup> T.V. Paul, Patrick M. Morgan and James J. Wirtz, eds., *Complex Deterrence Strategy in the Global Age* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 55.

to US nuclear weapons. The election of President Ahmadinejad in Iran in 2005 and the progress of Iran’s nuclear program since then have made military options more plausible and prominent.<sup>19</sup> At the same time, however, growing military difficulties in Iraq make the idea of another major American military effort in the Middle East less credible, and the unilateralist and militaristic image of the US that developed after the 2003 invasion of Iraq further constrains Washington.

**6. Conclusion**

Extended deterrence consists of merits and demerits based on a variety of factors inherent in both parties. I summarize the advantages and challenges of extended deterrence, as shown in Figure 1.

Potential Advantages	Potential Costs & Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Deterring attacks or coercion against vital U.S. interests</li> <li>➤ Prevent new states from proliferating</li> <li>➤ US nuclear umbrella safer than proliferation (avoids dangerous practices)</li> <li>➤ US retains control</li> <li>➤ Depending on the state, could share risks and burdens</li> <li>➤ Dissuade the potential aggressor’s pursuit of nuclear weapons capability</li> <li>➤ Depending on the state, dissuade unilateral action against the potential aggressor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Additional political-diplomatic burdens and costs</li> <li>➤ Commitment trap would put pressure on the US to respond and/or be drawn into regional conflicts even if it were unwise</li> <li>➤ May polarize relations with states that need not become adversaries</li> <li>➤ Political resistance in the US and recipient state</li> <li>➤ Perceived as increasing reliance on nuclear weapons</li> <li>➤ No formal alliances or support for an American troop presence to symbolize the commitment</li> <li>➤ Asymmetry of stakes</li> <li>➤ Enmity between protected states</li> </ul>

Figure 1: Pros and cons of providing new or strengthened extended nuclear deterrence guarantees

Unilateral declarations by the US to be willing to extend its deterrence to the Middle East is the weakest form of extended deterrence, but currently the only option that appears at all realistic. In the mid-term (assuming that Iran goes nuclear) a more credible and stable system of extended deterrence for the region will be needed. Such a system might be composed of unilateral Israeli capabilities, multilateral security agreements between Israel and the Arab states, and US nuclear guarantees for all members. There is still some time, however, before such a system must be in place.

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<sup>19</sup> Paul, Morgan and Wirtz, eds., *Complex Deterrence*, 56.



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## Bringing Religion Back In? Debating Religion in International Politics

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### Review article of 3 books:

1. Andrew Phillips, *War, Religion and Empire: The Transformation of International Orders* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011, xii + 364 pp., USD 82.68, hardcover).
2. Timothy Samuel Shah, Alfred Stepan, Monica Duffy Toft, eds., *Rethinking Religion and World Affairs* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012, x + 319 pp., USD 29.95, paper.).
3. Timothy Fitzgerald, *Religion and Politics in International Relations: The Modern Myth* (London: Continuum, 2011, x + 284 pp., USD 39.85, paper.).

Observing the shattering of the European society's axiological foundations and traditional systems of meaning, which had been constituted and sustained by and through Christianity, under the rampant secularism of his time, Nietzsche has a madman declare the death of God in *The Gay Science*: "God is dead. God remains dead. And we have killed him".<sup>1</sup> His observation was also valid for the international politics of the time, in which secular ideologies had long replaced religion as the ideational aspect of international politics. The competition among these new ideologies, after contributing in varying degrees to several upheavals in international politics, arguably ended with the collapse of the Soviet Union with socialism as its avowed ideology, leaving liberalism as the lone secular ideology with the United States as its avowed political custodian.<sup>2</sup>

Nonetheless, after the end of the Cold War, religious convictions, actors, practices, and institutions have become more visible in the practice of international relations, and yet, for different reasons, the study of the increasing role of religion and the religious in international affairs has been elided.<sup>3</sup> One reason for this disciplinary inertia pertains to the praxis of international relations. It is an unfortunate conjunction that this field's formative period after World War I coincided with World War II and the Cold War, which placed an overwhelming imperative on the study of 'high politics' to the exclusion of issues of 'low politics'. Nonetheless, after the end of the Cold War ideational aspects of international relations once overlooked as 'low politics' or 'below politics' have become more visible in the scholarly study of international relations.

The fundamental reason for the omission, however, is the discipline's secular nature, which has been a categorical impediment to including religion and has been highlighted

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<sup>1</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, trans. Walter Kaufmann, *The Gay Science* (New York: Vintage Books, 1974), 181.

<sup>2</sup> For the role of ideologies in current international relations, see Alan Cassels, *Ideology and International Relations in the Modern World* (London: Routledge, 1996).

<sup>3</sup> Here, 'religion' denotes a general system of belief with a dimension of extratemporal immanence and/or transcendence, while 'religious' denotes actors and practices related to religion.

by several scholars.<sup>4</sup> Edward Luttwak, for example, argued in the immediate aftermath of the Cold War that “astonishingly persistent, Enlightenment prejudice has remained amply manifest in the contemporary professional analysis of foreign affairs”.<sup>5</sup> According to Luttwak, “policymakers, diplomats, journalists and scholars...are still in the habit of disregarding the role of religion, religious institutions, and religious motivations in explaining politics and conflict...” and, as a result of this prejudiced scholarly attitude, “one is therefore confronted with learned repugnance to contend intellectually with all that is religion or belongs to it”.<sup>6</sup>

