

WORKSHOP PROGRAM

Paper abstracts are available at Center's website www.sehir.edu.tr/cemts

09:30 – 10:00	Registration
10:00 – 10:15	Opening Remarks
Session I: Moderator: Hasan Kösebalaban, İstanbul Şehir University	
10:15 – 11:45	Cansu Güleç , MEF University <i>"TURKISH DISCOURSE ON ARAB UPHEAVALS IN INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENT: POST-STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS OF UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY SPEECHES (2011-2018)"</i>
	Ahmed Mohsan , Bilkent University <i>"TURKEY AS A "NORMATIVE POWER" IN THE ARAB WORLD"</i>
	Federico Lanza , University of Pavia <i>"NATION BRANDING AND TURKISH MODEL: TIKA'S ENCOUNTER WITH ARAB SPRING"</i>
	Patrucja Karlowska , İstanbul University <i>"WE HAVE A HAMMER TO FALL DRALING: TURKEY AND ARABIC SPRING: BETWEEN SCYLLA AND CHARIBDIS OR A LAST CHANCE TO KEEP ITSELF ALIVE"</i>
11:45 – 12:00	Coffee Break
Session II: Moderator: Alireza Hodaei, İstanbul Şehir University	
12:00 – 13:00	Mehmet Akif Koç , Social Sciences University of Ankara <i>"COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF TURKISH AND IRANIAN POLICIES TOWARDS THE NON-STATE ARMED ACTORS IN THE MIDDLE EAST"</i>
	Eyüp Ersoy , Independent Scholar <i>"AN ILLUSION OF FRATERNITY: TURKEY'S RELATIONS WITH IRAN FROM AN IDENTITY PERSPECTIVE"</i>
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch
Session III: Moderator: Muzaffer Şenel, İstanbul Şehir University	
14:00 – 15:00	Ajdin Didic , İstanbul Şehir University <i>"TURKEY'S RAPPROCHEMENT WITH RUSSIA: THE CASE OF BALKANS"</i>
	Ferit Belder , Marmara University <i>"ASSESSING THE ROLE OF TURKEY IN ISRAEL'S POST- 2011 REGIONAL VISION: A CHALLENGER OR BYSTANDER?"</i>
15:00 – 15:15	Coffee Break
Session IV: Moderator: Federico Donelli, İstanbul Şehir University	
15:15 – 16:30	Hatice Hande Orhon Özdağ , Middle East Technical University <i>"MAKING SENSE OF THE TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS SYRIAN CRISES"</i>
	Tamas Dudlak , Corvinus University of Budapest <i>"YEAR ONE- A PARADIGM SHIFT IN TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS SYRIA?"</i>
	Hamed Pourhassan , Sakarya University <i>"DIALECTICAL CONSIDERATION IN TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY MAKING: PENDULUM BETWEEN EAST AND WEST"</i>
Closing Session: Moderator: Hasan Kösebalaban, İstanbul Şehir University	
16:30 – 17:00	With the attendance of all participants

CENTER FOR MODERN TURKISH STUDIES

The Center for Modern Turkish Studies, CEMTS, supports original and top-notch research on TURKEY within the context of Social Sciences and Humanities to contribute to the creation of knowledge on the last two centuries. One major goal of CEMTS is to function as an independent resource center and a center of excellence meeting the growing need for a credible, visible and leading-edge academic voice on Turkish studies.

The Center publishes reports and papers and runs a M.A. Program on Modern Turkish Studies within the Graduate School of Social Sciences, which constitutes a unique interdisciplinary graduate program focused on Turkey. Additionally, the Center organizes short focused programs and summer schools providing fresh and analytical approaches and knowledge about Turkey to those who work at the international institutions, think tanks and governmental agencies.

The Center offers a visiting researcher program, which it welcomes researchers, scholars and practitioners from Turkey and abroad who are interested in studying Modern Turkey. It has become a center of attraction for international researchers and scholars from different disciplines specializing on Turkey. In addition, internship program is open to students and graduates from all regions of the world. It provides an invaluable opportunity for interns to complement their educational experience and to develop their professional skills and experience through participation in work in an international context.

CEMTS has been engaged in organizing international academic meetings, conferences, workshops and solo talks on critical issues concerning Turkey and her surroundings. Eminent national and international scholars, noted public figures, prominent opinion producers and law-makers have been frequent participants in CEMTS' academic activities.

