

From the Desk of the Editor

In this issue of TPQ, we explore the different factors affecting a *push and pull* of forces between *East* and *West*, as experienced on Europe's periphery. Besides dissecting schisms between East and West, we also examine the ongoing integration between them – through migration, economic interdependence, intellectual exchange, and other consequences of globalization.

The perception of American strategic withdrawal from Eurasia, the uncertainty about coherent and effective European engagement in the EU's eastern and southern neighborhood, coupled with Ankara's claim for a central role in the region, have raised expectations from Turkey.

Turkey is a country caught at the epicenter of divergent geopolitical and societal trends. At the same time, it is one of the only countries in the region capable of influencing the trajectory of both the wider Black Sea region and the Southern Mediterranean. However, it is yet to be seen whether Ankara will emerge stronger from the fault-line shifts taking place across this broad geography, and if so, to what ends it will use its compounded strategic depth. The economic, historical, cultural, and kinship relations of people on either side of Turkey's borders pose both opportunities and challenges for Turkey's soft power in the region. Turkey's regional standing will depend not only on its geopolitical prowess but also on the extent to which liberal democracy and pluralism have laid down roots in the country.

The wider Black Sea region is at the forefront of the debate on where the West ends. The strategic choices of countries in this region are also intimately related to their choice of governance models and political values.

Contributors to this issue reflect on questions faced on Europe's east, such as: Is "balancing" foreign policy orientations inevitable, given the trend towards multiple power centers? Is the Eurasian Union a viable alternative to EU integration? Can Turkey aid in the Europeanization of the region despite the stall of its EU accession process? We look particularly closely at Georgia and Ukraine – key players in the balance of power in the EU's eastern neighborhood.

Georgian parliamentary elections in October 2012 yielded transition of power from one political party to another. Georgia yet again set an example in the Caucasus. The

ruling coalition emphasizes that EU integration remains the country's primary goal and NATO membership will be pursued. De-escalation of relations with Russia is also a stated goal of the Georgian Dream government. However, skeptics point out that improving relations with Russia in practice will require strategic compromises by Tbilisi. Besides its foreign policy orientation, the direction in which Georgia trends will be critically influenced by its democratization, identity debates, and domestic political stability.

In an interview for this issue of TPQ, we had the honor and the privilege of talking to Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili, about where Georgia is headed, why it should matter to the West, and what Turkey's role is in this context. "Cohabiting" with the governing coalition of the Georgian Dream, Saakashvili will remain president until the October 2013 elections, at which time the transition to a parliamentary system will also be completed.

In the interview, President Saakashvili points out that being a part of the West is about pursuing the rule of law, democracy, and efficient governance. Accordingly, in the past decade, Georgia "expanded the geographic horizons of the West."

Georgia also plays an important role in the integration of Europe's east. The strategic relations between Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Turkey are due to be further solidified in the next few years with the Baku-driven trans-Anatolian pipeline and the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway. These projects can effectively link not only the Caucasus but also the wider Central Eurasian region to Europe.

Besides the potential for an East-West corridor, Georgia's strong political will to join Western institutions and contribute to Western causes has lifted the strategic profile of the Caucasus in the past decade. However, maintaining consistent Euro-Atlantic engagement in the region is proving more difficult at this time, rendering a constructive and predictable role by Ankara ever more important for Baku and Tbilisi.

Over the past decade, Turkey-Georgia relations have flourished. The deepening of relations has been supported by a free trade agreement and a passport-free travel regime. However, challenges remain. Moreover, concern within the Georgian society about the erosion of traditional values has also had negative reflections on Turkey-related debates in the country. Some members of the current ruling coalition have arguably fed into these sentiments. In his interview with TPQ, President Saakashvili expresses regret that he did not realize the need to foster society-to-society links in order to address related prejudices in years past. Self-reflection on the Turkish side

is also in order; discussion regarding Georgia within the Turkish intellectual elite and policy community has not only been very scarce but has also largely reflected a shallow understanding of Georgian perspectives and realities.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, Leonid Kozhara, points out that NATO is challenged by the need to maintain its relevance, and that security in the 21st century requires more structured relations between international actors such as NATO, the UN, the OSCE, and the EU. The Foreign Minister provides his vision for Ukraine's OSCE chairmanship in 2013 and underlines that Ukraine can play an active role in security dialogue because it is not a party to any military alliance.