Acknowledging the increasing relevancy of religion in the practice of international affairs especially after 9/11, a growing number of scholars have ventured to explore the intricate relationships between religion and international relations.<sup>7</sup> Although the majority of studies is devoted to examining the relationship between violence and religion, especially Islam, comprehensive accounts discussing the place and role of religion in international relations have also appeared. Pavlos Hatzopoulos and Fabio Petito’s edited volume *Religion and International Relations: The Return from Exile* is an important post-9/11 contribution to the literature, and the editors, who are of the conviction that “the rejection of religion...seems to be inscribed in the genetic code of the discipline of IR”,<sup>8</sup> contend that “having unexpectedly survived the long Westphalian exile, religion is back to the center of international relations”.<sup>9</sup> The contributors, including John L. Esposito, Richard Falk, and Ole Wæver, among others, debate the interplay between religion and international affairs from a multitude of perspectives.<sup>10</sup>

Nevertheless, until now, the existing literature exhibited some shortcomings. The first was the lack of historical and systemic treatment of religion in international relations. The second was an overemphasis on the study of violence and religion in international relations. The third was the lack of semantic consciousness and conceptual self-reflection in the discussions of the issue. Three recently published works further explore the debate, analyzing it from different yet complementary perspectives. Andrew Phillips examines the role of the religious and the political in constituting and transforming international orders in his comparative historical study, and thus engages in a system-level analysis of the place of religion in international politics.<sup>11</sup> Timothy Samuel Shah, Alfred Stepan, and Monica Duffy Toft’s edited volume is more general in scope, and deals with multiple issues concerning religion and contemporary international relations, including secularism and secularization, democracy and human rights, conflict and peacemaking, humanitarianism and civil society, media, and American

<sup>4</sup> For example, Timothy Samuel Shah and Daniel Philpott, “The Fall and Rise of Religion in International Relations: History and Theory,” in *Religion and International Relations Theory*, ed. Jack Snyder (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 24-59; Elizabeth Shakman Hurd, “Secularism and International Relations Theory,” in *Religion and International Relations Theory*, ed. Jack Snyder (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 60-90.

<sup>5</sup> Edward Luttwak, “The Missing Dimension,” in *Religion, the Missing Dimension of Statecraft*, eds. Douglas Johnston and Cynthia Sampson (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 9.

<sup>6</sup> Luttwak, “Missing,” 9-10.

<sup>7</sup> In this review article, ‘international relations’ and ‘international affairs’ are used interchangeably, while ‘international politics’ is distinguished from them, and is used to denote the political facet or form of international relations/affairs.

<sup>8</sup> Pavlos Hatzopoulos and Fabio Petito, “The Return from Exile: An Introduction,” in *Religion in International Relations: The Return from Exile*, eds. Pavlos Hatzopoulos and Fabio Petito (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 1.

<sup>9</sup> Hatzopoulos and Petito, “An Introduction,” 2.

<sup>10</sup> For another contribution forcefully calling for the incorporation of religion in the study, and especially theory, of international relations, see Scott M. Thomas, *The Global Resurgence of Religion and the Transformation of International Relations* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

<sup>11</sup> Andrew Phillips, *War, Religion and Empire: The Transformation of International Orders* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011). The title is abbreviated as *WRE* within this text.

foreign policy.<sup>12</sup> Timothy Fitzgerald questions the generic employment of the categories of religion and politics, and undertakes a critical deconstruction of these categories as employed in other works of the literature.<sup>13</sup> In this article, I discuss the contributions of these scholars to the debate on the role and place of religion in international relations. First, I introduce their arguments then critically appraise the strengths and shortcomings of their analyses. Last, I discuss their insights in reference to my main argument.

It is my contention that religion and the religious is relevant to the practice and study of international relations, and yet the extent of its relevancy is, and will be, determined by the extent of troubled interactions between the religious and the political, especially the liberal, in contemporary international relations. This argument is predicated upon two premises. First, religion and politics are distinct realms of social existence and activity, and are based on different systems of meaning and value. Second, religion and politics are both authoritative institutions, in the sense that they are both sources of authority which makes both the religious and the political to become proprietors and enforcers of authority. Although ontologically separate sources of authority, religion and politics address the same audience as the subject of their authority in which the authority claims of religion and politics interact. In some cases, the interaction is symbiotic, but in all cases it is hierarchical, that is, one side's authority always takes priority over the other's. Therefore, I argue, a balanced relationship between the religious and the political in international relations is not likely, and in cases of active engagements with each other, the relationship is always asymmetrical.

### 1. Religion and International Dis/orders

In *WRE*, Andrew Phillips examines the role of religion in conjunction with war in the constitution, continuation, and collapse of international orders from a long-term historical perspective. Phillips' theoretical and empirical examination involves a comparative case study of Latin Christendom, the Sinosphere, and the global state system.<sup>14</sup> Three research questions underpin Phillips' account: 1) the nature of international orders, 2) the causes and the process of their transformations, and 3) the ways that were historically employed in Latin Christendom and the Sinosphere, and are currently employed in the global state system to counter challenges to their integrity. On the nature of international orders, Phillips advances a theoretically eclectic argument consisting of two parts. First, concentrating on "the order-producing norms and institutions that define international orders", he affirms that "international orders depend on the existence of an order-enabling material context" (5). Second, he maintains that international orders are teleological in nature and intrinsically dualistic in their formation. On the one hand, "international orders seek to advance a normatively thick and culturally and historically contingent vision of the good", while on the other hand, "international orders are also dedicated to the more basic objective of containing violent conflict between different polities within manageable bounds" (5).

In an elaborate analysis, Phillips defines international orders as composed of three constitutive elements: a normative complex, fundamental institutions, and a material context. A normative complex provides "actors with the 'maps of meaning necessary to navigate social

<sup>12</sup> Timothy Samuel Shah, Alfred Stepan, and Monica Duffy Toft, eds., *Rethinking Religion and World Affairs* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012). The title is abbreviated as *RRWA* within this text.

<sup>13</sup> Timothy Fitzgerald, *Religion and Politics in International Relations: The Modern Myth* (London: Continuum, 2011). The title is abbreviated as *RPIR* within this text.