CONTACT

İstanbul Şehir University

Center for Modern Turkish Studies (CEMTS)

Tel: (+ 90 216) 44 44 0 34 / 9343

E-Mail: mot@sehir.edu.tr

www.twitter.com/sehirmot

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www.sehir.edu.tr/cemts

Foreign Policy Workshop
Turkish Foreign Policy and Arab Spring

ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

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Gökhan Çetinsaya

Hasan Kösebalaban

Muzaffer Şenel

Özge Keleş

DATE & VENUE

11 May 2019, Saturday // 10.00 – 18.00

İstanbul Şehir University, Dragos Campus Students Center K101

REGISTRATION

The workshop is closed to the public. Pre-registration is required.

RSVP: Before 10th of December 2018 email to intmigration@sehir.edu.tr

To receive upcoming news and information on the activities of the Center by email, please leave your email address at the registration desk.

Registration desk will be open from 09.00 to 11.00 at the Student Center Hall

NAME BADGES

Name badges will be provided inside the participants' packs at the Registration Desk.

SESSIONS

Sessions are presided by moderators who monitor and administer the meetings. Each paper will be presented for 20 minutes, and will be followed by a brief discussion. The Chair may decide and change the order of presentations as well as the time allocated for each presentation.

WORKSHOP SECRETARIAT

E-mail: mot@sehir.edu.tr

Coordinator

Muzaffer Şenel: muzaffersenel@sehir.edu.tr

Assistants

Özge Keleş: ozgekeles@sehir.edu.tr

GCPRIS

**ABSTRACTS
&
BIOGRAPHIES**

AHMED MOHSAN

SABAHATTİN ZAİM UNIVERSITY

TURKEY AS A “NORMATIVE POWER” IN THE ARAB WORLD

“Normative power” is a concept used by many academics and researchers in European Studies. Academics use this concept to explain EU Foreign Relations. In this sense, normative power for EU has many criteria that shape its content and make it different from other concepts, as “EU does not rely solely on military force or capabilities to achieve its aims, second that its aims are linked to universal goods rather than being in the narrowly defined self-interest of the EU, and third that it realizes these goods by defining what should be accepted as ‘normal’ “ (Diez T. 2011)

For understanding the relation between Turkey and Arab world, I use the same concept to explain how youth and democratic advocates in the Arab World were looking towards Turkey’s role in supporting Arab spring from one side, and the positive role that Turkey can play in relation with Arab World from the other side. I argue that Turkey could play more positive and constructive role in the Arab region if it uses its normative power to support universal values like democracy and economic progress in the Arab region. But this requires that Turkey change its policies towards the region.

Ahmed Mohsan received MA degree at Doha Institute for Graduate Studies, Public Policy (MPP), Qatar in 2017. Mohsan is a PhD student at Sabahattin Zaim University, Political Science and International Relations. He is a researcher at Egyptian Institute for Studies, Turkey since 2017.

AJDIN ĐIDIĆ

İSTANBUL ŞEHİR UNIVERSITY

TURKEY'S RAPPROCHEMENT WITH RUSSIA: THE CASE OF BALKANS

Despite Russia's increasing clout and assertiveness in its region, Turkey chooses to improve its relations with Russia, rather than balancing against it through its western allies. Turkey's unexpected strategic partnership with Russia, is best seen as an example for bandwagoning for profit. It is an assertive bandwagoning with the objective of countering Kurdish separatism, a more imminent problem in the ranking of threat perceptions by the ruling elites in Turkey. The empowerment of Syrian Kurdish groups under the protection of the United States has moved Turkey closer to Russia. Moreover, this alliance behavior should be seen as a product of not only structural factors but also of Turkey's domestic politics and idiosyncrasies that directly shaped its threat perceptions and, since 2016, rising securitization. Hence, a long-term alliance between the two, however, depends on a reconciliation of their differences that are deeply rooted in historical and geopolitical factors. This is, however, an unlikely scenario since Turkish-Russian structural differences are simply too large to be overcome in favor of full restructuring of geopolitics and permanent alliance. This paper will deal with the study of Turkey's waning influence in its immediate neighborhood and spheres of influence, Balkans being the case in point. Turkey's recent tenuous relations with Bosnia, Albania and Kosovo help in empirically demonstrating detrimental influences of Turkey's securitization and alliance with Russia on the foreign policy towards its historical, structural allies.

