International Political Economy in Turkey: 
The Evolution and Current State of a Maturing Sub-field

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Abstract: Since its emergence in the 1970s, International Political Economy (IPE) has been one of the main components of the International Relations (IR) discipline in North America and Britain. The past two decades have witnessed a growing academic interest among Turkish IR scholars. This study explores the emergence, evolution and the current state of IPE studies in Turkey. Based on an original dataset, it examines the research dimension of Turkish IPE and presents a comprehensive overview of the thematic, theoretical and methodological orientations of the publications of Turkish IPE scholars. It also offers implications on the sociology of IPE in Turkey.

Keywords: International Political Economy, International Relations, dataset, Turkey


Anahtar kelimeler: Uluslararası Politik Ekonomi, Uluslararası İlişkiler, veri seti, Türkiye
Introduction

Since its emergence in the 1970s, International Political Economy (IPE) has been a core sub-field within the discipline of International Relations (IR) alongside IR Theory and International Security. What emerged as a sub-field in response to the debates around the hegemonic decline of the United States (U.S.) in the 1970s has gradually undergone a massive expansion to include international finance and money, trade, institutions, foreign direct investment, regional integration, environment, migration and many other issue areas. While the emergence of this field of inquiry can be traced back to the publications of Robert Keohane, Joseph Nye, Robert Gilpin and Stephen Krasner in American Political Science in the 1970s, in the British tradition, Susan Strange and Robert Cox laid the groundwork for what is today unanimously referred to as IPE.\(^1\) Over decades, IPE has gone beyond the American-British divide, and assumed a more pluralistic form with multiple research communities who have embraced a diverse set of theoretical, thematic, and methodological interests.\(^2\) This paper seeks to trace the progress of Turkish IPE through an examination of its scholars, these scholars’ publications, as well as the main teaching dynamics of this sub-field.

IR discipline has matured in Turkey over the past few decades. Turkish IR is now a vibrant research community, which encompasses hundreds of researchers who have produced a large body of scholarship on international politics. However, IR scholars in Turkey have been rather late in addressing research questions that lied at the intersection of politics and economics at the international level. Over the past few decades, several “state-of-the-art” articles have been published on the study of IR in Turkey. In these pieces, Turkish IR scholars have so far explored the field’s teaching\(^3\), scholars\(^4\), historical development\(^5\), and current

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Various other pieces have examined specific sub-fields such as security studies, terrorism studies, regional studies, and even the possibility of the emergence of a Turkey based-IR school. However, there is no study that addresses the historical development and the current state of IPE studies in Turkey. Based on an original dataset that we have compiled, this article aims at fulfilling this gap by offering a comprehensive overview of the evolution and current state of IPE research in Turkey.

The structure of the paper is as follows. We begin by introducing the Turkish IPE dataset, which this article is mainly built on. The second section offers a snapshot of the historical evolution of the IPE sub-field in Turkey. The third section examines the publications of Turkish IPE scholars in national and international peer-reviewed journals with a specific focus on thematic diversity, methodological orientation and regional/country concentration. The final section summarizes our findings and discusses their implications. Based on its findings, the paper also reflects on the sociology of the IPE sub-field in Turkey.

The Turkish IPE Dataset

In order to trace the development and explore the current state of IPE in Turkey, we built a comprehensive Turkish IPE dataset. The dataset includes information on Turkish IPE scholars’ educational background, areas of thematic expertise, and scholarly publications. For the purposes of this article, we were most interested in the articles that scholars of Turkish IPE published in national and international peer-reviewed journals. We also examined the main platforms through which Turkish IPE scholars disseminate their scholarly views and findings. Our dataset includes more than fifty scholars, who are academically active (i.e. publishing articles, teaching at universities or attending conferences) and who have published on topics that are within the boundaries of IPE. While the majority of these scholars are Turkish citizens, we have also included in our dataset foreign citizens who teach at universities in Turkey. We have also included those Turkish scholars, who teach outside Turkey, if they taught in Turkey at any period in their careers. Conversely, we left out any

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8 Korhan Cenker Demir and Engin Avci, “Turkish Terrorism Studies: A Preliminary Assessment”, All Azimuth, Vol 7, No 1, 2018, pp. 21-44.
Turkish citizen who has never taught or been affiliated with an academic institution in Turkey. Finally, we had to exclude researchers who have not yet received their Ph.D. degrees for practical reasons.

