

The July 15 Failed Coup Attempt and Its Implications for Turkish Foreign Policy

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Abstract

In the aftermath of the July 15 coup attempt, Turkish foreign policy has once again become the subject of debate amongst political, academic and diplomatic circles, as well as media outlets. The discussions put forward questions on Turkey's NATO membership, its relations with the EU, its trustworthiness in allying in the fight against ISIL in the region, and the likeliness of Turkey's slide into new axis of alliance with Russia and Iran. Despite the speculative potential of these foreign policy questions, Turkish foreign policy inclinations and the country's interactions with international institutions and individual nation states need to be revised after the July 15 coup attempt. This paper argues that that the recent domestic developments in Turkey, which actually started with a confrontation between the Gulenists and AK Party government over the control of state institutions and then resulted in the coup attempt, have certain implications for the country's near foreign policy inclinations. New Turkish foreign policy, which can be traced back to the end of 2013, takes on the mantel of a more rational, operational and internationally-focused policymaker. Although rational and operational mode of action may signal neorealism in the new Turkish foreign policy, Turkey will continue its value-based reservations, especially in the making of international order.

Keywords

Turkish foreign policy, failed coup attempt, domestic politics, neorealism

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Introduction

In the aftermath of the July 15 coup attempt, Turkish foreign policy has once again become the subject of debate amongst political, academic and diplomatic circles, as well as media outlets. The reason that Turkey's foreign policy is being subjected to re-examination can be attributed to the conflicting statements issued by the country's Western allies within the very first few hours of the coup attempt. Questions were raised pertaining to Turkey's membership with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), its ongoing accession process with the European Union (EU), and its trustworthiness as an ally in the fight against ISIL in the region. The outside world responded to the brutal attacks launched by the coup plotters on the night of July 15, in the major cities of Istanbul and Ankara, by questioning what effect the coup attempt would have on the country's future foreign policy. Would Turkey try to form an axis with Russia and Iran? Was it going to drop the values of democracy, human rights, and the rule of law? Would it move toward authoritarianism and distance itself from the EU? Was it going to become more Islamized? Finally, would it choose "real" politics over "ideal" politics? OR vice-versa?

In order to answer these questions, a rational analysis is required of the vital changes taking place in both the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region and the Western context, as well as in the international order. While the world has become more globally interdependent through the frequent use of technology, volatile trade relations, and liberal economic policies; polarization and discrimination against diverse national, ethnic, and religious groups have increased exponentially in the regional context. The rise of xenophobia, Islamophobia, and rising fears pertaining to the influx of refugees from Syria and other trouble spots has resulted in the rise of far-right politics in European countries. The brutal killings of black people by police have caused an increase in "black-on-white" clashes in the United States. The emergence of radical groups in the name of Islam in the Middle East has brought new meaning – and impetus – to transnational terrorism. The confrontation between Islam and the modern world has escalated and the gap between the East and the West has deepened. Rising instability and insecurity at national, regional, and global levels has forced the international community to explore new mechanisms and new diplomacies in the 21st

century which are markedly different from that of those employed in the previous century. In the quest to change the international order, Turkey, which is an active member of the United Nations (UN), NATO, and the G20, and a candidate for full EU membership, has re-emerged as a critical actor because of the combination of its secular state structure and its majority Muslim population. In the aftermath of the coup attempt, which was carried out by the clandestine cult group led by Fethullah Gulen, Turkey's efforts to rebalance between Muslim politics and the modern world has become all the more important.

Undoubtedly certain consequences will arise from the failed coup attempt in terms of Turkish domestic and foreign politics. Firstly, Turkish policymakers are indebted to the heroic civilians who peacefully stood up against the coup plotters, and to those who sacrificed their lives for democracy. The debt will be paid back through the enforcement of democracy. People from different political, religious, and ethnic backgrounds came together during the coup attempt and succeeded in ensuring that it failed. They displayed solidarity against the coup plotters. The Turkish government has made it clear that protecting diversity and human rights for all its citizens is its primary task. Secondly, given the new domestic environment more democratization is needed at home, as this will strengthen Turkey's ties with international institutions and ensure its commitment to international agreements. Turkey has pursued an "open-up" foreign policy since 2002. As a result, its foreign policy stance has shifted away from protectionism toward internationalism and risk-taking, and this will continue. Thus, instead of choosing between the West and the East, Turkey will continue to diversify its foreign policy as it become more active in various regions, from the Middle East to Africa, Latin America, and Asia-Pacific.

