

9th Annual All Azimuth Workshop: (Re)imagining Concepts in Turkish Foreign Policy

7 December 2024

The CFPPR is pleased to announce that it is organizing a workshop as part of its *Annual All Azimuth Global IR Workshop* series. The 9th installment of this series seeks to contextualize Turkish Foreign Policy (TFP) in the present international system by innovating new homegrown, as well as building on extant, analytical tools and theoretical concepts going forward in the analysis of TFP. It is difficult to overstate Turkey's importance in current global affairs. On the one hand, it styles itself as an aspiring regional leader seeking to promote greater strategic autonomy, but it is also a country constrained by a conflict-ridden neighborhood in which great-power states continue to stake claims of dominance. The dynamics of the Russia-Ukraine War, the ongoing conflict in Gaza, and speculations about the future of US foreign policy are but a sample of difficulties Turkish diplomacy must contend with going forward. These are issues that require both theoretical and practical scrutiny. To wit, the workshop aims to address two fundamental issues. Our first inquiry relates directly to identifying forward-looking and emerging agendas in the study of Turkish Foreign Policy and looking for ways to build on emerging concepts and themes. Secondly, we want to inquire into what is different or unique about Turkish Foreign Policy today, if anything. This entails an examination of structural, ideational, agential, and directional aspects of Turkish Foreign Policy.

This workshop, which will take place in Ankara, on December 7, builds on a successful series of *All Azimuth* meetings and publications. Starting with our first workshop in 2013, these events have brought together scholars from around the world to discuss IR theorizing in the periphery, including structural factors impacting disciplinary hierarchies, disciplinary dialogue, and interaction in the context of "Global IR," as well as research into IR pedagogy and practices. Our most recent workshop, in November 2023, co-organized with The Hollings Center and the Turkish Fulbright Commission, was centered on enduring questions and emergent discussions in American-Turkish relations, exploring theoretically and conceptually the intricacies of these bilateral relations at various levels of analysis. Essays from this workshop are set to be published in the upcoming winter 2024-2025 issue of *All Azimuth: A Journal of Foreign Policy and Peace*.

PROPOSED PANELS BASED ON DISCUSSION THEMES/QUESTIONS

The main goal of this workshop is to identify past, existing, and emerging core themes and concepts that explain continuity and change in Turkish Foreign Policy studies and practice. From its application to the meaning-making efforts over it, current TFP is characterized by dispersal and thematic discoordination, if not chaos. Considering several gaps in our understanding, this workshop is intended to serve as an opportunity to return to basics and discuss what TFP has evolved into, what has defined its core structures and agencies, and how it is transforming. In this endeavor, the focus of this workshop is also extended to include the international historical sociology of the social and political structures underpinning foreign policy-making processes. As these structures raise broader questions about state-society cohesiveness and national consolidation projects, the workshop will consider the domestic perspectives in tandem with the international.

Panel I – Conceptual Foundations and Ideological Frameworks in TFP

The goal of this panel is to reimagine the existing key themes offered to us while explaining continuity in TFP. Among these themes are (1) the contested ideological currents or doctrinal influences behind TFP, such as *Ataturkism*, *Westernism*, *Muslim Brotherhood*, and *Eurasianism*; (2) the power analysis and geopolitical considerations that focus on Turkey following a *strategic culture*, balancing between *East* and *West*, and being a *Middle power*, *model country*, ‘diffuser’ or ‘receiver’ of democratic norms; and (3) the debates over state identity, formation and statecraft revolving around principles and agents, leadership roles, the *deep state* and *public state*, and *high politics* and *low politics*.

- Are any of these concepts worth maintaining/resuscitating/revising to help make sense of Turkey’s current foreign policy?
- Have the institutions of traditional TFP been overhauled/changed/replaced? If so, in what ways?
- How do domestic disputes receive or affect the decisions, priorities, and implementation of foreign policy?
- To what extent do historical alliances and established relationships form path-dependent concepts in the evolution and continuity of TFP?
- In what ways do Turkey’s long-standing economic interests create enduring patterns that shape and sustain its foreign policy priorities and strategies over time?

Panel II – Conceptualizing Contemporary Dynamics in TFP

The goal of this panel is to vocalize emergent discussions and forward-looking concepts, themes and research agendas in the study of Turkish Foreign Policy. An additional focus will be on the examination of conceptual poverty within Turkish Foreign Policy studies, addressing how original and innovative concepts affect the study and practice of TFP. The panel aims to explore if and why practitioners tend to put forward relatively novel concepts in the field of TFP,

examining the factors that contribute to the generation of innovative ideas and approaches in this area.

- What is the state of the art in the study of TFP; how does new scholarship approach and/or make sense of past TFP and recent changes in it, if any?
- What novel or forward-looking concepts and themes can we identify in Turkish Foreign Policy?
- Have there been actual normative, identitarian, or ideational shifts in TFP, or have any changes been only pragmatic?
- Has there been a *directional* change in Turkish Foreign Policy in terms of east-west/north-south/imperialist-anti-imperialist sentiments?
- Has there been a fundamental change in the main actors of TFP?
- To what extent do non-state actors, such as political parties, epistemic communities, and NGOs, influence Turkish Foreign Policy outside governmental channels?