Ajdin Đidić is currently working as a teaching assistant and a graduate student at Istanbul Sehir University in the Department of Political Science and International Relations. He obtained his undergraduate diploma in 2016 at the same department. He is currently working on the thesis focuses on the discrepancy between the rhetoric of Turkey's president Erdogan and actual foreign policy. His articles appeared in prestigious journals, i.e., The International Spectator. He also write semi-academic articles in various magazines and news outlets.

CANSU GÜLEÇ

MEF UNIVERSITY

TURKISH DISCOURSE ON ARAB UPHEAVALS IN INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENT: POST-STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS OF UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY SPEECHES (2011-2018)

With the outbreak of the grassroots movements in December 2010, the conjuncture of the Middle East began to undergo a major transformation. The first demonstrations took place in Central Tunisia, and after a while, a series of anti-government protests, uprisings, and armed rebellions spread across the whole region. With this process, defined as “Arab Spring”, any country affected by the rebellion wave has experienced different political developments and started to follow different routes. Turkey, as a regional country, has not only monitor developments, but instead followed a very active foreign policy towards the transformations occurred. The aim of this paper is to understand and situate Turkish discourse about Arab upheavals in the international environment, specifically in UN General Assembly. Through asking “how” questions, the construction and hierarchical positioning of different actors in the process will seek to be analyzed. The concepts of “presupposition”, “predication” and “subject positioning”, which were borrowed from Roxanne Lynn Doty,^{[1][2][3]} will be used as analytical categories to provide a textual framework. The representational practices through which meaning are generated is important in this study. Accordingly, the discursive identities produced by Turkish elites with their speech acts will be examined throughout the time in order to understand the attachments to various social objects and subjects in the region. Thus, both continuity and change within the Turkish discourse would be put forward.

Cansu Güleç Aras received her BA degree at Political Science and International Relations Department at Marmara University in 2010; and she completed her MA degree in 2012 with her thesis on Cultural Diplomacy in Turkey’s Relations with the Middle East (2002-2011). She obtained her PhD at Marmara University at the Department of International Relations with her thesis, titled, “Turkish Foreign Policy Analysis of JDP Period: Discourse of Foreign Policy in Regional Conflicts” in May 2018. Before joining to MEF University, she worked as a Research Assistant at İstanbul Yeni Yüzyıl University at the Department of International Relations between 2012-20014 She is currently working as a Research Assistant at MEF University since March 2014. Her research interests mainly include IR Theories, Foreign Policy Analysis, Turkish Foreign Policy, Turkey- Middle East relations.

EYÜP ERSOY

INDEPENDENT SCHOLAR

AN ILLUSION OF FRATERNITY: TURKEY'S RELATIONS WITH IRAN FROM AN IDENTITY PERSPECTIVE

Identity has gained palpable salience both in the discourse and practice of Turkish foreign policy since the Justice and Development Party (JDP) took office in 2003. With the advent of a conservative/Islamist government in Turkey, it would have been expected that religious affinity would act as a catalyst for the demise, or at least suspension, of reciprocal otherization proved to be inimical to Turkey's relations with Iran in the preceding period. This paper contends that despite the habitual statements of policymakers on both sides before and after the Arab Spring, identity has not led to identification in Turkey's relations with Iran. Although Turkey's multiple and shifting self-conceptions, self-representations, and self-identifications have conditioned and shaped Turkey's relations with Iran, they have not propelled Turkey's relations with Iran. In other words, in Turkey's relations with Iran, identity has constituted a factor but not a motive. On account of the peculiar nature and dynamics of identity relations between Turkey and Iran, Turkey's person identity, role identity, and social identity, as classified in the Identity Theory developed by Peter J. Burke and Jan E. Stets, have not been verified in and through Turkey's relations with Iran. Furthermore, the paper concludes, whenever Turkey has attempted to verify three identities in and through its foreign policy in the Middle East before and after the Arab Spring, Turkey's relations with Iran have become strained.

Eyüp Ersoy received his BA, MA, and PhD from the Department of International Relations, Bilkent University in Ankara, Turkey. Dr. Ersoy studied Arabic at the University of Damascus. His research interests include power and influence in international relations, civil wars and regional geopolitics, Middle Eastern politics, Turkish foreign policy, and Turkish-Iranian relations. Dr. Ersoy's scholarly publications have appeared in scholarly journals, including Turkish Studies and Middle East Policy.