My main argument in this article is that domestic politics is an important parameter for shaping foreign politics. I argue that the recent domestic developments in Turkey, which actually started with a confrontation between the Gulenists and the Justice and Development Party (AK Party) government over the control of state institutions and then resulted in the coup attempt, have certain implications for the country's future foreign policy inclinations. Whether Turkey takes a more rational and operational approach in terms of its foreign policy behaviors depends on the increasing

security concerns it encounters internally. This may result in the distancing itself from “idealism” to some degree and signal neorealism in Turkish foreign policy. However, Turkey will continue to protect its value-based reservations in foreign politics particularly by attempting to play a policymaking role at the international level. The new foreign policy inclinations have their roots in Turkey’s domestic politics. These inclinations did not appear suddenly and were present before July 15; this is evident if one looks back to the tense history between the Gulenists and the AK Party government which surfaced in 2012.

A common approach in the literature is that policymakers and heads of government do not determine foreign policies without factoring in domestic politics. According to these *Innenpolitik* theories, there may be various independent variables in domestic politics, from political and economic ideologies, to the nation’s nature and socioeconomics, which influence the international behavior of states (Rose 1998: 148). This further suggests that the same political structures behave in the same manner with regard to foreign policy, although this is not always the case. In fact, in the long-term the political environment of a country, in other words the basic structure of a state, whether it be a liberal democracy, a kingdom, an autocracy, etc., determines its foreign policy behavior. This in turn prevents any major changes in foreign policy preferences. On the other hand, it is possible that various motivating and unforeseen domestic incidents will result in a country shifting its foreign policy actions and diversifying its foreign policy choices.

Based on the argument outlined above, I posit that Turkey’s international disposition will not change in the long run due to the country’s political environment, which has been structured democratically and in a secular way since the establishment of the modern Turkish Republic despite its ups and downs. It is this political environment that ensures that Turkey will uphold its commitment to international agreements, as well as international institutions, such as the UN, NATO, and the EU. However, its foreign policy inclinations may change after the unprecedented coup attempt, in order to eliminate the domains of coup plotters domiciled in foreign countries. In enacting such policies, Turkey may behave in a more rational and operational way in the near future.

This paper first draws up a framework of the two phases of Turkish foreign policy under the AK Party government. The first section argues that there are two important domestic dynamics in Turkey, which have influenced the development of foreign policy in the last 15 years. While the first phase was shaped by the secular-versus-religious divide, the second phase began with the conflict between the Gulenists and members of the AK Party. The second section establishes the background details, and outlines what has transpired in Turkish domestic politics with regard to the conflict between the democratically elected government and the Gulenists. This section not only highlights ongoing political incidents in the country, but also assesses the domestic dynamic, which has shifted away from the secular versus Islamists divide toward a religious versus religious one. Finally, it analyses the influence of the sequence of events that have taken place between the Gulenists and the AK Party government, on foreign policy.

1. Two Phases of Turkish Foreign Policy under the AK Party Government

The AK Party, which came into power in 2002, has its leadership cadre's roots in Turkey's mainstream Islamist movement, the "National Outlook". Since then, the country's foreign policy has undergone a number of remarkable changes. In addition to the changing environment of the international order from globalization to regional transformations, and to neoliberal evaluations taking place throughout the world, domestic factors have also shaped Turkish foreign policy under the AK Party government.

With regard to the Turkish foreign policy has undergone in the last 15 years, there are two phases that require close examination. The first is the new foreign policy approach that was introduced by the AK Party, which differentiated from traditional Turkish foreign policy. From 2002 onwards, the AK Party started to pursue a proactive foreign policy by shifting away from its military-focused international role toward "soft power" activities. Previously, Turkish foreign policy remained isolated through the "peace at home and peace in the world" legacy left from Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of the modern Turkey. On the other hand, when Turkey preferred getting visibility in international arena, such visibility had been maintained through the participation of its troops in NATO operations. Thus, its power represented through its military power. However, the new foreign policy paradigm of sending immediate humanitarian aid to disaster areas,

establishing Turkish cultural centers, renovating old-Ottoman heritage sites in various countries became more important under the rule of AK Party. Turkey also developed a “zero problem with neighbors” policy and shifted its focus away from the West toward the East. It also diversified its foreign interests from the Middle East to Africa, Latin America, and Asia Pacific. The policymakers explained that the changes implemented were constructivist and realist, but at the same time were also value-based and principled. Turkey thus attempted to create a balance between “real politik” and “ideal politik” in its foreign policy (Kalin 2011-12: 9).

Domestic factors did have a certain role to play in such policy changes. First, the secular state structure of the modern Turkish Republic encouraged Turkey to anchor itself to the international order, which was basically established by the West. It also ensured that Turkey continued to obey and follow its commitments to international agreements and solidified its role in international institutions such as the UN, NATO, and the Council of Europe. It intensified its relationship with the EU and did not change the country’s strategic goal of becoming a full member; in fact, it hastened the process. However, the polarization between the secular and religious groups in the country pushed the new leadership to develop a different foreign policy from that which the secularists pursued in the country. Jung argues that the AK Party’s foreign policies have been shaped by the political struggle against the Kemalist establishment at home, and in particular the powerful role that the armed forces play in Turkish politics (Jung 2011-12: 24-25). In other words, in order to weaken the power of the secular elites in the country, the new government, which has claimed to be the more genuine representative of the people in Turkey, has diversified its foreign policy choices. Consequently, the countries that Turkey started to interact with more, for instance the Gulf countries, have contributed to the development of small- and medium-sized entrepreneurs. Hence, new groups in the country have started to claim a stake in central government besides the secular elites.

