

From the Editor

In his article “*A Comparative Analysis on the Role of Culture and Language in the Early Phases of Nation-Building in the Middle East*”, Selim Sezer elaborates, three important currents that influenced the formation of the 20th century’s Middle East region and its nation-states. He argues that these currents have many characteristics that are similar to the cultural awakening patterns of several European nations. In this framework, he studies *Al-Nahda*, Phoenicianism, and early modern Zionism, which played significant roles in shaping modern Syria, Lebanon, and Israel respectively. He chooses these currents for the following reasons: first, they brought political effects in regions which are geographically close to each other, which can be even considered as one and same region: *Bilad al-Sham*, or Levant. Second, despite significant differences, they have many common points as well, and these points are parallel to what he defines as the “universal pattern” of nation building in this article. Third, these currents are also rival to each other, if not mutually exclusive. He mainly argues that all of these currents, which are developed by pioneers and then reached to relatively larger masses, have played significant roles in the shaping of new nation-states, regardless of whether those pioneers had that goal or not. The originality of Sezer’s article comes from its effort to *compare* them and to elaborate each of them primarily (but not solely) through the perspective of centrality of national language. After a short analysis of the role of culture and language in the nation-building processes as the theoretical framework, he analyzes mentioned three currents, and in the final part, he compares these currents. In conclusion, he argues that all the aforementioned currents belong to the same periods, and they emerged as part of the general modernization process in the region and in the world. This is why they share some basic characteristics of modern national(ist) currents and ideologies. Moreover, language plays a crucial role in creation of a national identity, and this role is clearly seen especially in cases of *Nahda* and cultural Zionism.

In their article, “*The Other Face of Turkey’s Foreign Policy in Sub-Saharan Africa: Soft Power Policy in Somalia*” Sümer Esin Şenyurt and Murat Özay Taşkın focus on Turkey’s becoming an important soft power actor in Sub-Saharan Africa by investing heavily in Somalia in the last 20 years. They argue that by capitalizing on its cultural, religious and historical ties, Turkey has improved its relations with this region and has been seen as

part of its efforts to assume an active role on the world stage. In addition, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's historical visit to Somalia in 2011 is highlighted as a turning point that strengthened Turkish-Somali relations and Turkey's Sub-Saharan Africa policy in general. Turkey has played an active role in Sub-Saharan Africa in areas such as health, education, cultural cooperation and humanitarian aid projects, effectively utilizing its soft power elements through commercial and political channels. Sub-Saharan Africa's perception of Turkey as being in a more advantageous position compared to traditional great powers without a colonial past has positively reinforced Turkey's influence in the continent. Turkey's relations with Sub-Saharan Africa have not only contributed significantly to the countries of the continent, but also enhanced Turkey's international image and influence. In return, as Şenyurt and Taşkın argue, with its economic growth potential and resource richness, Sub-Saharan Africa offers new opportunities for cooperation and development for Turkey. Methodologically, they use qualitative approach and utilize existing literature and document analysis methods. In conclusion, as authors argue, Turkey's Sub-Saharan Africa policy has the potential to be a strategic partnership that serves the mutual interests of the continent and Turkey. This policy strengthens Turkey's position as a global actor while playing an important role in helping Sub-Saharan Africa achieve its development goals. The future of these relations will be closely linked to how both sides shape and deepen this partnership.

In her article, "*A Critical Study on the Use of War News as a Means of Propaganda: The 2003 Iraq War Case*" Ceren Balel argues that conflict conditions such as war or crises facilitate the use of propaganda. Although widely known as consisting of facts, the news is a narrative of reality. Therefore, news texts are ideal for managing perception for the intended purpose. The Iraq War, the first US war to involve pre-emptive war against a potential threat, also witnessed in the global media via both embedded journalism and citizen journalism. The legitimacy of the 2003 Iraq War, waged by the US-led Coalition Force based on United Nations Resolution 1441, is still a matter of debate in international law. Balel emphasizes that in the literature review, it was observed that the structure of the propaganda applied by the US in the war was examined within the framing theory in most studies in terms of the news production and broadcasting process. However, it was seen that the process of the US war program was not assessed within the constructionist framework. Balel's article examines the use of propaganda in the Iraq war news content. The aim of her article is

to examine the use of propaganda in Iraq War news' content in the context of the propaganda model. Methodologically, she uses descriptive field research methodology, case study and relational research models through the content analysis technique. She concludes that after the collapse of the USSR, the fifth filter of the model was found to be functioning as ideological agenda instead of anticommunism, as it had been for the original model.

In his article, "*Geopolitical Problems of NATO Members in the Arctic*" Ferdi Güçyetmez analyzes the increasing geopolitical risks in the Arctic region from the perspective of NATO expansion. Güçyetmez tries to answer the question of preventing a war between NATO members and Russia due to cooperation by examining the geopolitical problems in the Arctic. He aims to provide a different perspective by exploring not only the geopolitical problems with Russia, but also the geopolitical problems of NATO member countries with each other. In the article, Güçyetmez makes an analysis of NATO expansion to the North and geopolitical problems between NATO members such as the USA, Canada, Norway and Denmark in the Arctic Circle. He concludes that cooperation and dialogue among NATO members are vital to resolve future geopolitical challenges. Especially after the tense relations with Russia, the dominance of NATO-centered thinking in the Arctic has overridden the individual policies of the countries. Due to geopolitical tensions in the region, Arctic countries are far from cooperating independently of NATO, taking into account their mutual interests. For this reason, NATO member Arctic countries endeavor to resolve border disputes and island issues on a legal basis. These problems will continue in this manner until the state of war with Russia disappears and tensions between the countries are suspended.

In her article, "*Russian-Turkish Relations in the New Age of Uncertainty*" Veronika Tsibenko provides an analysis of the current state of Russian-Turkish Relations within the framework of the 'Age of Uncertainty' concept coined by Harvard economist Ken Galbraith. In her study, she examines how Turkey is evolving its self-image as it seeks to achieve strategic autonomy through various foreign policy initiatives. Her paper also analyzes Turkey's perceptions of Russia, highlighting both positive and negative views that shape their bilateral relations. By exploring the intricate dynamics of Russian-Turkish relations while taking into account historical context and geopolitical factors, the author provides a comprehensive understanding of the complex nature of interactions of the two

states. In conclusion, Tsibenko emphasizes the necessity of cultivating a positive image and promoting cooperation between Russia and Turkey to effectively navigate the uncertainty of the contemporary world, and ensure a more stable and peaceful coexistence in a constantly changing international landscape.

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