FEDERICO LANZA

UNIVERSITY OF PAVIA

NATION BRANDING AND TURKISH MODEL: TİKA'S ENCOUNTER WITH THE ARAB SPRINGS

Nation branding constitutes a set of strategies for those countries attempting to conveying messages regarding the nation's identity; in a context of commodification of cultures and identities, the nation is portrayed as a brand, reflecting the symbolic, ideological, political and cultural values attributed to the nation. Various states and governments undertook branding campaign to promote their "imagined community" (Anderson 1991) on national and international level. Turkey is no exception. For at least a decade, Turkey was often proposed as a model for the Middle East and the Muslim world in general. Nation branding has been a tool in the hands of turkish decision-makers to conceptualize a successful example of socio-economic development and democratization. Turkish NGOs and non-state actors were instrumental in restating and consolidating this view. Yet, the outbreak of the Arab Springs proved to be very challenging for turkish foreign policy and called into question the concept of turkish model itself. I will start my paper by problematizing the nature of the turkish model, namely the outcome of a specific political and socio-economic process nevertheless presented as a static model to be emulated and adopted. Secondly, the analysis will focus on and investigate the role of TİKA (Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency) in the context of the Arab Springs. I will argue that the activities carried out by TİKA during the Arab Springs were not just seen as a mere humanitarian responsibility to protect (Erdoğan 2017) or moral obligation, but also as a part of a broader quest to become a major regional power with agenda-setter capabilities. Lastly, I will argue that Turkey's soft power has been limited to certain aspects of international diplomacy and only partially successful regarding the "ability to get what you want through attraction rather than through coercion" (Nye 2004).

Federico Lanza received his BA Degree in Political Science and International Relations. Lanza is a graduate student at the department of Afro-Asian Studies, University of Pavia, Italy. He is currently writing his MA thesis titled "One nation, two states? The Role of Azerbaijan in Turkish Foreign Policy". Besides Turkish foreign policy, his research interests focus on military interventions in a comparative perspective, Turkish domestic policy and electoral behaviours, Turkish militaristic culture and strategic doctrine, formation of nationalism and conservatism.

FERİT BELDER

MARMARA UNIVERSITY

ASSESSING THE ROLE OF TURKEY IN ISRAEL'S POST- 2011 REGIONAL VISION: A CHALLENGER OR BYSTANDER?

Since the beginning of the Arab Uprisings in 2011, both Israel and Turkey have been actively dealing with the ground-breaking changes that took place in their immediate neighbourhoods. While Turkey adopted more comprehensive outlook and pro-active foreign policy strategies, Israel preferred adopting more cautious and selective responses, which also required handling all the cases separately. Despite these two non-Arab regional powers have taken opposite sides in some cases as could be seen in the aftermath of the military coup in Egypt in 2013, they have never directly confronted. In this regard, this paper examines if Israel and Turkey's responses to the uprisings across the region are also affecting their bilateral relations. In so doing, it focuses on Israel's 'Arab Uprising' perspective and discusses the role of Turkey's actions, discourses within this context. It firstly explains Israel's foreign policy responses to the Arab Uprising in terms of two interrelated analytical dimensions: 'Regional balance of power' and 'balance of identities'. Secondly, it focuses on the changes and continuities of Israel's security understandings in its relations with the two major Arab states and its neighbours, Egypt and Syria. Lastly, it analyses the role of Turkey's political support for Morsi government and active involvement in Syrian conflict on Israel's post-2011 regional vision and its relations with Turkey.

Ferit Belder received his MA degrees from Istanbul University in 2013 and School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) in 2015. Belder is a PhD candidate at Istanbul University. He is a research assistant at the department of International Relations, Marmara University. His research interests lie in the area of International Politics of the Middle East, Israeli Politics and broader security studies. He is currently writing his PhD dissertation titled 'Analysing Haredi Parties in Israel from the Societal Security Perspective'. He conducted part of his research at Bar-Ilan University in 2017-2018.