Roundtable Discussion

Comparing and contrasting themes—old and new. This session will include a thematic competition for understanding TFP for today and tomorrow.

Speakers

Ali Balcı	Sakarya University
Aslıhan Ezgi Dereli	Bilkent University
Aşkın İnci Sökmen Alaca	Istanbul Arel University
Bayram Sinkaya	Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University
Ersel Aydınli	Bilkent University
Faruk Aksoy	CFPPR
Gürol Baba	Social Sciences University of Ankara
Haluk Özdemir	Kırıkkale University
Hazal Papuççular	Fenerbahçe University
Lerna K. Yanık	Kadir Has University
Meliha Altunışık	Middle East Technical University
Metin Koca	CFPPR & Bilkent University
Metin Yücekaya	Social Sciences University of Ankara
Nasuh Sofuoğlu	Recep Tayyip Erdoğan University
Oğuzhan Göksel	Marmara University
Onur Birkan	Mardin Artuklu University
Onur Erpul	Bilkent University
Özgür Özdamar	Bilkent University
Radiye Funda Karadeniz	Gaziantep University
Seçkin Köstem	Bilkent University
Şaban Kardeş	Qatar University - TOBB ETÜ (on leave)
Vuslat Nur Şahin Temel	Social Sciences University of Ankara
Yaşar Sarı	İbn Haldun University

Organization Team:

Ersel Aydınli
Metin Koca
Faruk Aksoy
Onur Erpul
Seçkin Köstem
Ece Engin
Nihan Aşcı

Date: December 7, 2024
Location: Bilkent University, Main Campus, A-130
Time: 08:50 – 18:40

- 08:50 - 09:00** Introduction: Welcome and overview of the workshop goals
- Panel I** **Conceptual Foundations and Ideological Frameworks in TFP**
- 09:00 – 09:30** Dr Hazal Papuççular, Fenerbahçe University
The Politics of “Misak-ı Milli”: Visualizing the Borders of Turkey in Turkish Foreign Policy
- 09:30 – 10:00** Dr Ali Balcı, Sakarya University
Alliances and Local Solidarity: The Evolution of Ottoman Survival Strategies in Modern Turkey
- 10:00 – 10:30** Dr Radiye Funda Karadeniz, Gaziantep University
Kinship in Turkish Foreign Policy: The Centennial Journey of Outer Turks Concept
- 10:30 – 10:45** Coffee Break
- 10:45 – 11:15** Prof Dr Aşkın İnci Sökmen Alaca, Istanbul Arel University
Conceptualization of Sphere of Influence in Turkish Foreign Policy
- 11:15 – 11:45** Dr Metin Koca, CFPPR & Bilkent University
Consistency and Continuity: A Cultural Sociology of *Tutarlılık* in TFP
- 11:45 – 12:15** Dr Şaban Kardaş, Qatar University - TOBB ETÜ (on leave)
Dr Bayram Sinkaya, Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University
Conceptualizing Compartmentalization in International Relations: The Case of Turkish Foreign Policy
- 12:15 – 12:45** Prof Dr Haluk Özdemir, Kırıkkale University
Rapprochement-Estrangement Pendulum: An Inter-subsystemic Analysis of Turkish Foreign Policy
- 12:45 – 14:00** Lunch Break

Panel II	Conceptualizing Contemporary Dynamics in TFP
14:00 – 14:30	Prof Dr Yaşar Sarı, Ibn Haldun University Türkiye’s Pursuit of a Turkic Axis: Strategic Autonomy or Regional Balancing?
14:30 – 15:00	Prof Dr Meliha Altunışık, Middle East Technical University Turkey as a Cusp State: Conceptualization and Implementation
15:00 – 15:30	Dr Nasuh Sofuoğlu, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan University Dr Vuslat Nur Şahin Temel, Social Sciences University of Ankara Competing Definitions of Success: Türkiye’s Navigation Between Western Standards and Emerging Non-Western Alternatives
15:30 – 15:45	Coffee Break
15:45 – 16:15	Prof Dr Özgür Özdamar, Bilkent University Prof Dr Lerna K. Yanık, Kadir Has University Aslıhan Ezgi Dereli, Bilkent University Populist hyperpersonalization and politicization of foreign policy institutions
16:15 – 16:45	Dr Metin Yücekaya, Social Sciences University of Ankara Prof Dr Gürol Baba, Social Sciences University of Ankara A “Miniscule Pendulum”: The Concurrence of the East and the West in Turkish Foreign Policy in the Asia-Pacific
16:45 – 17:15	Dr Oğuzhan Göksel, Marmara University Political and Economic Typologies of Statecraft: Locating Turkish Foreign Policy under the AKP
17:15 – 17:45	Dr Onur Birkan, Mardin Artuklu University From “Value-rational” to “Purpose-rational” Foreign Policy: A Shift of Rationality in Turkish Foreign Policy
17:45 – 18:00	Coffee Break
18:00 – 18:40	Roundtable and Concluding Remarks