Another dimension Minister Kozhara focuses on is Ukraine's EU integration. EU decisions in the upcoming Third Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius will be decisive for the credibility of the EU's Eastern Partnership policy, he underlines. In this Summit which will take place in November 2013, one issue which Ukraine expects progress in is its visa liberalization process. For EU engagement in its eastern neighborhood to gain momentum, the acknowledgement of an EU membership prospect for Eastern Partnership countries is deemed important.

Marietje Schaake, a Member of the European Parliament representing the Democrats 66 Party from the Netherlands, raises questions about where Turkey-EU relations are headed. With more welcoming leaders in Paris and Berlin, there is an opportunity for Turkey to reignite its EU accession process, she points out. While regional problems have brought Turkey closer to its regional allies, no less because Turkey needs support from the Euro-Atlantic alliance for the fortification of its borders, they have also distracted attention from the domestic reforms Turkey needs to be carrying out. Schaake, who is also a member of the European Council on Foreign Relations, questions whether Turkey's strong Sunni ambition in foreign policy can go hand in hand with its EU accession process. She concludes that Turkey will need to identify whether it wants to be an independent regional power or a Western NATO ally.

A member of TPQ's advisory board, historian Professor Gerard Libaridian, points to the Justice and Development Party's (AKP) roots in Islamic ideology as a factor that should have eased their break from the position of past Turkish governments, in regards to the historical narrative concerning early 20th century Armenian history in Anatolia. Erdoğan could have chosen to portray the rulers of the Ottoman Empire in 1915, the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), as a "nationalist *clique*" which had illegally taken power and used religion only as an instrument of control to maintain this power. Libaridian's article provides a counterargument to the

depiction of this Ottoman government's policies towards the Empire's Armenians as simply counter-insurgency operations and not genocide. Libaridian believes that Turkey's democratization is organically tied to Ankara's "views on the treatment of Armenians during the First World War, and the proper examination and appreciation of that history today." He also points out the deepening divide between the leaders of AKP and the Turkish liberals. It is possible that the AKP "could not resist the temptation, so common to radically-minded reformers, to use the same, ready-made methods of repression against their antagonists to achieve their vision, methods they opposed before they came to power," he writes.

Tuba Eldem, a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Toronto, argues that the loss of the EU's dynamism in Turkey, coupled with the growing hegemony of the ruling AKP, has weakened the process of democratic deepening in Turkey. This raises questions about both the EU's democracy promotion strategy and the democratic future of Europe's periphery, she writes. Media freedom, women's rights, freedom of association and expression are just some of the issues for which Eldem provides facts and figures to depict what she refers to as the "authoritarian tendencies" of the Turkish government. She concludes that Turkey's 2014 presidential elections and the prospect of adopting a presidential regime without strong checks and balances is a threat to the country's democracy and political stability. Eldem calls on the EU to engage more sincerely in the promotion of liberal democratic norms and practices in Turkey – including in critical areas such as judicial independence. She concludes that given the turmoil in the Middle East, only a credible EU membership prospect might prevent Turkey from falling into the trap of "competitive authoritarianism", and render Turkey a fitting model for transitioning countries in its "Eastern" neighborhood.

The extent to which emerging regional powers such as Turkey, Russia, and Iran are –existentially or conjecturally– synergetic with or undermining the Euro-Atlantic order is also examined in this issue of TPQ. Given the ongoing conflict and high stakes involved, the Syria case is at the center of some of these analyses.

Igor Okunev, Vice-Dean at the School of Political Science at Moscow State Institute of International Relations, outlines many reasons that caused Russian elites to turn away from Europe. Some of these overlap with reasons for Turkey's EU-skepticism. Okunev sees the exclusionary approaches by European powers towards Russia and Turkey as a factor which might rule out Europe's global prominence. He explains that "once turned down (by Europe), Russia and Turkey looked for a different, non-European basis for their identity – one that they did not take long to find: some in

their appeal to Islam, others in Eurasianism.” Okunev argues that Moscow’s current regional integration projects, such as the Eurasian Union, are much more attractive than previous Russian-driven integration schemes and are economically more appealing for countries like Ukraine than European integration.