HAMED POURHASSAN

SAKARYA UNIVERSITY

DIALECTICAL CONSIDERATION IN TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY MAKING: PENDULUM BETWEEN EAST AND WEST

This piece of paper is going to show how dialectical thoughts get produced and developed in the agenda of Turkish foreign policy based on tradition of policymaking and social forces in Turkey. In this regard with using of Hegelian dialectic methods, we will be discovering the paradoxical trends of Turkish foreign policy and thesis, antithesis and synthesis in some specific affaires. In this regard, examining ongoing Turkish foreign debates including negotiations for membership of European Union, Turkish military operations outside borders, and relations with the United States of America and Russia will be precisely examined. According to findings, philosophical inconsistencies and incompatibilities of politics in Turkey are basically originated from different intellectual and civilization domains, which have produced contradictory process between opposing sides. These trends have brought about a dramatic fluctuation and pendulum in international arena. Inclining to the westward and eastward in the various foreign policy subjects reveals deep ideational contradictions inside constitutional cores of republic along contemporary history. As a result, this model of process leads to a linear evolution of paradoxical trend, which produces kind of pendulum inside politics in Turkey.

Hamed Pourhassan received his BA degree at Payame Noor University of Tabriz in the field of Political Science then continued his MA studies in international relations at Tehran Kharazmi University. Afterwards, Pourhassan worked at Middle Eastern Study Center at Tehran and Strategic Defense Studies. Currently, he is doing his PhD at Sakarya University.

HATICE HANDE ORHON ÖZDAĞ

MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

MAKING SENSE OF THE TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS SYRIAN CRISIS

Arab Uprisings created a stir for the peaceful democratic transformation of the Middle East countries. However, it also complicated the state of instability in the region. The Syrian Crisis, launched as another wave of Arab Uprisings, transformed into a multidimensional crisis in a short time. Turkey, on the other hand, from the very beginning of the Arab Uprisings was one of the most prominent countries that got involved in and tried to steer the uprisings. Unsurprisingly, Syria has not been an exception of that case. In fact, the more the Syria Crisis became complicated, the more Turkey took part in it. However, Turkey's policies towards Syria showed significant alterations, which deserve careful evaluation. The goal of this presentation is to make sense of the policies of Turkey towards this tangled crisis, and understanding policy changes and continuities are at the core. About the reasons of changes, I focus on facts caused by (i) changes in the attitudes of other actors in the Syrian crises, (ii) changes in the field of the Syrian war, and (iii) changes in Turkey's internal conjuncture. The main claim is as follows: Turkey's foreign policy orientation towards the Syrian Crisis transformed from a more extraverted character to a more introverted one. At the beginning of the Syrian Crisis (also as in the Arab Uprisings), the fundamental elements of Turkish foreign policy were mostly shaped by its aims to set a "model", which is developed in coordination with Turkey's Western allies. During that term, Turkey's partners were Western states and their Middle Eastern allies. However, currently, internal threats of Turkey are more decisive than they were in the past, which makes Turkish foreign policy more introverted. In this context, Turkey seizes an opportunity to cooperate with actors such as Iran and Russia.

Hatice Hande Orhon Özdağ – She graduated from International Relations, Ege University (Izmir, Turkey), ranking first in the school (School of Economics and Administrative Sciences) in 2009. She continued her career at the same institution and got her M.A. Degree, the thesis title is "Iran's Energy Geopolitics within the Framework of the Global Reflections of Its Regional Power". Hande Orhon Özdağ also got a second major at Anadolu University, the Department of Sociology, Eskişehir, Turkey. Following her M.A., she pursued her academic career at Marmara University (Istanbul, Turkey), and got her Ph.D. at the Institute of Social Sciences, at the Department of International Relations in 2018, the title of the dissertation is "Iran-Turkey Relations within the framework of Neo-Gramscian International Relations Theory". During her Ph.D. studies, in between April 2016 – August 2018, she worked at Beykent University, (Istanbul, Turkey) at the Department of International Relations as a research assistant. Currently, she is pursuing her career as a postdoctoral researcher at the Middle East Technical University (Ankara, Turkey) in the Department of International Relations.

MEHMET AKİF KOÇ

SOCIAL SCIENCES UNIVERSITY OF ANKARA

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF TURKISH AND IRANIAN POLICIES TOWARDS THE NON-STATE ARMED ACTORS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Arab uprisings ushered a new era within the context of power politics and regional security dynamics of the Middle East since 2011. One of the most remarkable aspects of the new era appears as the rise and proliferation of the non-state armed actors (NSAAs), particularly in directly affected countries, namely Syria, Iraq, Libya, and Yemen. Increasing activities of the armed networks in Iran and Lebanon should also be evaluated in this framework.

Each regional state supports or opposes the existence and activities of those NSAAs through a set of individual or common interests motivated by their own political, economic and security-related perspectives. This article aims at analysing regional policies of Turkey and Iran towards the reality of the NSAAs on a comparative basis.