The second phase of foreign policy was initiated by the AK Party government at the end of 2013 and has become more explicit after the coup attempt. This second phase differentiates itself from the first phase particularly with regard to its applied methods. The new Turkish foreign policy takes on the mantle of

a more rational, operational and internationally-focused policymaker. First, the coup attempt on July 15 made Turkey a “defensive realist” in terms of its foreign policy behaviors. Thus, instead of subscribing to the “ideal politics” approach when establishing relationships, its new choices are now more interest-based. The collapse of the value-based relationship between the Gulenists and the government has led the latter to establish interest-based relationships both domestically and abroad. The implications of this strategy involve running the country based on secular principles and employing rational behaviors in its foreign policy. Second, Turkey has become more operational, by applying both hard-power and soft-power approaches, after the coup attempt. As the country now faces multiple threats, from both internal and external forces, it has become more active in the fight against multi-faced terrorism. From the Gulenists to the Kurdistan Worker’s Party (PKK), the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) to the Democratic Union Party (PYD), Turkey needs to fight on various fronts, but it has also intensified its soft power activities in order to replace the role the Gulenists played in the domains of education and trade in foreign countries. In doing so, both governmental and non-governmental organizations have already started to be established and have become more active. Finally, Turkey is taking a more active role in shaping the international order since the major world powers have failed to solve the problems between the Muslim world and the West – a factor which dominates world politics more and more every day. In addition, Western powers do not understand fully the newly emerging deviant groups operating in the name of Islam, such as ISIL and the Gulenists. With its Muslim majority population combined with a Western-type democracy, Turkey considers itself as having a vital role in proposing constructivist solutions to existing problems.

2. The Power Struggle between the Gulenists and the AK Party Government

A clandestine organization, the Gulenists have been described as a parallel state in Turkey for the last three years, as its followers have infiltrated strategic state institutions like the police, military and judiciary, as well as the ministries of education and justice. The organization was recently classified as a terrorist group, referred to as the “Fethullah Gulen Terrorist Organization” (FETO), by formal state authorities like the National Security

Council, as a result of its activities against Turkey's national interests and, most importantly, the attempted coup on July 15.

Four years ago, the AK Party had rather close relations with the Gulenists. The essential reason for this relationship was to weaken the Kemalist establishment, in order to democratize the country, particularly for those religious fractions that suppressed in their daily religious practices by secular elites.

Ataturk established a secular state and abolished the sultanate in 1922 and the Islamic caliphate in 1924. Together with the caliphate all religious institutions, such as *Sheikh al-Islam* (Official Religious Authority), religious courts and religious schools (*madrasas*), were closed and removed from the system. As far as the social structure was concerned, even the places, where *Sufi* groups came together and prayed (*tekke* and *zawiyas*) were closed down. The prayer call (*ezan*), which is originally Arabic, was recited in Turkish, and people were banned from reading the Quran in the early Republican period. In these circumstances, the Turkish military took the role of safeguarding the secular structure, and the secular elites had the role of secularizing, modernizing, and westernizing Turkish society.

Since then, military factions have intervened in Turkish politics at least four times (1960, 1971, 1980, and 1997), either by plotting a coup, or promulgating and enforcing memoranda that placed tremendous pressure on religious citizens. The last coup, known as the "post-modern coup", took place on February 28, 1997, before the AK Party came to power, and was expected to last a thousand years, at least according to Huseyin Kivrıkođlu, the Chief of General Staff in 1999 (Babacan 2012: 73). The AK Party was formed in 2001 and went on to win the general election in November 2002, however the political and economic milieu continued to remain fragile as a result of the process of February 28. The AK Party was elected with 34.9% of the vote and formed a single-party government that took over the reins from a long line of coalition government administrations. However, the new administration had to rule the country under the threat of a possible coup attempt by secular factions.

In order to nullify this threat, the AK Party government launched a domestic and foreign campaign. It first declared its commitment to international

order and then focused on speeding up the EU accession process, by passing a number of reform packages through the Turkish Grand National Assembly and democratizing many archaic state institutions. Within this framework, normalizing civil-military relations became a priority for the government, although the very complicated ties between the military, secular elites, a number of politicians and media outlets made the struggle more than difficult.

During this very critical time in Turkish history, the Gulenists appeared as strong allies who were already embedded deep within state institutions through their earlier infiltration into the police and judiciary. As a group who presented themselves as the victims of the disjointed structure of the Turkish state, they committed themselves to being the patrons and defenders of democracy. When the Ergenekon and Sledgehammer cases were taken up by the ostensibly Gulenist judiciary, they pretended they were making important contributions to the progress of the cases. These two cases attempted to dissolve the chronic relationship buried deep within the state apparatus. The suspects were accused of being involved in a coup attempt in 2003 against the AK Party government; however, as many rumors began to spread about the Gulenists producing fake documents in relation to these two cases, Turkish domestic politics entered into new and even more chaotic turmoil.