Okunev also suggests that the further liberalization of social values in Western Europe is reducing the level of regard for Europe in the rest of the world. The erosion of traditional gender roles, atheism, and a welfare state that caters to “have-nots” are some of the “values” Okunev lists in this context.

Anna Borshchevskaya, Assistant Director at the Dinu Patriciu Eurasia Center of the Atlantic Council, takes up the East-West dynamic as it relates to Armenia. While Armenia has been trying to balance Russia and the EU in its foreign policy, Borshchevskaya argues that it needs to proceed in choosing between the two. Not only is there a technical “clash” between the Moscow-driven Eurasia Union and the EU’s DCFTA, but there is also incompatibility in the political vision the two sides provide for Yerevan. She concludes that Armenia’s choice matters for the West because Armenia’s dependence on Russia undermines Western security interests in the South Caucasus.

Challenges emanating from the Middle East are also covered through various perspectives in this issue of TPQ. The fragile political situation in Iraq, civil war in Syria, the marginalization of minorities and liberals in Arab Spring countries, and the prospect of a nuclear Iran are but some of the reasons to expect difficult years in this neighborhood. Some of the related questions we probe are: Does Turkey have the capacity to step up to a constructive regional leadership role? Is the intensification of Ankara’s collaboration with Western allies driven only by pragmatic, short-term considerations or is there a long-term shared vision? For the sake of stability in the Middle East, will the benchmarks of democracy that Turkey has aspired to be lowered? As it prioritizes the containment of Iran, is Washington enabling the empowerment of Sunni networks that could turn against the West?

Farid Mirbagheri, Professor of International Relations at the University of Nicosia, explores the prospects for both war and peace between the U.S. and Iran. Breaking with common wisdom, he points out that the interests of the U.S. and Iran have overlapped in cases such as the war in Bosnia, the Taliban, and Saddam Hussein. However a number of dynamics have prevented resumption of diplomatic ties between the two. Mirbagheri highlights the ongoing sectarian schism in the Middle East, the suspicions over Iran’s nuclear program, and the effects of the crisis in Syria.

Halil Karaveli, Senior Fellow at the Central Asia-Caucasus Institute gives an overview of the intensification of Washington-Ankara relations as a result of the Syrian war. While only a couple of years ago there had been worries among American observers that Turkey was drifting Eastwards, today there seems to be a reassurance that Turkey is back in the Western strategic fold. However Karaveli also points out a longer-term incongruence between Turkish and American interests. While in the short-term both countries may aim for the end of the Assad regime, Ankara's unconditional support for Sunni militant groups in Syria could inflame sectarian divisions across the Middle East and rule out religious and ethnic pluralism in the future Syria.

While developments in the MENA region have intensified certain alliances, they have also further widened some global divergences. Hovhannes Nikoghosyan, a Magdalena Yesil Visiting Scholar at the Sanford School of Public Policy at Duke University, sheds light on the disagreements between the West on one side and Russia and China on the other with regard to the support of regime change as a result of popular uprisings in Egypt, Libya, and Syria. Besides geopolitical interests, this divergence boils down to landing on different sides of the state sovereignty versus human rights debate. Geography also plays a role, no doubt, in the positions taken towards situations like that of Syria. A reflection of this dimension can be found in the article of Didem Collinsworth, Analyst at the International Crisis Group, shedding light on the economic impact of the crisis in Syria for Turkey, through the case study of Hatay, a province of Turkey bordering Syria.

The projection of a conservative democratic identity by AKP has aided the expansion of Turkey's economic and political space in the region, Sotiris Serbos explains. However, the transition from being a regional power to a responsible actor in the global environment is not a process that can be taken for granted. Lecturer at the Democritus University of Thrace, Dr. Serbos argues that Turkey's sustained economic growth and its development of relevant intellectual capacity is critical in its realization of a successful multidimensional foreign policy. He suggests that without a strong measure of soft power, Turkey will not be able to substantiate its foreign policy ambitions.