While constructing a comparative framework, both countries will be evaluated within the parameters of; i) regional and reciprocal security perceptions; ii) relations between state structure and non-state armed groups; iii) instrumentalization of religious / sectarian identities, iv) tend to use friendly armed groups against neighbouring / regional rivals; v) internal public perspective regarding each state's relations with the foreign NSAAs; vi) popular image of each countries in the regional level (society and political elites)

Mehmet Akif Koç completed his BA at the department of Economics, Middle East Technical University (METU), and MA at the field of International Security, in 2006 and 2012, respectively. Currently, he continues Ph.D. education at the Middle East Studies program of the Social Sciences University of Ankara (ASBÜ). His current academic researches focus on Iranian foreign policy, Shiite studies, political and cultural life in Iran, non-state armed actors, Kurdish affairs, and political economy of the sovereign wealth funds (SWF) in the Gulf region. He speaks English and Persian. Koç also studies professionally on Iranian culture and literature. His published books are: 'Rekabetten Geleceğe: Türkiye-İran İlişkilerinin Güvenlik Boyutu' [(From Competition to Future: Security Dimension of Turkish-Iranian Relations), 2012, TASAM Press]; 'Hey You! - Irak'taki Amerikan Hapishanelerinden Hatıralar' [(Hey You! – Memoirs of an Iranian Journalist from the American Prisons in Irak), 2018, Matbuat Publications]; 'Mecazi Pencereleer – Modern İran Edebiyatından Barış Şiirleri Antolojisi' [(Metaphorical Windows - Anthology of Poetry from Modern Iranian Literature on the Theme of 'Peace' and 'Anti-war'), 2019, Demavend Publications].

PATRUCJA KARLOWSKA

ISTANBUL UNIVERSITY

“WE HAVE A HAMMER TO FALL DARLING”: TURKEY AND ARABIC SPRING: BETWEEN SCYLLA AND CHARYBDIS OR A LAST CHANCE TO KEEP ITSELF ALIVE

Arabic spring is being said to start in 2010 with a protests against rulers in Arabic countries. Currently, observable results present not only many issues for an internal and external policy of those countries but a global impact as well. Turkey stays between European and Arabic World. From the one hand, it is trying to complete its accession process to the European Union but from the other because of religious identity is expected to take action in case of current problems emerged in the region. Support for Muslims countries may not be well seen by the European Union mainly because of a fact that Turkish accession to the European Union has so many controversies mainly because of its Muslim origins of Turkish state. In my article, I will try to analyse the role of Turkey inside post-Arabic spring events in three different perspectives: relations between Turkey and European Union as a first, Turkey as a role model of the modern state with Islamic roots for Arabic countries as a second and Turkey as the main actor in refugee crisis as a third. I will try to prove the thesis that the position of Turkey might not be seen only in case of hard position between two contradict interest but an opportunity for creating the bridge between Arabic and European World.

Patrucja Karłowska completed her master degree at the department of Eurasian Studies at Warsaw University. Karłowska is contuning his Ph.D. at the department of Political Science and International Relations at Istanbul University under the TÜBİTAK 2215 Scholarship Programme for international students. Her research is related to global politics, identity, migration, bio politics, Turkmens and Turkmenistan. She did internship at TÜİÇ: Uluslararası İlişkiler Çalışmaları Derneği. Her article, titled “Turkmen historical memory in contemporary Turkmenistan” published in the book edited by Annuar Galiyev, Andrzej Wierzbicki, Piotr Załęski, “The identity and historical memory in Central Asia”.

TAMAS DUDLAK

CORVINUS UNIVERSITY OF BUDAPEST

YEAR ONE – A PARADIGM SHIFT IN TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS SYRIA?

As the Syrian conflict has been dominating the political landscape of the Middle East for seven years, many analyses revolve around the recent developments of the conflict and how the crisis should be resolved. However, the question of how the relations between Turkey and Syria deteriorated remained relatively under-researched. Consequently, my presentation tries to scrutinize this important transformation process that took place in 2011. As this year lifted the crisis to a regional level, it also signifies a paradigm shift in Turkish foreign policy, however, only later developments shed light on the decisive nature of the events in 2011. As a reaction to the mass demonstrations in Syria, Turkey utilized a human rights discourse strategy to force the Syrian leadership to make concessions. This was part of the proactive policy setting that Ankara pursued to avoid isolation (as in the case of Libya beforehand) and gain the most prominent position in the conduct of an expected political transformation in Syria.