Before the AK Party government started to discover that the Gulenists were manipulating and abusing the Ergenekon and Sledgehammer investigation processes, by replacing their followers with members of the establishment, a number of crises had already occurred between the two protagonists.

The February 7 crisis, in 2012, and the arrest of the Chief of Generals, İlker Başbuğ, in 2013, helped the AK Party government understand the real aims of this organization. The February 7 crisis started when the Chief of the National Intelligence Agency (MIT), Hakan Fidan was summoned a specially authorized court that was established to carry out an inquiry into the Kurdistan Communities Union (KCK), the city-organization of the PKK terrorist group. The specially authorized prosecutor wanted Hakan Fidan to deliver a statement for the operations, which was actually meant to be kept secret in principle by the Chief of MIT. The prime minister at the time, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, who was later elected as the 12th president of

the country, interpreted such an attempt as an attack on the civilian rulers, as the National Intelligence Agency was a strategic institution working directly under the prime ministry. Ilker Başbuğ, on the other hand, was the General Chief of Staff between 2008 and 2010, when Erdoğan was prime minister. He was arrested in 2013 as part of the Ergenekon case, but Erdoğan had no idea of Başbuğ Pasha's coup plotting. Rather, he worked with him in harmony and perceived him as a general who respected civil-political authorities. Hence, on a few occasions, he stated his annoyance about Başbuğ Pasha's arrest. These two incidents became important turning points in the relations between the Gulenists and the government, and as a result a lack of trust developed between the two.

While the two incidents led to even more complications, the insistence of the Gulenists in taking strategic positions in state institutions as well as in political circles caused serious tension between them and Erdoğan. As a result, the Gulenists targeted Prime Minister Erdoğan and first launched a coup to topple the democratically elected government in December 2013. The coup attempt was performed by lower-ranking police officers who alleged that four ministers were engaged in fraudulently trading gold for oil with Iran. The operation was carried out in secret by secret members of the Gulenists in the police force, and in fact aimed to break the hierarchy within the state in order to weaken the state structure. Illegal wiretappings, fake documents, and the abuse of official positions were all prevalent in the December 17 operation.

In the aftermath of the coup attempt on December 17, the government launched a significant campaign to oust the Gulenists from state institutions. However, the Gulenists had a strong presence in the military. The Gulenist coup on July 15, 2016 took place because they knew that their secret members in the military would be dismissed at the upcoming High Military Council, to be held from August 1 to August 4, 2016. In order to keep their establishment within the military, they attempted a coup.

The night of the coup attempt was brutal and bloody. The coup plotters bombed the headquarters of the Special Operational Forces and the headquarters of the Police Force, as well as the National Intelligence Service Building. Moreover, they bombed the Turkish parliament seven times during the night and blocked the two bridges spanning the Bosphorus in Istanbul,

the most strategic routes of the city. Here, helicopters opened gun-fire on the civilians. The Turkish people resisted the coup attempt bare-handed and in a peaceful manner by standing in front of tanks in order to protect their democratically elected government and democratically structured state. They sacrificed their lives. The role of individuals and their sudden self-organization in order to prevent the coup attempt cannot be emphasized enough. Before President Erdoğan called on the Turkish people to take to the streets and squares and repel the coup plotters, Turkish people took the initiative and fought back. Their presence on the streets clearly displayed how they resisted giving up their democratic acquisitions. Such self-organization was only possible because of early acquisitions of democracy by the Turkish people, which they ultimately did not want to lose.

Following the failed coup attempt, various groups from different ethnic, religious, and political backgrounds unified against the conspirators. This included the ruling and the opposition parties cooperating in fighting against the Gulenists, who were subsequently classified as a terrorist group and now referred to as “FETO” by all factions in the country.

This incident changed one very important aspect in the social structure of the nation – it was the first time in the history of modern Turkey that the secular versus Islamist divide was closed, in that secular and religious people unified against a group that was abusing religion in order to achieve its ultimate aim. This may result in changes in the fundamental dynamics of the country. First, the secular versus Islamist division may lose its importance in being *a priori* in Turkish political literature from now on. Second, the conflict between secular and religious groups may wither as religious groups begin to clash with other religious groups, which is already taking place to some extent. This may consequently lead to more Islamists becoming secularized, particularly with regard to the relations between state and religion. Although this topic is beyond the scope of this article to focus on, the social consequences of the July 15 coup attempt should be examined by academics.

With regard to the country’s foreign relations, this short history indicates a shift in Turkey’s interactions with other states. Turkey’s rational and operational behaviors taken in these interactions will be motivated by its aim of washing-out the Gulenists from the foreign countries. However,

Turkey will also attempt to play a greater role in international arena as a result of its unprecedented experience with the Gulenists.