<sup>14</sup> References to *WRE* are included in the text in parentheses.

life, conferring upon them a shared collective identity, as well as a common ethical system and a framework for recognising and legitimising political authority” (24). “Authoritative institutions that wield supreme authority within a given issue area and/or territory”, “a legal or ritual framework that codifies agents’ rights and obligations”, and “authorised practices of legitimate violence through which order is enforced, violators are punished, and injuries are remedied” constitute the fundamental institutions of an international order (26-27). Finally, an international order’s normative complex and fundamental institutions are embedded within a material context. “Aggregate social capacities for organized production and destruction”, “the configuration of mobilizational networks”, and “the volume and density of interactions” constitute the three most prominent characteristics of material context (29).

Phillips’ emphasis on the dualistic nature of international orders is also evident in his argument about their continuation. To Phillips, a combination of authoritative institutions and coercive institutions sustains international orders. While authoritative institutions “attract agents’ compliance through their concordance with shared standards of legitimacy”, coercive institutions “compel agents’ compliance through the application of authorised practices of organized violence” (6). In the most general terms, international orders transform when “the organising principle that governs relations of authority between different political communities” constituting an international order changes along with “its constitutional values and fundamental institutions” (6-7).

According to Phillips, the collapse of international orders is a result of ideational and material changes. Ideationally, “it entails the emergence of anti-systemic ideologies that explicitly contest either part or all of the normative complex underpinning the existing international order” (8). Phillips calls this situation an ideological schism, and it subverts an international order in two ways. First, it destroys “the normative consensus necessary to sustain the operation of fundamental institutions, effectively paralysing collective capacities to manage and contain violent conflict”, and second, it polarizes “polities both internally and internationally between defenders and opponents of the existing order” (8). Materially, “technologically driven increases in the scale of and scope of violent international conflict” compounds ideational challenges to an international order (9). It can easily be seen that the causal primacy in Phillips’ account is accorded to ideational factors, notwithstanding the incorporation of material factors.

For Phillips, the demise of Latin Christendom is attributable first to the advent of a religious movement, the Reformation, which challenged the normative complex and fundamental institutions of the established international order sustained by the Catholic Church and imperial arrangements, and subsequently caused a severe legitimacy crisis within the order, culminating in the Thirty Years’ War. The second factor in its demise was the introduction of more destructive military and technological capacities, enabled by the increasing wealth created by incipient commercialization, which destroyed the existing order-enabling material context and ushered in a new international order (59-148). In the same vein, the collapse of the Sinosphere was the result of a combination of the ideational and material decay of the Qing dynasty, internal rebellions (the gravest being the Taiping Rebellion), and the increasing rapacity of, first, Western powers, and then Japan (149-258). In the case of the global state system, Phillips discusses the current situation and the future of the contemporary world order against the challenge of radical Islamism, specifically, “the

most extreme anti-systemic expression of radical Islamism, namely the transnational Salafi-jihadist terrorist threat embodied in Al Qaeda and its many offshoots” (263).

Before discussing the place of religion and the religious in Phillips’ account of the transformation of international relations and the insights that can be drawn from the relationships between the religious and the political, a critical appraisal of the basic strengths and weaknesses of his analysis is needed. Its strength, which is also its substantial contribution, is its holistic approach, which incorporates normative, institutional, and material factors to account for the transformation of international orders in an attempt to transcend the realist/constructivist and materialist/idealist dualisms in international relations scholarship. On the other hand, there is also a serious shortcoming in his analysis. Despite their seeming similarities, the nature of the transformations in Latin Christendom and the Sinosphere are empirically distinct, and thus the two cases are incomparable causing a problem of incommensurability.

The transformation of the international order in Latin Christendom was endogenic, that is, intra-systemic, while the transformation of the international order in the Sinosphere was mainly exogenic, that is, inter-systemic. Starting with the Opium Wars, and continuing till the defeat of Japan by the US in World War II, the transformation of the Sinosphere was conditioned, and more often than not forcefully affected, by the policies of external actors, a phenomenon empirically identified by Phillips himself (for example, 174-182). While intra-systemic transformation of Latin Christendom ushered in another international order within the same system, the Sinosphere was liquidated after World War II, and incorporated into the emerging international order. Finally, the crisis of Latin Christendom’s normative complex was again endogenic and exclusively ideational in character, that is, caused by an intra-systemic normative rival to the Catholic Church that challenged its legitimacy on ideational grounds. However, the crisis of the Sinosphere’s normative complex was mainly exogenic, and to a great extent materially conditioned, that is, caused by inter-systemic rivals to the Heavenly Kingdom that challenged and damaged its legitimacy on ideational and material grounds. As again noted by Phillips in his account of the fall of the Sinosphere (for example, 198-214), the decay of its normative complex was intimately intertwined with changes in its material context, mainly imposed by external interventions. In other words, the successive defeats of Qing armies by foreign invaders, including Western powers and Japan, paved the way for insidious criticism, and subsequently severe debilitation, of the legitimacy of the Heavenly Kingdom and the Sinosphere, which were the fundamental causes behind its internal rebellions and associated domestic troubles. For the above reasons, then, the cases examined in Phillips’ analysis accounting for the transformation of international orders are incomparable because Latin Christendom and the Sinosphere followed peculiar paths in their transformations.