One of our most important findings is that no Turkish IR scholar publishes solely in the sub-field of IPE. Therefore, we decided not to filter IPE scholars exclusively, but rather include all scholars who have published on any IPE subject. In addition, we have examined IPE articles that have been published in leading international IR and Political Science journals, regional studies journals and Turkey-based IR journals. For the former we have included several leading Political Science and International Relations journals covered in Thomson Reuters Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI). As for domestic journals, we covered two journals covered in SSCI, *New Perspectives on Turkey* and *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, and *METU Studies in Development*, a leading inter-disciplinary journal that focuses on developmental issues since the early 1960s. This has enabled us to have an overview of subject distribution among IPE articles written by Turkish scholars. For a scholarly work to be considered an IPE piece, it must have an international scope and incorporate political as well as economic dimensions. In other words, we followed Benjamin J. Cohen’s definition of IPE to address “the complex linkages between economic and political activity at the level of international affairs”.\(^\text{11}\) We have therefore excluded many articles that are political economic in nature, but do not have an international angle. We have also excluded articles that examine the international economy, and therefore fall within the sub-field of International Economics, but lack a political dimension.

**Development and Evolution of IPE in Turkey**

As leading IPE scholar Benjamin J. Cohen argued “in the United States, during the first decades after World War II, almost all work on international political economy had come from leftist economists. Most focused on dependency theory, emphasizing the uneven development and inequalities of the world capitalist system”.\(^\text{12}\) Similarly, we can trace the origins of IPE in Turkey back to the studies of development economists. IPE was introduced to Turkish academia mainly by Marxists economists, who examined world affairs through the “Core-Periphery” dichotomy during the Cold War. These scholars largely dealt with a series

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\(^{11}\) Cohen, “The Transatlantic Divide”, p. 197.

of IPE issues such as the international division of labor, re-distributional policies\textsuperscript{13}, economic development\textsuperscript{14}, and liberalization in the age of neoliberalism\textsuperscript{15}. In these years, prominent Marxist-oriented economists, who taught at the Middle East Technical University (METU) and M"ulkiye (Faculty of Political Science at Ankara University), were the pioneers of publishing and teaching in the sub-field of IPE.\textsuperscript{16}

Recent decades, however, have witnessed a shift from the dominance of Marxist economics to non-paradigmatic Political Science and IR research. Today, no theoretical school is dominant, and Turkish IPE is thematically oriented and mostly puzzle-driven.\textsuperscript{17} The majority of Turkish IPE scholars are affiliated with departments of International Relations, although there is also a considerable number of scholars from Political Science and to a lesser extent Economics department. This shift from economics-dominated IPE towards IR-dominated IPE in Turkey also demonstrates a consistence with the evolution of the field in core countries such as the U.S. and UK. With regard to the development of the American School of IPE, Cohen points out that “economists effectively abdicated after the baby’s birth, leaving custody to the political scientists. Despite the fact that much of the earliest work in the field was actually done by economists, IPE to this day remains a peripheral interest in most economics departments”.\textsuperscript{18} However, while this development took place in the U.S. and Britain as early as the 1970s, Turkish IR scholars have caught up with this trend only about two decades ago.

The main reason why Turkish IPE followed the evolutionary steps of IPE in the core countries, but have done so with a considerable time lag, was that an increasing number of Turkish scholars received their PhD degrees from abroad in the past two decades. What is striking about the educational background of Turkish IPE scholars is that the vast majority of them have PhD degrees from foreign universities. As Figure 1 shows, 46 out of 60 scholars in our dataset hold foreign PhDs, while the remaining 14 scholars received their degrees from

\textsuperscript{14} Korkut Boratav and Oktar Türel, \textit{“Notes on the Current Development Problem and Growth Prospects of the Turkish Economy”}, \textit{New Perspectives on Turkey}, Vol 2, No 1, 1988, pp. 37-50.
\textsuperscript{16} According to Eri\c{n}ç Yeldan, these scholars do not self-identify as scholars of IPE. Authors’ conversation with Eri\c{n}ç Yeldan, Ankara, May 2018.
\textsuperscript{17} In contrast to IPE research, Marxist analyses have sustained their salience in explaining neoliberalism and the political economy of authoritarianism in Turkey. For a recent example, see Ismet Akça, Ahmet Bekmen and Barış Alp Özden (eds.), \textit{Turkey Reframed: Constituting Neoliberal Hegemony}, London, Pluto Press, 2014.
\textsuperscript{18} Cohen, “International Political”, p.37.
Turkish universities, mostly from the Middle East Technical University (METU) and Koç University. As the chart below indicates, British universities have been at the forefront in awarding doctoral degrees to Turkish IPE scholars as more than one third of the scholars in our dataset (21/60) hold their PhDs from British institutions.