Lisel Hintz, a Ph.D. candidate at George Washington University and a Visiting Research Fellow at Bilkent University, argues that the identity politics of Kemalists, Pan-Turkists, and Islamist Ottoman-nationalists in Turkey have all been incompatible with Europeanization. Each has enforced ideas that limit freedoms of the "other" –be it pious Muslims, Alevis, or Kurds– and attempted to institutionalize their "social purposes" within the state through exclusion and censorship.

The identity currently promoted by authorities of Turkey, which Hintz refers to as “Islamist Ottoman-nationalism,” entails “social conservatism, Muslim piety, and a firm rule by a patriarchal figure.” In terms of foreign policy, the implications are a leaning toward “cultural solidarity, historical ties with other Muslim countries and former Ottoman territories – with ambivalence bordering on resentment toward the West.” Hintz concludes that “an effort to make Turkey a uniting force in the Islamic world guides the vision of this identity group,” and “while AKP was the driving force behind EU reforms for some time, today it is the greatest obstacle.”

This issue of TPQ also covers some of the *mechanics* of Turkey’s EU integration, such as migration policies, border management, and mobilization of the Turkish diaspora. Turkey’s being between East and West is succinctly reflected in its being at once an emigration country, a destination country, and a transit country for migrants – both irregular and legal. While prospects of heavy migration from Turkey has been a leading concern for EU public opinion, the potential positive role Turkey can play towards securing the borders of the EU –if it is so incentivized– is less discussed. Two articles in this issue of TPQ delve into related themes.

Seçil Paçacı Elitok, a Mercator-IPC Fellow at Istanbul Policy Center in Sabancı University, covers the changes in Turkey’s migration policy in the past decade, explaining the role of EU criteria and the single-party rule of the AKP government in this sphere. While she argues the dynamic of reform has taken on a life of its own, independent of a political party or the EU integration process, Elitok also expresses concern that derailment of the EU track could interrupt Turkey’s gradual transition to good governance in migration policies.

The management of Turkey’s borders as they relate to Turkey-EU relations and institution building is taken up by Dr. Deniz Sert, Assistant Professor at Özyeğin University in Istanbul. Tasks related to border management –currently divided between many different institutions in Turkey– should be transferred to a specialized and professional border security entity, according to the EU.

Can Ünver, Assistant Professor at Toros University in Mersin, provides an overview of Ankara’s approach to its citizens or former citizens who emigrated to EU countries four decades ago. The government is trying to develop more effective engagement policies with the Turkish diaspora and use it in its public diplomacy goals. These efforts are not without controversy. Ünver recounts various examples in which the addresses of the Turkish Prime Minister to Turkish migrants in receiving countries have been met with criticism. On the other hand, globalization and

trends in transnational mutual interference increase Turkish authorities' inclination to get involved in cases concerning Turkish identity in the EU.

The abovementioned three articles were developed on the basis of a workshop entitled “Turkey’s Migration Policy from 2002 to 2012: An Assessment of the AKP’s Reforms,” organized by Istanbul Policy Center as part of the Stiftung Mercator Initiative on 16 February 2013. The workshop provided a platform of discussion about asylum and migration issues in Turkey as they relate to the agenda of the government and EU-Turkey relations. Topics such as the concept of citizenship and Turkey’s visa policies were also discussed. The challenge of open, yet secure borders is likely to continue to be high on the joint agenda of Turkey and the EU.

Three other articles –contributions by Mirbagheri, Okunev, and Serbos– were secured as a result of our participation at the 4th Annual Thessaloniki Strategic Summit that took place in March 2013. Besides cutting-edge strategic discussions, the event provided valuable networking opportunities.

TPQ has intensified its Caucasus-orientation in the first half of 2013. On 25 March 2013, together with the European Stability Initiative (ESI) and Kadir Has University International Relations Department, we held a roundtable discussion entitled “The Prospects for Stability and Instability in the Caucasus in 2013 - A View From Georgia”. Former Foreign Minister of Georgia, Eka Tkeshelashvili, featured as the keynote speaker. Tkeshelashvili, speaking as president of a newly established think tank in Tbilisi, the Georgian Institute for Strategic Studies, outlined the reforms Georgia underwent in the past decade to shed post-Soviet legacies. She touched upon progress marked in areas such as fighting organized crime, easing regulations for doing business, targeting systemic corruption, and setting up a service-oriented bureaucracy.