Nonetheless, with regard to the role and place of religion and the religious in the transformation of international orders, Phillips’ long-term historical comparative investigation is highly informative and illuminating. Religion in Latin Christendom and the Sinosphere, Catholicism and Confucianism respectively, constituted the fundamental structures over which coherent normative complexes could be built and sustained.<sup>15</sup> Phillips disaggregates

<sup>15</sup> It ought to be noted that it is problematic to situate Catholicism and Confucianism under the category of ‘religion’; ‘religious belief systems’ would be a more accurate specification. This is an important point, discussed by Phillips only in passing (154); still, I use the same categorization for convenience.

normative complex into “a composite of overlapping norms that perform identity-constitutive, ethical prescriptive and power-legitimizing functions” (25). In Latin Christendom and the Sinosphere alike, religion constituted the base upon which to confer the communities and polities of the international order a collective shared identity, enabling them to relate to each other and to the world in consensual, meaningful, interpretative frameworks (61-70, 149-163). In addition, religion was the ultimate regulatory source; it provided norms of appropriate behavior in a given international order as well as the criteria to judge that behavior. Finally, and in a more authoritative manner, religion functioned “to convince agents that political obedience is both necessary and consistent with the demands of morality”, and consolidated “established structures of domination by situating them as necessary expressions of politically salient collective identities” (26). In the Sinosphere, for example, Confucianism “worked to sustain a hierarchical order with an omniscient universal emperor at its pinnacle”, who was construed and conceived as the Son of Heaven and who “presided over a social order conceived in organic and rigidly hierarchical terms” (155).

That religion and the religious were not without challenges, which could emerge from within and from outside, and that competition and conflict between the established religion and revisionist challengers was quite decisive in the transformation of international orders, is another important insight in Phillips’ account. In Latin Christendom, the challenge emerged from within; the Reformation originated in the ideas and acts of a Christian monk, Martin Luther, and signified the onset of the collapse of the existing order. For example, in assaulting the Catholic tenet that “salvation was possible only through the Church... Luther assaulted the most basic power-legitimizing norms underpinning Christendom” (87). In the Sinosphere, on the other hand, the challenge came from outside. Confucianism’s terminal legitimacy crises began as an adversarial worldview of ‘barbarians’ (Christianity) into the social imaginary of the Sinosphere after the opening of Chinese politics, economy, and society to Western encroachment in the Opium Wars (174-193). The Taiping Rebellion of the evangelical Protestant native Chinese was as equally a theological rebellion against Confucianism as it was a political revolt against dynastic authority (182-193). Confucianism was further debilitated and finally outcast by secular ideologies originating from the West. Nationalism, republicanism, and later, socialism, challenged and delegitimized Confucianism, and by expelling it from the normative complex of the Sinosphere, these secular ideologies contributed to the collapse of that order.

Phillips’ account conspicuously demonstrates that the place of religion, be it established or revisionist, in a given international order is re/negotiated in and through its relations with the political. Further, the role of religion (again, established or revisionist) in the transformation of international orders is determined by its interactions with the political. The decisive dynamic in the transformation of international orders is the nature of relationships between the religious and the political. In the constitution and continuation of Latin Christendom a concord existed between the religious and the political, wherein the religious was the dominant party in specifying the terms of the relationship. As Phillips states, “Church doctrine proclaimed that both Church and empire were divinely ordained institutions fulfilling distinct but complementary functions” (66). The Church, as the religious authority, “was responsible for assuring humanity’s submission to Christ and securing the salvation of souls” and the empire, as the political authority, “was charged with securing the temporal order necessary for the Church to realize its divinely ordained mission” (66).



However, the relationship became troubled when the political gained ascendancy. As an example, “under the pontificate of Clement VII, the papacy proved intransigent in its resistance to imperial calls for a General Council to reform the Church”, whereby, to Phillips, the Church confounded the progress towards religious reconciliation “until the gap between Catholics and Protestants had become unbridgeable” (103). Protestantism, on the other hand, the revisionist religion, forged its own relationships with the political, including the Habsburg monarchy *and* the politics contesting the Habsburg hegemony in this particular international order. In short, the transformation of Latin Christendom involved the interplay of two religious and two political authorities in crosscutting relationships. The two religious authorities were the Church and Protestantism, and the two political authorities were the “Counter-Reformation axis” headed by the Habsburgs and “an eclectic coalition united by little more than their opposition to Habsburg power” (129).

In the Sinosphere, a similar concord existed between politics and religion in its initial constitution and subsequent continuation (150-163). However, contrary to the Church, Confucianism’s religious authority was inextricably tied to the political authority of the Qing emperor; there was no institutional embodiment of Confucianism similar to the Church, and accordingly the diarchy of authorities as seen in Latin Christendom was not present in the Sinosphere. Therefore, the transformation of the Sinosphere necessarily followed a different path than Latin Christendom. Confucianism and the Qing dynasty struggled for their common survival against a multitude of foreign ideologies and predatory powers, and the weakening of one inevitably led to the weakening of the other (196-225). In the case of the Sinosphere, the religious and political authorities shared a common destiny, and a common defeat against several external religious and political challengers.

Phillips’ account also follows the gradual secularization of politics and the political, and the associated descent and final expulsion of religion and the religious in the constitution and continuation of international orders. With the effective end of Latin Christendom by the Peace of Westphalia, a long-term “transition from the medieval universalism of the *Respublica Christiana* to the sovereign anarchy of the modern state system” (136) took hold in conjunction with “an important shift towards the secularization of [the] European order” (144).<sup>16</sup> Religion no longer constituted the sole and ultimate normative complex, nor ideational foundation, of the national and international order in the European system, and was to be increasingly disputed and marginalized by alternative secular social imaginaries, primarily emanating from the Enlightenment. The religious also lost its authority in shaping that order’s foundational institutions and material contexts.