3. The Implications of the July 15th Coup Attempt for Turkish Foreign Policy

Since July 15, various aspects of Turkish foreign policy have become the subject of much discussion. The possibility of a weakened Turkish military hampering the fight against terrorism in the region, renewed turbulence in Turkish-American relations, and the deterioration of Turkish-EU relations are only a few examples amongst the larger questions surrounding Turkey's NATO membership and whether the country will form an axis of alliance with Russia and Iran. Despite the speculative nature of the questions, Turkish foreign policy inclinations and the country's interactions with international institutions and individual nation states need to be revised after the July 15 coup attempt. Indeed, the incident offers a crucial example of how domestic politics affect foreign policy, as this paper proposes.

Ahmet Davutoğlu, who was first foreign policy advisor both to Abdullah Gül, 11th President of the Turkish Republic, and then to Recep Tayyip Erdoğan crafted the first phase of Turkish foreign policy under the AK Party government.

Davutoğlu served as the country's foreign minister between 2009 and 2014, and was Prime Minister from 2014 to 2016. He had spent a long time in the academic world before starting his political career in Ankara, and attempted to put the theories he had produced in academia into practice. Davutoğlu argued that since Turkey held a position of geostrategic importance, it could use its geographic location and historical legacy to actively engage in with its neighbors, thereby become a "central state" or "central country" in the region (Davutoğlu 2001). By taking this approach, Davutoğlu basically distinguished himself from the old foreign policymakers who had emphasized Turkey's bridging role between the East and the West. While he agreed with idea of the country playing a bridging role, he also placed emphasis on Turkey's historical and cultural ties, which not only with countries in the East but also in the Balkans, Caucasus, Africa, and so on. As Davutoğlu had served a long and successful period in office, his perspective left notable marks on Turkish foreign policy. The principles of

“zero problems with neighbors” and “rhythmic diplomacy” were developed by Davutoğlu, and shaped the contours of the first phase of Turkish foreign policy. Idealism was also introduced in to Turkish foreign policy by him.

However, when difficulties arose surrounding this approach to foreign policy, realized in the complex web of international order and amidst the chronic problems of the nation’s domestic politics, Turkish foreign policy entered into a new phase under the AK Party government. The government’s relations with the Gulenists, which was established on the basis of shared values, collapsed unexpectedly and more importantly resulted in disbelief to idealism not only in domestic politics but also in foreign politics.

In the new era, which I have defined above as constituting the second phase of the AK Party’s foreign policies, the government’s foreign policy inclinations are more rational and operational, particularly with regard to its relations with individual states. This signals a shift toward neorealism, which proposes hardline policies in terms of security and interests, thus taking value-based policies out of the game. However, neorealism can no longer downplay the importance of values, as realism once did. Indeed, the liberal international order that emerged post-World War II created certain standards in international relations that are important to adhere to. Since then, the rule of law, protection of human rights, freedoms, maintenance of peace and equilibrium among the states are the main pillars of international relations. Therefore, AK Party’s new phase in foreign policy will not become entirely a value free hard line politics, but it will prioritize rational choices.

With regard to its international role, Turkey will continue to be the part of international order, though the rules of the game slightly changed after the Cold War. Kenneth Waltz and Henry Kissinger argued that the post-Cold War world would become a multipolar system containing a range of both big powers and effective medium-sized powers, and would inevitably return the world to a *balance of power* system (Brown 2001: 44-45, Kissinger 1994: 23). The balance of power system, though, works in an anarchical world rather than in a hierarchical one. Here, anarchy does not refer to “disorder” but rather the opposite; in other words, establishing relations in a horizontal line. As a result of the end of the Cold War and the bipolar system, no nation rose to take on the role of the sole superpower. Despite the triumph of the US over the Soviet Union, in the post-Cold War period various powers

like China, India, Europe and even Russia have vied to be in the same position as the US, not as super powers but as big powers. The absence of a superpower has resulted in an anarchical system in the world. In this system, states determine their relationships not in a vertical way, but in a cross-cutting way. This also signals the decline of the new world order, which was established after the Second World War and that imagined ruling the world by the five permanent members of the UN Security Council (UNSC). However, even if this liberal international era starts to decline, the system does not provide the framework in which to argue for the possibility of hard realism in international relations henceforth. Liberal internationalism, with its institutions like the UN, as well as cross-bordering organizations such as International Amnesty and Human Rights Watch, has constructed a value-based system in theory despite – to a certain extent – a number of failures in practice.

Based on Waltz's and Kissinger's arguments, I discuss how Turkey will use its nation-state power in the new multipolar international system below. In this context, it will continue to be the part of the existing international community. However, it will make a difference through its proposals advocating an international order that is fairer. Turkey's rational approach to foreign policy and its operational capacity, on the other hand, will serve to improve the world system as well as the wellbeing of the societies in various countries.

