
Military Innovation in Türkiye:

An Overview of the Post-Cold War Era

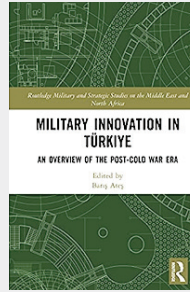
Edited by Barış Ateş

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Reviewed by Arda Mehmet Tezcanlar, Turkish National Defense University

With the advent of Türkiye's emergence as a regional power actor, its underlying causes become a matter of inquiry in studies of International Relations and military sciences. Any overlap between these inquiries becomes a diverse study methodologically when scholars of both international relations and military studies analyze this causal phenomenon in their own terms. As a result, it is a complex task to produce a well-written academic book. However, the contributors to *Military Innovation in Türkiye* have succeeded in putting together such a treatise in an interdisciplinary form.

Before reviewing the contents of the book, it is important to point out that the topic of military innovation does not contain mere explanations about the evolution and development of weapon systems. More than that, it is a matter of making decisions on what and how to manage a change in ways of conducting offense and defense for a national strategy with military and civilian domestic participants. The military demands what should be changed. The civilians appropriate the change. Since it is a matter of national defense, conflict among these actors is out of the question; it is rather expressed by discord. Cooperation or discord between civilian and military participants is dependent not on principles, but on premeditated techniques. Success develops through careful planning, along with informal but well-intentioned goodwill in



consultative relations among the participants.

The book's first chapter is reserved for the philosophical foundations of Turkish military innovation by Özgür Körpe. He argues that the mentality behind Turkish military innovation comes from a kind of

pragmatism that emerges in society at times of upheaval and crises. However, Körpe fails to either assert how this pragmatism is reproduced among a group of innovators or describe the quality of crisis conditions that affect these innovators to act pragmatically. In that sense, the philosophy behind the innovation that is suggested as pragmatism may have been an ex post facto notion of adaptive behavior within a social subsystem that may directly be related to social psychology.

Chapter 2, written by Tolga Öz, explores the evolution of the Turkish Defense Industry after the Cold War. Öz argues that the dynamics of the post-Cold War environment provided a pretext for the adoption of a defense policy against external challenges, similar to Türkiye's adoption of deterrence during the Cold War. This analysis also demonstrates that an aggressive stance in foreign policy does not necessarily require internal balancing. In that sense, Öz's examination of the Turkish defense industry and his elaboration of its internal processes combine a remarkable case that a nation and a state can adapt and develop its

industrial capabilities to counter asymmetrical challenges of terrorism and symmetrical challenges of its unsettled neighbors without changing its respectable and peaceful foreign policy.

Chapters 3 and 4, written by Mehmet Mert Çam and Kemal Eker, respectively, elaborate causes of domestic restraints and permissions in military innovations and what decision-making processes have developed to overcome these parameters. Çam elaborates on these restraints within bureaucratic politics, and how one man's ambition and determination against these restraints has succeeded in establishing the domestic production and operation of UAVs and UCAVs for Türkiye. Eker argues, in his chapter on the MILGEM project, that the social embrace of Türkiye's naval tradition can result in an industrial mobilization within civil-military cooperation when emerging requirements of Türkiye's naval strategy are challenged by embargoes or non-belligerence, as was the case after the Cyprus Peace Operation.

The transformation of innovation into a capability to implement a foreign policy is addressed in chapter 5 by Baybars Ögün. He bases his argument upon the structural realism that the diffusion of power from the military competition between superpowers enables secondary states to emulate or learn military know-how only if these states seek their vital security in terms of relative gains in their relations with superpowers. This argument demonstrates that states that have succeeded in imitating the diffusion of military power influence others by internal balancing as a socialization, that is an internalization of social norms.

Emrah Özdemir's chapter focuses on military innovation in the context of irregular war-

fare. In doing so, Özdemir compares British and American cases with the recent Turkish experiences, especially in Syria. As a result, he deduces that irregular warfare provides innovative opportunities for both conventional and unconventional means in times of military crises, which should also follow with organizational innovations. However, it is a fact that during times of strategic crises, the operational environment often becomes stagnant not due to a lack of capabilities, but rather due to the political will's inability to make decisive decisions based on accurate estimates. Once this has been achieved, the political will can allocate resources and provide the necessary authorization for organizational change. Subsequently, the satisfaction of demands for such change takes the form of military innovation. Unfortunately, the understanding of this fact seems to be lacking. In chapter 7, Tolga Ökten analyses the transformation of the Turkish Armed Forces in terms of tactical lessons learned during counter-terrorism operations. In doing so, Ökten concentrates on two elements of military power: firepower and maneuverability. Upon these two elements, he concludes that the lessons that have implied organizational transformation follow doctrinal changes, as he exemplifies this by the doctrinal shift from search-and-destroy to find-fix-fight-finish. However, Ökten limits his analysis of this transformation to horizontal levels of firepower and maneuvering rather than vertical levels of strategy, operations, and tactics. Therefore, the doctrinal change he exemplifies is not an innovation but a modification of infantry concepts of reconnaissance-in-force and advance-in-contact.

Chapter 8 belongs to Barış Ateş, also the editor of this book, who discusses the Turkish military innovation in terms of Türkiye's sociological leap to the post-heroic times. Ateş argues that societal dynamics are still intact

to motivate the military's profession and innovation, even against the increasing societal conformism. Even considering their progression into the post-heroic age, Turkish society willingly shows consent to any security policy or defense decision in exchange for their liberties and incomes. Despite this fact, Ateş warns us that post-heroism may cause unexpected hardships to military innovation in the future.

The last chapter is written by Dağhan Yet, in which he stresses that Türkiye's recent operations in Syria, and Iraq and its support to Azerbaijan during the Second Karabakh War have created non-kinetic effects, which have dominated the information environment that Türkiye's adversaries take part in. However, he fails to balance qualitative and quantitative data; for the former, he relies too much on interpreting events; and for the latter, he excludes numbers that would verify his interpretations of measurable facts, as seen in the only figure in the chapter.

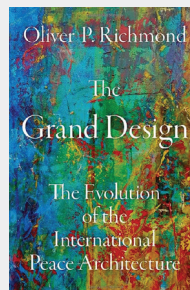
This book will contribute to readers in various ways. The students of international relations who will read this book will eventually realize that their discipline is not all about defining realist theory and its critical approaches but also about why and how the notion of power becomes operational with concepts of effectiveness or with acts of influence in a contemporary operational environment. Their tutors and scholars will become acquainted with how to critically challenge the current and 'hegemonic' literature of military innovation with different and indigenous interpretations. The military officers who are going to read this book will sharpen their judgments that will eventually contribute to their future staff duties and their decisions to imply operational measures, domestically and nationally. However, the main contribution of this book is that military innovation is not a magic bullet that will solve structural problems of Turkish defense policy, but it ought to be a tradition in military affairs that will innovate defense solutions for Türkiye.

The Grand Design: The Evolution of the International Peace Architecture

By Oliver P. Richmond
Oxford University Press, 2022, 307 pages, £47.99, ISBN: 9780190850449

Reviewed by Cavit Emre Aytekin, Kafkas University

Interestingly, *peace* is one of the few concepts in the discipline of International Relations (IR) that has not been conceptualized within a grand theoretical context. Manchester University Professor Oliver P. Richmond's most recent book, *The Grand Design: The Evolution of the International Peace Architec-*



ture, introduces the International Peace Architecture (IPA) concept to scholarship, which needs a structural and composite basis for peace-related concepts, theories, and policy analyses. IPA is an epistemological framework proposal that captures the evolving nature of peace over the history of the inter-