
American Image in Turkey: U.S. Foreign Policy Dimensions

By Giray Sadik

Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2009, 110 pages, ISBN 9780739133804, \$50

The US-Turkish relationship has faced trouble since the Iraq War. On the one hand, the current Justice and Development Party government has pursued new foreign policy initiatives toward its neighbors in the Middle East. Turkey's approach toward Iran, for instance, has caused policy makers and commentators in Washington to wonder "did the United States lose Turkey?" On the other hand, we have observed a rise of anti-Americanism in Turkey. During the Cold War era, anti-Americanism in Turkey was not so widespread; it was contained to leftist circles. Since 2003, in contrast, anti-American attitudes have become widespread among citizens regardless of their political and ideological positions. What accounts for this rise of Turkish public opinion unfavorable to the United States? Under what conditions could the image of America in Turkey improve? Giray Sadik's *American Image in Turkey* addresses these interesting and important questions. He considers how American foreign policy has affected Turkish public opinion toward the United States between 2000 and 2006.

Sadik hypothesizes that there is a positive relationship between pro-American public opinion among Turks and the amount of military aid, economic assistance, foreign direct investment, and bilateral trade provided by the United States. For instance, Sadik speculates that when the volume of US military assistance to Turkey increases, we can observe a parallel increase of favorable public attitudes toward the United States. In order

to identify the impact of US aid, foreign direct investment, and bilateral trade with Turkey, the author examines how Turkish public opinion toward Washington is associated with each of these elements of American foreign policy. Turkish public opinion toward the United States, which constitutes the dependent variable in this study, is measured by using a series of the PEW Global Attitudes Project. According to the data, more than 50% of the respondents had a pro-American opinion before the Iraq War, but favorable opinions toward the United States dropped sharply after the war. In 2004, anti-American feeling slightly dissipated, but increased again in the subsequent years. Sadik investigates to what extent the changes in Turkish public opinion toward the United States are congruent with changes in these independent variables.

The reviewer has serious reservations with the author's hypothesis that the US aid and its economic relationship with Turkey are causally associated with pro-American public opinion in Turkey. If citizens change their attitudes toward the United States as an effect of the variation in US military assistance, this means that they must have knowledge about, or at least be aware of, the amount of military aid Turkey receives from the United States. Sadik, unfortunately, never touches the topic of how this intimate knowledge of state affairs is accessed. If citizens do not know the changing amount of US military aid received by their government, then we can not causally relate the rise

and decline of pro-American attitudes to the variation in US foreign aid. This problem is relevant to all other independent variables including economic assistance, foreign direct investment, and bilateral trade. Throughout the book, there is no discussion or data demonstrating that citizens are aware of the fact that the volume of bilateral trade and investment from the United States has changed over years. Sadik also hypothesizes that the US economic assistance which might have helped Turkey recover from the 2001 economic crisis can be expected to positively contribute to Turkish public opinion toward the United States. This hypothesis is not empirically testable unless (1) we confirm that US economic assistance in fact played an important role in Turkey's recovery from the economic crisis and (2) we have evidence demonstrating that Turkish citizens were aware of the role played by US assistance in the Turkish economy after the crisis. No tangible data is provided in the book, however. The author writes that "in case of diminishing trade with the United States, it is likely that these industries will have to institute labor reduction. In turn, frustrated by their unemployment, those workers and families are likely to blame the United States" (p. 66). Again, this causal relationship is not plausible unless we empirically confirm that citizens, who lost their jobs because of the decline of the trade volume with the United States, are really likely to put blame on the United States rather than their own government.

Sadik's analysis about the impact of US foreign policy on Turkish public opinion toward the United States produces mixed results. In some cases, there is inconsistency between the trend in Turkish public opinion and the trend in US foreign

policy. However, in other occasions, he finds a parallel trend between them. For instance, he argues that his hypothesis is partially supported by the data because when favorable Turkish public opinion toward the United States declined in 2002-3, pro-American public opinion simultaneously moved down. In 2003-4, these two variables increased together, which he also claims supports his hypothesis. It is true that in figure 2.1 (p. 28) it appears that these two variables co-vary in the positive direction, but there is no discussion that explains how the US military aid is "causally" related to Turkish public opinion. It is quite possible that this relationship is spurious: that there is no causal relationship between them at all. We can, for example, explain this correlation in terms of another factor. In 2003, Turkish public opinion became more anti-American because of the Iraq War (not because of the decline of military aid to Turkey), and the US military aid decreased because the Turkish government did not allow US troops to use military bases in Turkey. Thus, it is logically plausible that the decline of pro-American citizens and the decline of military aid were caused by the Iraq War, which is an antecedent variable affecting both public opinion in Turkey and American policy toward Turkey. If this is the case, pro-American public opinion and the amount of military aid are not causally related to each other.

Another problem in the book is the absence of time order between the independent and the dependent variables. According to the data Sadik provides, pro-American views among Turkish citizens changed simultaneously with changes in US policies toward Turkey; as the relationship between public opinion and the

US military aid in 2002-3 shows. In order to establish causality, however, an independent variable must occur prior to a dependent variable. Thus, there should be a time gap between a change in public opinion and a change in aid. Sadik's analysis violates an important criterion for causal explanation.

There are other factors that influence American image in Turkey, such as the motion to pass the Armenian Genocide bill in Congress, the US policy towards the PKK (the Kurdistan Workers Party) in northern Iraq, and the overall condition of the Trans-Atlantic alliance. Although Sadik treats these as "intervening factors" in this book, it seems to the reviewer that these contextual factors have far more rigorous impacts on American image in Turkey than military assistance, economic aid, foreign direct investment, and bilateral trade. During the 1960s and 1970s in Turkey, when socialism and anti-imperialism were widespread among urban intellectuals and university students, there was a negative, rather than positive, relationship between US policy toward Turkey and public opinion toward the United States: those leftists were against the development of a closer tie between Ankara and Washington. When there is a rising anti-Amer-

ican sentiment in a country, the increase of military aid and economic engagement with the recipient country can escalate anti-American public opinion rather than improve America's image as Sadik suggests. Thus, contextual factors can completely change the direction of the relationship between public opinion toward the United States and U.S. foreign policy.

In this short monograph, Sadik attends to an interesting and important question on the US-Turkey relationship. As he accurately claims, scholars should pay more attention to the American image held by ordinary citizens in Turkey because public opinion has become an important determinant of Turkish foreign policy in recent years. Sadik also touches upon a rarely examined relationship in the literature: US foreign policy and public opinions toward the United States in foreign countries. Thus, the implication of this book is relevant to US foreign policy making as well. Although Sadik's data analysis and causal explanation suffer from some problems, which this review describes above, *American Image in Turkey* is a timely contribution to the literature on the US-Turkey alliance.

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Russian Eurasianism: An Ideology of Empire

By Marlene Laruelle

Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008, 276 pages. ISBN 9780801890734, \$60

'Eurasianism' is a relatively new concept in Russian history, and not one that appeals beyond a fairly narrow circle. The argument goes back to the turn of

the last century, when, looking for a Russian identity, one or two scholars, headed by a Prince Trubetskoy, discovered their Asiatic roots. Here lay temptation. Was