A. Turkey's Institutional Affiliations and Its Rationality as a Mode of Action

In fact, given Turkey's secular and democratic political environment, Turkey continues to maintain its alliance with the West. The failure of the coup attempt has had the effect of strengthening this alliance and Turkey's commitment to democracy has been confirmed, specifically in light of the actions taken by Turkish civilians on July 15. This eliminates any speculation pertaining the possibility of the country forming an axis of alliance with Russia and Iran. In order to form such an alliance, Turkey would need to change its economic and political landscape and re-compromise its position within the international order, which is not likely. Furthermore, the country has continued to be a valuable member of NATO, and maintained the accession process with the EU, has underlined its role

in the G20 and increased its leading role in the UN through various means, e.g., by suggesting the reformation of the UNSC. Turkey's participation and delivered messages in the G20 Summit in China on September 4-5, 2016 and the UN General Assembly Opening session in the US on September 19, 2016 displayed its commitment to its international affiliations, in the aftermath of the coup attempt.

Turkey's rational choice-based mode of action, on the other hand, can be seen in its interactions with individual national states, particularly after July 15, 2016. This foreign policy approach entails establishing interest-based relations for the sake of security (Brown 2001: 49, 239). Turkey considers the Gulenists to be both an internal and an external threat to its national security. Therefore, flushing them out of foreign countries and extraditing the mastermind of the organization, Fethullah Gulen, from the United States are the highest priorities on Turkey's foreign policy agenda. In this regard, since July 15, Turkey has launched a major campaign to convince American authorities to deport Fethullah Gulen, who has been living in the US for over 15 years. In pursuing this legal route, Turkey is acting within the framework of the rule of law. The Ministries of Justice of both countries are in contact, and technical teams from each ministry have already been established to oversee the process closely. Turkey has also formally requested the extradition of Fethullah Gulen and sent thousands of files containing evidence that connect him to certain crimes, including masterminding the coup. While Turkey has upheld its responsibility to work in full compliance with the rule of law, it keeps this issue independent from the rest of the relations and continues their economic and military cooperation between the two countries. Their alliance in fighting against ISIL in the region, the diplomatic initiatives and sharing intelligence on Syria, by reviewing economic relations and targeting increases in trade volume are part of these ongoing dealings.

Turkey's relations with Russia also continue to remain strong. Turkish President Erdoğan visited St. Petersburg on August 9, 2016. This marked his first visit to a foreign country after the coup attempt. His presence in St. Petersburg fueled speculation concerning the possibility of Turkey forming an axis of alliance with Russia and Iran. Such speculation was justified as the democratically elected government of Turkey received very weak support

from its Western allies after the coup attempt, while President Putin had been the first foreign leader who called Erdoğan after the events of July 15. However, Turkey's endeavors to normalize relations with Russia had already begun long before the coup attempt. Turkish-Russian relations had deteriorated after a Russian war plane was shot down by Turkish pilots on the Turkish-Syrian border on November 24, 2015. While the Turkish government focused on trying to protect the relationship between the two countries, Russia reacted by cutting all ties with Turkey from the economy to tourism, to diplomacy to politics. However, due to the \$35 billion trade volume between the two countries, mutual investments, high tourism potential, and energy agreements both sides decided to act rationally and converge once again.

Furthermore, Russia proved itself to be a trustworthy ally after the July 15 coup attempt. The Gulenists established numerous schools in Central Asia and the Caucasus in the 1980s. From Kazakhstan to Kirgizstan, to Turkmenistan to Mongolia, they became very active in these countries' politics and societies. Russia, on the other hand, never allowed them to establish schools within its borders, and since the 1980s, has considered the group to be an instrument of American expansion in the former Soviet Union region. As such, Russia tends to support Turkey in its fight against the Gulenists, particularly when it comes to the task of purging them from Central Asia and the Caucasus.

b. Turkey's Operational Capacity

For the last 15 years, Turkey's operational capacity, characterized by the use of soft power, had been the distinguishing feature of its foreign policy. Due to the advances the country has made in strengthening its cultural and historical ties with various regions in the world, the mobilization of its youth population in developing countries, and the high number of risk-taking entrepreneurs in countries with weak economies Turkey is now able to make its presence felt globally. The country has signaled that it will expand its soft power in the near future. However, after the July 15 coup attempt, its mobilization abroad has become two-fold as a result of the addition of "hard power" operations.

Soon after the coup attempt, Turkey expanded its operational capacity through the use of hard power. On July 22, Turkish security forces and civilians were

attacked by the PKK in Diyarbakır. This was followed by further attacks in Elazığ, Van, Bitlis, Şırnak and Artvin. ISIL also attacked a wedding ceremony in Gaziantep on August 20, killing 51 civilians. Hence, Turkey is now defending itself against the Gulenists, ISIL, PKK and PYD on many fronts. On August 24, the Turkish military launched operation, Euphrates Shield in response to the ISIL attack in Gaziantep. This response was in line with its right to protect its borders, and was in full compliance with international agreements. Turkish ground troops were supported by air power through a coalition led by the US. This operation allowed Turkey to send a clear signal that it would be more aggressive in protecting its national security going forward, while also remaining loyal to the international requirements.