In the Sinosphere, mainly due to inter-systemic external factors, religion in the form of Confucianism experienced the same destiny. Confucianism was discredited as the ideational foundation of the national and international order, and along with the fall of the Qing Empire, was superseded by new secular social imaginaries of Western origin. Religion’s nexus with politics was severed, and the Sinosphere was liquidated through the forceful integration of the regional system into the global state system. Phillips stresses that “unlike either Christendom or the Sinosphere, the global state system lacks overt cosmological foundations” (263). However, this does not mean that it lacks ideational foundations; “the global state system

<sup>16</sup> Phillips discusses arguments about transition to sovereign and secular Westphalian state system in detail, and after presenting a full overview of the revisionist scholarship contesting both arguments, he seems to concede the validity of them both in the final analysis (136-148).

powerfully reflects Enlightenment legacies in its constitutional norms, with the goals of human emancipation and material progress in the temporal world entirely replacing religious imperatives as the basis for international order” (263). The current international order, however, is underpinned ideationally by the most resilient and pervasive ideological legitimacy of the Enlightenment, which is liberalism. Global state system is at the same time a liberal international order. In other words, in the contemporary international order, politics is secular, and defined exclusively by liberalism. Therefore, in the current international order, the role and place of religion and the religious are, and will be, determined by their interactions with politics and the political, especially the liberal underpinning of the political.<sup>17</sup> In order to clarify this point, it is necessary to identify the role and place of religion and the religious in contemporary international affairs in which early signs of a renegotiation of the role and place of religion with politics are discernible.

## 2. Religion and Contemporary International Affairs

Religious convictions, actors, practices, and institutions have become more visible in many areas of contemporary international affairs and have come under increasing scrutiny by scholars of varying disciplines and persuasions. In an attempt to give a comprehensive account of the interconnection of religion with several aspects of current global affairs, Timothy Samuel Shah, Alfred Stepan, and Monica Duffy Toft’s edited volume deals with issues including secularism and secularization, democracy and human rights, conflict and peacemaking, humanitarianism and civil society, media, and American foreign policy.<sup>18</sup> The rationale behind this scholarly venture is explained in its introductory chapter by the proposition that “religion has become one of the most influential factors in world affairs in the last generation but remains one of the least examined factors in the professional study and practice of world affairs” (3).

The first section pertains to the relationship between religion, secularism, and secularization in the practice and study of international affairs. J. Bryan Heir questions the absence of thoughtful consideration of the role and place of religion in international politics and advances three explanations for it. First, the Westphalian order that emerged in Europe and extended to the world in its entirety “produced a conception of international order that was sovereign and secular in character, committed to a conception of state interests as the best guide to understanding international relations” (16). Second, common to the international relations scholarship and the practice of diplomacy is pervasive diffidence and skepticism about religion and all things religious. Third, democracy entails a normative prescription that religion is, and should be, a private reality, which “undergirds the idea that religion need not be addressed in understanding the public nature of world politics” (18).

Jose Casanova contends that the three subtheses of the theory of secularization (secular institutional differentiation, decline in religious observance, and privatization of religion), have become questionable, if not invalidated, in the current state of national and international affairs, wherein ‘public religions’ have become more salient (25-27). Specifically in international affairs, Casanova calls attention to “the proliferation of deterritorialized

<sup>17</sup> The debate over the inclusion of a reference to Christianity in the Treaty of Lisbon in the European Union is supportive of this argument, and exemplary of how a religious body, i.e., the Pope, attempted to find a role and place for religion in the secular politics of an emerging regional order and how this attempt was opposed and thwarted by liberal circles.

<sup>18</sup> References to *RRWA* are included in the text in parentheses.

transnational global imagined communities”, which, to him, “present fundamental challenges to international relations theories that are still functioning within the premises of a Westphalian international system” (33). Finally in this section, Elizabeth Shakman Hurd debates the politics of secularism in national and international affairs, critically comparing what she calls “two ideal types of secularism” (37), namely laicism and Judeo-Christian secularism, and, concurring with the previous authors, argues that “most realist and liberal approaches to international relations operate on the laicist assumption that religion has been confined to the private sphere or has disappeared” (38).

The second section of *RRWA* discusses the relationship between religion, democracy, and human rights. Stepan presents a strong case for what he calls “twin tolerations” in public life, where there must be “minimal boundaries of freedom of action...crafted for political institutions vis-à-vis religious authorities, and for religious individuals and groups vis-à-vis political institutions” (55). He maintains that in practice many seemingly secular European states, including Denmark, Finland, Greece, Sweden, England, and Germany, are not strictly secular, and gives examples of twin tolerations. Rajev Bhargava proposes an alternative model of secularism based on India’s experience in dealing with religion in public and political life. He contends that the American model of secularism (with its prominent characteristics of mutual exclusion of religion and state and passive respect for religion by state) and the French model of secularism (with its prominent characteristics of one-sided exclusion of religion from state, and active disrespect for religion by state) “have persistent difficulties coping with community oriented religions that demand greater public presence” (75). To Bhargava, the Indian model of secularism, with its prominent characteristics of principled distance and contextual secularism, is a better alternative.

Rethinking Islam and democracy, Robert W. Hefner is of the conviction that the future of democracy in contemporary Muslim states is to be determined by the debates, and especially by the positions of Muslim religious authorities on those debates, about the status of women, non-Muslims, and Muslim nonconformists in Muslim societies (89-97). Finally in this section, John Witte, Jr. and M. Christian Green discuss religion and international human rights. They specify three controversial subjects challenging the universality of the international religious freedom regime: proselytism/evangelization, conversion and apostasy, and blasphemy and religious defamation (110-117).

The third section is an examination of the role of religion in conflict and peacemaking. According to Toft, religions in general “share two key aspects relevant to the likelihood that conflict between competing groups may escalate into violence” (133). First, “religion tends to be uncompromising”, and second, “religion encourages followers to discount their physical survival” (133-134). Although Toft finds an increase in the proportion of civil wars “with religion as a feature of the fight” (136), her sampling is methodologically flawed, and thus her findings are not tenable. Daniel Philpott investigates the role of religion in the realization of transitional justice based on reconciliation. Philpott denounces the liberal human rights paradigm with regards to the realization of transitional justice, maintaining that its core commitment is the punishment of perpetrators and vindication of victims (150). He finally states that religious actors have become influential in the realization of transitional justice in some cases, for they have espoused a political theology of reconciliation and have been autonomous from their states during periods of conflict and periods of transition (153-157).