In April, together with Caucasus International (CI), TPQ published a book for the first time. Entitled, “The Geopolitical Scene of the Caucasus: A Decade of Perspectives”, the publication is a compilation of 28 essays that were previously included in TPQ and CI and that map out the contours of the region’s power politics. With the range of perspectives included, we have aimed to create a dialogue on the region over time and space. We would like to thank the Baku-based Center for Strategic Studies (SAM) for giving us the initial idea for this product, for their support in making the publication possible, and for holding events in Washington D.C. in May 2013 where the book was launched and promoted. The full text of the publication is available on the TPQ website.

Attendance at the workshop entitled “Breaching the impasse on Nagorno-Karabakh” which was organized by RUSI in London on 17 April 2013 also enriched TPQ’s Caucasus-related outreach this quarter. While public opinion and political rhetoric in either Armenia or Azerbaijan does not suggest momentum for the peaceful resolution of the Karabakh conflict, the gradual shift of the balance of power between the two countries in favor of Baku may impact Yerevan’s incentives. The resolution of this conflict would lift many of the obstacles to the Europeanization of the Caucasus, and among external players, arguably it is Turkey that has the most to gain by this. Russia’s interest in supporting the resolution of the conflict was taken up at the RUSI conference. The dominant view was that in light of its deteriorating relations with the West, Russia would not be interested in supporting a Karabakh resolution unless the parameters agreed on give Moscow substantial leverage in the region.

Particularly since 2010, TPQ’s work in the Black Sea region has benefited from the support of the Black Sea Trust (BST) – for which we are thankful. Participation in the Study Tour to Georgia organized by the Black Sea Trust for Regional Cooperation of the German Marshall Fund and the Robert Bosch Stiftung in April 2013 was an invaluable contribution to TPQ’s intensified focus on Georgia-Turkey relations. The study tour included meetings with representatives of the main political institutions shaping Georgia’s course today and provided an opportunity to interview President Saakashvili.

We are very pleased to announce that Ahmet Bozer has joined our Advisory Board. Mr. Bozer is Executive Vice President and President of Coca-Cola International. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Professor Lord Anthony Giddens –who, after eight years of being on our Advisory Board, leaves with this issue. We are also pleased to announce a new media partnership with *The Globalist*, aiding our outreach to a wider global audience. We value our deepening partnership with *Hürriyet Daily News*. As always, we are particularly grateful for the standing support of Kadir Has University.

We would like to extend a special thanks to the premium sponsor of this issue of TPQ, Finansbank. We appreciate the continuing support of Ford, Odeabank, Garanti Bank, Akbank, İş Bank, Turcas Petrol, and BP Turkey.

Diba Nigâr Göksel



Turkey and its Neighborhood: Trending East or West?

Interview with Mikheil Saakashvili: Georgia's Westward March

Ukraine in a Broader Transatlantic Context

Leonid Kozhara

Between Rhetoric and Reality: Turkey's Foreign Policy

Marietje Schaake

Erdoğan and His Armenian Problem

Gerard J. Libaridian

Russia's Changing Geopolitical Code
Igor Okunev

The Obama-Erdoğan Partnership over Syria
Halil Karaveli

Why Libya, and not Syria?
Hovhannes Nikoghosyan

The End of Turkey's Europeanization?
Tuba Eldem

Identity Contestation and Turkey's EU Stalemate
Lisel Hintz

Turkey's Integrated Border Management Strategy
Deniz Sert

The Iranian Revolution and Political Realism
Farid Mirbagheri

Armenia's Choice: Russia or the EU?
Anna Borshchevskaya

The Syrian Crisis and Hatay's Economy
Didem Collinsworth

A More Globalized Turkey?
Sotiris Serbos

Turkey's Migration Policy: Moving Forward?
Seçil Paçacı Elitok

The Changing Diaspora Politics of Turkey
O. Can Ünver