The perception that the purging of the Gulenists from its ranks had weakened the Turkish military was nullified by the Euphrates Shield operation. The military operation also allowed Turkey to re-affirm its trustworthiness as an ally in the fight against ISIL and other terrorist groups in the region. The welcoming of Turkish soldiers by Syrians has also strengthened Turkey's soft-power in the region, and it is likely that the country will continue to engage in future military operations, particularly in Syria and Iraq.

With regard to its soft-power operations, Turkey was showing good progress even before July 15. The resolution for the establishment of the Turkish Education Union (*Türkiye Maarif Vakfı*) was passed by the Turkish parliament on June 19, 2016. The Union aims to provide education abroad, from the nursery level to the university level, and to support students with scholarships, dormitories and consultancy services. It will provide teachers with the necessary training. The resolution also authorizes the Union in establishing businesses or becoming a shareholder in a business abroad (<https://www.tbmm.gov.tr/sirasayi/donem26/yil01/ss383.pdf>[Erişim: 18.09.2016]). Apart from the Turkish Education Union, the establishment of TÜRGEV (Turkish Union of Services for the Youth and the Education) and its immediate introduction in foreign countries signals Turkey's eagerness to increase its operational power in the field of education. The country has already established cultural ties through services provided by the Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency, the Yunus Emre Foundation and NGOs abroad. The aforementioned government agencies have helped in building schools, hospitals and mosques, renovating historical buildings, organizing cultural events and providing humanitarian aid to African, Middle Eastern, Latin American and Asian countries for the last

15 years. Turkish businessmen also invest in these regions in various sectors from construction to building factories, and trading plenty of products. With the establishment of the Turkish Education Union, Turkey's current operational capability in the fields of culture and business will be extended to the field of education.

c. Turkey as an International Policymaker

Turkey has been recently voicing a need for reform in the international order. President Erdoğan has frequently repeated his view that the composition of the UNSC, which was founded in the aftermath of the Second World War, is unfair. The UNSC consists of five permanent members with veto power and ten non-permanent members that are elected every two years by the General Assembly. The five permanent members are the five countries that were the victors in the Second World War. To date, the UN has failed to implement effective solutions for the problems the world faces. This may be attributed to its structure, which was established under the conditions of the previous century.

Turkey has called for an urgent reform of the UNSC, by criticizing the power allocated to the permanent member countries through the veto right, and the unfair way in which these countries use their veto power politically. Turkey's argument is that the fate of all nations lies in the hands of these five powers, which constantly make political decisions about enduring problems in the world without solving anything. In addition to the veto right of five permanent members, the lack of representation amongst those five members led another failure in the UNSC. In other words, those five members the USA, the UK, France, Russia and China do not fairly represent the various regions and populations of the world. In response to this imbalance, Turkey has suggested the representation of larger groups, such as Muslims, Asians, Africans and South Americans, wherein the problems of the twenty-first century entangled. Recently, Turkey suggested the UNSC should have the following structure: 20 permanent members with equal voting rights. Every two years these permanent members should be replaced with another twenty members, thereby guaranteeing the presence of these currently under-represented groups and regions.

Turkey considers itself as having a preeminent role in solving the problems of this age, for two important reasons. First, it is located between the East and the West, and has a combination of Muslim majority population and

a secular state structure. Second, as a Muslim country, it sees itself as being responsible for representing the accurate Islam and distinguishing it from the newly emerging deviant, radical groups operating under the guise of Islam, such as ISIL and the Gulenists. As a result of the lack of knowledge on Islam in the West, as well as the prejudices on Muslims; Western actors fail to understand these groups and are not able to suggest viable solutions for the region. As a result, the West faces an increase in Islamophobia and xenophobia, buoyed by the prevailing rise of far-right politics and racism. As a consequence, the gap between the Western world and the Muslim world is only deepening.

In this context, Turkey's impending membership to the EU gains more importance by the day. In order to protect the universal values of human rights, democracy and freedom, it is important that the EU cooperate with Turkey now more than ever. The recent refugee crisis proves that European countries are incapable of properly handling the influx of refugee from Muslim countries, ranging from Syria to Iraq, Afghanistan to Pakistan. The refugee crisis entangles from state to society in European countries. Europe does not only need Turkey to prevent refugees from encroaching onto its territory, but it also needs Turkey's assistance in dealing with enabling social harmonization in these countries.