In its fourth section, *RRWA* probes the relationships between religion, humanitarianism, and civil society. Reflecting on his scholarly experiences in the field of humanitarianism, Michael Barnett observes that “in general, because they confront the same environment and respond in fairly similar ways, secular and faith-based agencies are growing more alike all the time” (166). Notwithstanding the incremental similarities in practice, in motive, religious convictions influence faith-based charitable and philanthropic action through encouraging “greater stoicism”, shaping “the boundaries of the moral community”, and shaping the faith-based humanitarian organization’s “understanding of the social purpose of humanitarian action” (170-171). Katherine Marshall explores the issue of faith and gender in international affairs, and argues that “gender has become the preeminently contested social question, with religion thrown, willingly or unwillingly, into the vortex of the global contestation” (189).

In the subsequent chapter, Marshall turns to the issue of religion and development, and discusses the ideational and institutional setbacks inhibiting a thorough examination of religion’s possible contributions to international development. In terms of development, Marshall thinks that religion is treated in civil society in the fashion of “out of sight and out of mind” (198), is seen by development technocrats as divisive (200), and is regarded in development circles as “part of the problem and part of the solution” (202). These claims call for a serious examination of the subject of religion and development. Finally in this section, Thomas Banchoff explains the ways interreligious dialogue and international relations shape each other, and contends that the dialectical relationship between the two is asymmetrical because “as in earlier eras, the course of international relations and world politics has constrained the scope and content of interreligious dialogue” (211).

The fifth section is pertinent to the uneasy relationships between religion and media. Mehrzad Boroujerdi and Nichole J. Allem investigate the effects of new media on the international and intra-national relations of the Muslim world. They seem to be of the opinion that “the omnipresence and inescapability of new media” (218) may not be a welcome development in terms of the destabilizing effects of religion on international and intra-national relations of the Muslim world due to, for example, “the diminution of the power of experts, the fracturing of religious discourse, [and] the questionings of religious orthodoxies” (218). Diane Winston demonstrates how international media brought widespread protests of Buddhist monks in Burma/Myanmar against the military junta in 2007 to the attention of an international audience, and how this domestically and internationally influenced the developments concerning the turmoil there.

The sixth and last section of *RRWA* is devoted to a discussion of religion and American foreign policy. Walter Russell Mead traces the historical trajectory of the demographics of Protestantism in the US, identifies its three most important strands as fundamentalist, liberal, and evangelical Protestant Christianity, and illustrates how shifting demographics and the power of those strands have corresponding effects on US foreign policy. Mead states that humanitarianism and human rights policies and the question of Israel occupy the highest place on the foreign policy agenda of the evangelicals, which has become the most influential Protestant strand in the US. Thomas F. Farr attributes the problems in the origins, implementation, and institutionalization of the US’ International Religious Freedom Act (1998) mainly to “a deeper pathology in the American diplomatic establishment: a secularist conviction about how the world ought to work” (273). In the last, mainly prescriptive, chapter, Frederick D. Barton, Shannon Hayden, and Karin von Hippel specify some critical

steps for improving the US government's engagement with religion in its foreign policy, especially in conflict zones, including enhancing training and exercises, regular meetings of an interagency task force, improving connectivity between civilian and military personnel, conducting regular surveys in countries where US troops are stationed, and employing new tools and partners.

The paramount contribution of this collective study, in addition to the highly insightful contributions of particular authors, is to demonstrate the irrefutable relevancy of religion to contemporary international affairs. Religion and the religious are ubiquitous in international affairs; in the forms of inspirational individuals, committed movements, and lively organizations, religion and the religious engage national and international policies, affect national and international developments, and in the process are affected by them. However, despite the general empathetic treatment of religion and the religious in the study as a potential contributor to developments in international affairs, "the ambivalence of the sacred" is also discernible.<sup>19</sup> Religion and the religious can be promoters of peace as well as instigators of conflict, and can be sources of welfare as well as warfare. Nonetheless, drawing on the book, it can be forcefully argued that the main issues of contemporary international affairs cannot be exhaustively debated, the main developments cannot be thoroughly understood, and the main problems cannot be satisfactorily settled without including religion and the religious in its study, and without incorporating religion and the religious into its practice. On the other hand, a basic limitation of this volume in illuminating the interactions of religion and the religious with several areas and aspects of international affairs is the lack of an overarching framework and underlying argument linking otherwise highly elaborate essays to each other.

It is clearly demonstrated in my brief account of the critical points and main arguments of respective scholars in *RRWA* that religion and the religious are relevant to international *affairs*. However, their relevancy to international *politics*, which is the political form and aspect of international affairs, is another issue.<sup>20</sup> To repeat my main argument, I argue that the extent of the relevancy of religion and the religious in the practice of international relations is, and will be, determined by the extent of troubled interactions between the religious and the secular political, especially the liberal, in contemporary international relations.

In the first section of *RRWA*, for example, the authors call attention to the perverse and persistent secularism of contemporary international politics, and argue that for religion and the religious to secure a credible role and place in international relations, the secularist character of international politics must be addressed and challenged. Heir indicates that although "the secular character of the modern era was taken for granted in the study and practice of world politics", secularism, "the assertion of a political order (within states and among them) that stood beyond the range of religious authority, control, or even influence, was a purposeful result of Westphalia" (17), constituting the foundation of contemporary international politics. Hurd on the other hand, identifies unarticulated presuppositions of the secular international politics, which regard "secularization as a commendable side effect of democratization and modernization" (45) and "secularization as the result of the globalization of a modern state system in which religion has been privatized once and for all" (46). However, Hurd rightly insists that "secularisms are not fixed in stone and [are] produced and renegotiated through

<sup>19</sup> See R. Scott Appleby, *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence, and Reconciliation* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 1999).