Due to structural factors in parallel with the agencies (personality of leaders, Erdoğan and Assad) involved in the negotiation process, Ankara's mediation attempt between the rebels and the leadership have failed. Despite the unsuccessful outcome of peace negotiations, trying to answer the "what went wrong?" question may hold important implications for peace mediation efforts. For that purpose, my presentation examines the political development of 2011 in a detailed way to show some possible bifurcation points in the course of events. The analysis also takes the regional and global interests into consideration to underline the main argument that Turkey's efforts to convince the Syrian leadership of changes became counterproductive due to the direct interest in the outcome of the process, as Ankara's intention was to use the mediation process for undermining the Syrian leadership and gaining political influence in its immediate neighborhood.

Tamas Dudlak studied History, Arabic and Turkish. Dudlak is a PhD candidate studying International Relations and Geopolitics based in Budapest, Hungary. His research focus is mainly on Turkey and its role in the Middle East in various fields: migration and refugees, domestic and foreign policy, energy policy (with regard to Africa and Central Asia as well). Moreover, he conducts research on the bilateral relations of Hungary and Turkey as well. In his dissertation, he deals with the paradigm shift of the Turkish foreign policy in 2011 with relation to Syria.

Participants

AHMED MOHSAN, Sabahattin Zaim University

AJDIN ĐIDIĆ, İstanbul Şehir University

ALIREZA HODAEI, İstanbul Şehir University

CANSU GÜLEÇ, MEF University

EYÜP ERSOY, Independent Scholar

FEDERICO DONELLI, İstanbul Şehir University

FEDERICO LANZA, University Of Pavia

FERİT BELDER, Marmara University

HAMED POURHASSAN, Sakarya University

HASAN KÖSEBALABAN, İstanbul Şehir University

HATİCE HANDE ORHON ÖZDAĞ, Middle East Technical University

MEHMET AKİF KOÇ, Social Sciences University of Ankara

MUZAFFER ŞENEL, İstanbul Şehir University

PATRYCJA KARLOWSKA, İstanbul University

TAMAS DUDLAK, Corvinus University of Budapest

MA in MODERN TURKISH STUDIES

Modern Turkish Studies Graduate Program provides a high level of study area relating to Modern Turkey in several fields of social sciences by interdisciplinary perspectives, theories and methods. The fundamental aim of the program is to contribute to the formation of systematic, comprehensive and in-depth knowledge in significant fields and subjects of research within the scope of Modern Turkish Studies.

The interdisciplinarity of Modern Turkish Studies program allows us to have a comprehensive understanding of the historical, sociological and global perspectives of the current Turkish political context. This wider knowledge emanates from the conjunction of our fields such as Political Sciences, International Relations, History, Sociology, Nationalism Studies, Regional Analysis and Security Studies.

Some of the distinctive features of Modern Turkish Studies program among the other graduate programs are as follows: Firstly, the focal point of this program is the issues of Modern Turkey. Furthermore, the program aims to provide its students with an analytical point of view about the subjects and problematic of research in the Social Sciences in modern Turkey.

Secondly, the program benefits from the interdisciplinary research done by related disciplines such as History, Political Sciences, International Relations, Sociology, Islamic Studies, Anthropology and Political Economy. The joint focal point of this wide-range of interdisciplinary approach in the graduate program is the construction process of Modern Turkey. In addition to this, “Modern Turkish Studies” graduate program of İstanbul Şehir University calls attention with its specially designed curriculum, which enables its students to conduct a research in the areas relating the Turkish studies and with the interdisciplinary knowledge, competence and confidence to interpret and evaluate the outcomes of research.

In addition, along with existing courses and seminars that reflect the research problematic, the program is endorsed by its well-known academic staff, which has both national and international experience. The studies of the faculty covers a wide range of academic specialization and perspective i.e., problems of democracy, law and politics, religion and politics, media and politics, sociology of modern Turkish society, conflict resolution, Turkish foreign policy, political economy and modern Turkish intellectual thought.

Furthermore MTS graduate program aims to be a center of attraction for highly-qualified and ambitious students who want to be specialized in Turkish Studies throughout a pioneering academic approaches that embedded in curricula.

Details at www.sehir.edu.tr/cemts