Conclusion

The coup attempt on July 15, and the earlier tensions between the Gulenists and the government, has resulted in a new phase in Turkish foreign policy under the AK Party government. Indeed, this new phase has its roots in the tense relationship that has existed between these two groups since the end of 2013. Turkey's foreign policy behavior is now more rational, operational and international. Employing a rational mode of action and the increase in its operational capacity will make Turkey more effective in the international arena. It will also relatively distance the country from incorporating idealism into its foreign policy, and despite the neorealist inclinations in its reactions, Turkey will continue abide by the terms of international institutions. However, it will take more proactive role in guiding policies in these institutions.

The main argument of this article is that the new Turkish foreign policy has its roots in domestic politics. The collapse of value-based relations established between the Gulenists and the government has led the government to focus more on interest-based relations, both internally and externally. Security is

also a primary concern since the attempted coup. From the FETO to PKK, ISIL to PYD, Turkey's multi-faceted fight against terrorism has made it operationally active and as a result it has employed both hard power and soft power approaches. This defensive stance, in theory, contradicts international institutionalism; however, Turkey, with its significant experience in Muslim politics and a deep understanding of relations between Islam and politics, is a vital actor in international politics, particularly in regard to the relationship between the West and the Muslim world.

In this context, Turkey has proposed constructivist solutions to the international order, by suggesting a more equally distributed balance of power in international institutions. Particularly its stance that "the world is bigger than five" resonates in various corners of the world. This stance essentially calls for an equal distribution of power in the UNSC, and is against giving overwhelming power to five permanent members of the Security Council who hold the power of veto. As a consequence, Turkey's neorealist policies do not entirely downplay the importance of values in international relations; rather, Turkey attempts to provide equilibrium to the international order by playing the realist card.

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15 Temmuz Başarısız Darbe Girişimi ve Türk Dış Politikası Üzerindeki Etkileri

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Öz

15 Temmuz başarısız darbe girişimin ardından, Türk dış politikası siyasi, akademik ve diplomatik çevrelerin yanı sıra medyada da bir kez daha tartışma konusu oldu. Tartışmalar Türkiye'nin NATO üyeliğinden, AB ile ilişkilerine, DAES ile mücadelesindeki güvenilirliğinden, eksen kaymasına kadar pek çok konuyu içerdi. Bu tartışmaların spekülâtif tarafına rağmen, 15 Temmuz darbe girişiminden sonra Türk dış politikasının yeni eğilimleri ve ülkenin hem uluslararası örgütlerle hem de tek tek uluslar ile ilişkilerinin incelenme gereği açıktır. Bu makale son zamanlarda Türk iç siyasetinde yaşanan gelişmelerin Türk dış politikasının yakın geleceği üzerinde kesin bazı etkileri olacağını tartışmaktadır. 15 Temmuz darbe girişimi de iç politikanın dış politikada belirleyici olduğu nosyonunu destekleyici önemli bir örnek olaydır. Doğrusu iç siyasetteki son gelişmeler Gülcenciler ile AK Parti Hükümeti arasında devleti kontrol etme üzerine yaşanan güç çatışması ve son olarak darbe girişiminden kaynaklanmaktadır. Bu makale yeni Türk dış politikasının –ki 2013 yılının sonuna dayandırılabilir– daha rasyonel, operasyonel ve uluslararası alanda politika yapıcı bir tavır belirleyeceğini tartışmaktadır. Bu tavır Türk dış politikasında neorealist sinyaller verecek olsa da Türkiye'nin değerlere dayalı dış politikası yeni yaklaşımlarında yer tutmaya devam edecek, özellikle de uluslararası sistemin oluşturulmasında.

Anahtar Kelimeler

Türk Dış Politikası, başarısız darbe girişimi, iç politika, neorealizm

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Безуспешный переворот 15 Июля и Его Влияние на Турецкой Внешней Политике

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Аннотация

После неудачного переворота, внешняя политика Турции стала предметом обсуждения в академических и дипломатических кругах, а также в СМИ. Обсуждение выдвинутых вопросов содержит целый ряд вопросов начиная о членстве Турции в НАТО, ее отношения с ЕС, надежность о союзе в борьбе против ИГИЛ. Несмотря на спекулятивную сторону этой дискуссии, после переворота выявлены что новые тенденции внешней политики Турции должны рассмотреть взаимосвязь как с международными организациями, так и с отдельными странами. В данной статье обсуждается последние события во внутренней политике и их влияние на ближайшее будущее внешней политики Турции. Утверждается, что последние внутривластные события в Турции связаны с конфликтом, которая фактически началась с противостояния Гюленистов и ПСР правительством за контроль над государственными институтами, а также с государственным переворотам. Данной статье обсуждается, что Турецкая внешняя политика определяет новую позицию на рациональных, оперативных и директивных областях и на международной арене. Такое отношение хотя дает неореалистические сигналы, внешняя политика Турции основывается на новом подходе, особенно в создании международной системы.

Ключевые слова

Туркская Внешняя Политика, неуспешный военный переворот, внутренняя политика неореализм

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