<sup>20</sup> To repeat, I use 'international relations' and 'international affairs' interchangeably.

laws, practices, and social relations, including international relations” (46). Accordingly, the increasing relevancy of religion and the religious in international relations, manifesting in the functioning of religious convictions, actors, practices, and institutions in numerous areas, is to cause troubled processes of renegotiation of religion and the religious with secular politics.

The relevancy of religion and the religious in international relations is contrary to a foundational character of current international politics, and, to repeat, the endeavor of religion and the religious to find and secure a credible role and place in international relations is certain to cause a troubled engagement with secular politics and the secular political. I further argue that liberalism is the universally dominant, and, one may add, hegemonic, secular ideology defining contemporary international politics, and thus the troubled engagement of religion and the religious with secular politics in the current era is, and will be, between the religion and the religious and liberalism and the liberal. Witte and Green’s discussion of the transformation of “the international law framework of religion and human rights” (108) is indicative of this point. The debate over the inclusion of resolutions against defamation of religions in the policies of international organizations, most importantly the UN, demonstrates the tension that emerges when religion and the religious intend to become more relevant, in this case legally, to international politics, and face the strong opposition of liberalism and the liberal (113-117).

A similar troubled engagement can be seen in the politics of transitional justice, discussed in detail by Philpott. Liberalism and the liberal have categorically opposed the arguments of religion and the religious about transitional justice. For example, “leading intellectuals in the liberal human rights school have called into question core features of religious arguments for reconciliation”, through arguing, for example, that “abrogating punishment... is always a sacrifice of justice, [and] ought never to be reenvisioned as justice” (150). They additionally insist that “goals of religious reconciliation like healing, overcoming enmity, and forgiveness...violate individual autonomy, disrespect liberalism’s plurality of values, and undermine central democratic virtues of argument and deliberation” (150). In short, even though religion and the religious have been instrumental in the realization of transitional justice in several cases in international *affairs* (153-157), their relevancy to international *politics*, in this case through finding a place in customary international law, let alone codified international law, is resolutely opposed by liberalism and the liberal.

Yet another example is Farr’s account of the problems in the origins, implementation, and institutionalization of the US’ International Religious Freedom Act (1998). The US State Department strongly opposed the bill’s legislation, and when it passed in Congress, the State Department circumvented its implementation, “fear[ing] that a separate office devoted to religious issues would expose U.S. diplomacy to what they saw as the divisiveness of the Christian right, especially its goals of conversion and employing religion-based arguments in the public sphere” (270). The State Department also charged that “IRF legislation would construct an “artificial hierarchy of human rights” in foreign policy, privileging religious freedom over other equally important or more important rights” (270). The first contention of the State Department exhibits its secular character, while the second one exhibits its liberal character. In sum, the endeavor of religion and the religious to find and secure a credible role and place in US foreign policy involved a troubled engagement and renegotiation with politics and the political, in this case mainly the US State Department, which opposed

religion and the religious becoming more relevant to the practice and institutionalization of US foreign policy on secular, and mainly liberal, grounds.

It should be noted that extensive employment of concepts like religion, the religious, politics, the political, the secular and the liberal in arguments pertinent to the role and place of religion in international politics calls for an informed consideration of the style and the substance of these concepts because the validity of the arguments depends on the validity of the concepts.

### 3. Religion and Politics in International Relations: Categorical Debates

Timothy Fitzgerald questions the generic employment of the categories of religion and politics in the debate on the role and place of religion in international relations, and undertakes a critical analysis of these categories from an epistemological/ontological perspective.<sup>21</sup> Fitzgerald first focuses on religion, and states that despite religions being “[just the] classifications designed to indicate a distinct kind of institution, experience, or practice” (1-2), they are “spoken of, written about, described, analyzed and compared *as though* they are phenomena that can be observed” (2, emphasis in original). To Fitzgerald, it is an “illusion, often made theoretically explicit, that religions exist in the world as distinct kinds of things” (4).

Second, Fitzgerald holds that “the critique of the category of ‘religion’ leads us inevitably into a critique of all those categories deemed to represent the ‘non-religious’ secular” (4). He contends that “there could be no secular ‘politics’...without ‘religion’”, for “the two categories are parasitic to each other”, and accordingly, imagining “the non-religious secular domains such as ‘politics’ without the category religion operating as its binary other” is not possible (4). To Fitzgerald, this understanding of international relations constitutes “the discursive basis of a dominant modern myth that, by inventing generic religion as one side of a fantastic binary, simultaneously invents the secular as the domain of common sense and natural reason” (94).

Third, Fitzgerald insists that inventing these categories and naturalizing them through binary oppositions and unquestioned employment in discourse lead to what he calls linguistic colonialism, or hegemony. To Fitzgerald, even though categories like religion and politics are “widely used as though their meanings are distinct, obvious, and certain” (59-60), the lines dividing them are “arbitrary, provisional and contested” (60). These categories “are not obvious and transparent terms for universal realities that correspond with empirical observation, but are contested Anglophone or more widely Europhone categories with ideological work to do” (60). Displaying commendable reflexive scholarship, Fitzgerald concludes that these “modern dominant ideological categories...force and subordinate other peoples’ realities into our Europhone classificatory demands” (60). To that end, drawing on his knowledge and experiences as a religious studies scholar specializing in India and Japan, Fitzgerald stresses throughout his analysis the impossibility of translating categories invented in the English language into categories found in non-English (especially non-European) languages and gives several examples.

Fourth, Fitzgerald underlines that inventing and employing categories like religion and politics is not a neutral and innocent act because specifying categories sustains, and is sustained by, an intricate web of power relations. He argues that the discourse on religion

<sup>21</sup> References to *RPIR* are included in the text in parentheses.

based on this binary has “disguised aspects of secular power, the conceit of natural reason and its presumed grip on so-called ‘reality’, [and] legitimated new hierarchies of privilege and wealth” (72). Categories have to do with power, Fitzgerald insists. For instance, the ‘religious’ category of Sinhalese Buddhism “is inevitably involved in power relations, for example[,] in who can and who cannot join the Sangha [the community], in caste and gender issues, in internal disciplinary matters... [and] in accumulation of land and wealth” (58).

Fitzgerald demonstrates the inherent relationship between categories and power with another interesting example from Japan. He states that “in Japan the Emperor was *ikigami* (usually translated as ‘living god’) at a time when the Meiji Constitution of 1889 constituted State Shinto as the Japanese equivalent of the secular state” (50). However, “in 1946 the US occupation forces rewrote the Constitution which declared that State Shinto is really a religion and should be classified as such” and that “the Emperor is no longer *ikigami* but something more like a British constitutional monarch” (50). For Fitzgerald, “it is clear that power decides what gets classified as a religion and what as a secular one” (50).

Along this line of argument, throughout his study Fitzgerald engages in a critical deconstruction of several works of international relations, including Eli Berman’s *Radical, Religious, and Violent: The New Economics of Terrorism*, Pavlos Hatzopoulos and Fabio Petito’s edited volume *Religion in International Relations: The Return from Exile*, Scott M. Thomas’ *The Global Resurgence of Religion and the Transformation of International Relations*, and Elizabeth Shakman Hurd’s *The Politics of Secularism in International Relations*.<sup>22</sup>

Fitzgerald, in my view, makes an outstanding contribution, though extremely critical, to the scholarly study of the role and place of religion and the religious in international relations, and of their interactions with politics and the political, especially with the secular/liberal, despite the fact that he unequivocally rejects these categories. He offers penetrating critical insight on the reification of categories as neutral objective facts susceptible to empirical investigation with accompanying legitimations of hegemonic discursive practices, which in turn produce very concrete and highly insidious consequences. Although Fitzgerald does not allude in any way to this in his study, a strong case can be derived from its critical deconstruction for a reflexive employment of concepts in scholarly analyses through being conscious of the discursive origins of concepts, the constructed nature of dichotomies, linguistic diversity and idiosyncrasy, and the power relations involved in the scholarly practice of inventing and employing seemingly natural categories.

However, displaying the same weakness common to virtually all post-positivist approaches, especially post-modernism and post-structuralism, Fitzgerald makes no suggestions on how to study the relationship between practices that, for him, are misguidedly categorized and reified as religious, and practices, that are similarly categorized and reified as political or economic or social. Understandably, this silence is the corollary of an anti-foundational ontological position. However, research is not just about analysis; it is equally composed of synthesis. Although post-positivist approaches engage in and produce critical analysis, they are prone to stop halfway through the research and elide engaging in and producing critical

<sup>22</sup> Eli Berman, *Radical, Religious and Violent: The New Economics of Terrorism* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2009), Pavlos Hatzopoulos and Fabio Petito, eds., *Religion in International Relations: The Return from Exile* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003); Scott M. Thomas, *The Global Resurgence of Religion and the Transformation of International Relations* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); Elizabeth Shakman Hurd, *The Politics of Secularism in International Relations* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2008).



synthesis. Fitzgerald would argue that the analysis-synthesis dichotomy is just another reified and naturalized category in Anglophone academia with no factual referents, and his objection would be consistent with his anti-foundational ontological position.

Nonetheless, acts that are or are not subjected to categorization and discursive construction still exist, scholars intent on studying them still exist, and the need for scholars who not only engage in critical analyses but also aim at reaching critical syntheses still exist. Fitzgerald's evasion on suggesting ways to study the acts (the categories of which he critically and cogently deconstructs), other than a total abandonment of categories and dichotomies and holding to the "faith that, if and as critical discourse gains a footing, a democratic consensus on the language we should use to construct our collective world will emerge from the parameters of a widening public debate" (98), leaves the interested reader with no guide for where to go from here (especially if s/he does not endorse an anti-foundational ontological position in research) except for continuing to employ the same categories but now in a reflexive manner.

#### 4. Conclusion

A specter is haunting the world – the specter of the God. After constituting the ideational foundations of international orders in the history of the mankind, then incrementally relinquishing their privileged positions in construing and shaping national and international affairs for the good and for the bad, and becoming 'privatized' in national and international public spheres, religion and the religious in the forms of agenda-setting convictions, restless actors, progressive practices, and vibrant institutions have become ubiquitous in international relations. They have proven, again, for the good and for the bad, capable of engaging other actors and shaping political, economic, and social developments, thus transforming the world in many ways at many levels. To reiterate, the major issues of contemporary international affairs cannot be exhaustively debated, the major developments cannot be thoroughly understood, and the major problems cannot be satisfactorily settled without including religion and the religious in the study of international relations, and without incorporating religion and the religious into the practice of international relations.<sup>23</sup>

It is imperative to keep in mind that international affairs is not international politics, that contemporary international politics is secular in essence, and that its secularism is predominantly defined by the ideology of liberalism. Therefore, the growing visibility and influence of religion and the religious in international relations is contrary to a foundational character of international politics, and the endeavor of religion and the religious to find and secure a credible role and place in international relations is certain to cause a troubled engagement and an uneasy renegotiation with secular politics and the secular political, especially with liberalism and the liberal. In conclusion, it seems time for scholars of international relations, who have long neglected the relevancy of religion to the discipline and quite purposefully eschewed studying its role and place in international relations both historically and contemporarily, to redeem themselves and bring religion back in, academically speaking.

<sup>23</sup> With specific reference to the implications of bringing religion back in for theorizing in international relations see Jack Snyder, ed., *Religion and International Relations Theory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011).



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