![Bar Chart: Countries from which Turkish IPE Scholars Hold their PhDs](chart.png)

**Figure 1:** Countries from which Turkish IPE Scholars Hold their PhDs

As this chart implies, the development of IPE in Turkey is closely associated with studying abroad and bringing knowledge back home. Rather than having homegrown characteristics, IPE in Turkey owes too much to this phenomenon for its historical development as well as its current state. Even more interesting figures emerge when we examine scholars of Turkish IPE, who received their degrees in the 1980s and the 1990s, the infant years of the sub-field in Turkey. 12 out of 14 Turkish IPE scholars, who obtained their doctoral degrees in the 1980s and the 1990s, hold foreign PhDs, and again overwhelmingly from British and American universities. Interestingly, 7 of these 14 scholars have PhD degrees in Economics. Starting in the early 1990s, those who hold foreign PhDs had contributed to the field by both introducing IPE-related courses to their respective universities and supervising graduate dissertations in the sub-field of IPE.

This brings us to another very interesting dynamic that is not observed in American or British IPE but is specific to Turkish IPE. Our dataset reveals that no scholar in Turkey solely specializes on matters confined exclusively to the study of IPE. Contrarily, Turkish IPE scholars devote their scholarly efforts to publishing in other areas such as comparative
political economy, Turkish foreign policy, and Turkey’s domestic politics to name a few.\textsuperscript{19} The recent years have witnessed that several graduate students, with degrees from Turkish universities, emerged as scholars of IPE. This may be interpreted as a sign of the growing educational opportunities in this sub-field in Turkish academia, and of the relative increase in the numbers of IPE scholars with PhDs from Turkish universities, particularly, compared to the foreign-PhD-dominated 1980s and 90s.

The last decade has also witnessed the emergence of several academic communities with expertise on International or Comparative Political Economy (CPE). The most institutionalized among these is the Turkish (International) Political Economy Society, TPES. Established in 2013, TPES organizes annual workshops that brings together scholars from the fields of IPE, CPE, and comparative public policy.\textsuperscript{20} Respectively, the themes of the TPES workshops have been as follows; “The Political Economy of Contemporary Turkey” in 2015, “Politics in Hard Times: Emerging Markets after the Global Recession” in 2016, and “Political Economy, Governance and Policymaking in Tumultuous Times: Turkey in Comparative Perspective” in 2018. To our knowledge, there is no research center devoted to the study of IPE or the global economy in Turkey. The Center for Research on Globalization, Peace and Democratic Governance (GLODEM) located at Koç University in Istanbul hosts academic workshops and seminars with IPE content. Recently, GLODEM has become a partner of the Sheffield Political Economy Research Institute, a leading academic research center located at the University of Sheffield in the UK.\textsuperscript{21} Marxist-oriented Karaburun Science Congress (\textit{Bilim Kongresi}), which has gathered since 2006, has also addressed IPE issues such as labor, class, capital, and technology in its panels and discussions.

Finally, we would like to note that the percentage of women in our dataset is well-below that of their male colleagues, corresponding to 30 percent (18 scholars out of 60). Among Turkish IPE scholars who received their PhDs before 2000, the representation of women was almost the same (4 scholars out of 14). It is worrying that we have not witnessed a change over time for the better in terms of gender balance. Moreover, the percentage of women IPE scholars’ publications in international journals is proportionate with their gender

\textsuperscript{19} One remarkable example is Kemal Kirişçi, whose article “The Transformation of Turkish Foreign Policy: The Tise of the Turkish Trading State”, published in 2009, is the highest-cited article as of writing. In May 2019, Kirişçi’s seminal article had 155 citations in the Scopus database. In a conversation with authors, Kemal Kirişçi stressed that he did not see himself as a scholar of IPE. Throughout his academic career, Kirişçi mentioned he has never taught IPE courses, and extensively published on international migration, refugee issues and Turkish foreign policy.

\textsuperscript{20} See TPES, “Who are we?”, \url{https://tpes.sabanciuniv.edu/who-are-we}, (Accessed on 8 May 2019)

\textsuperscript{21} GLODEM is directed by Caner Bakır, a scholar of IPE and public policy.
representation; however, only 8 (20%) out of 39 IPE articles published in Turkey-based journals have been authored or co-authored by women.

**Publications of Turkish IPE Scholars**

This section examines the peer-reviewed publications of Turkish IPE scholars. Our dataset includes IPE articles published by scholars of Turkish IPE in leading international and Turkey-based peer-reviewed academic journals. For the former, we covered journals in the Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI) from the date they started to be covered in the Web of Science or Scopus databases to the end of 2018. Of the international journals we have covered, *New Political Economy* and *Review of International Political Economy* are the two most well-known IPE journals. Other international journals that we have included in our dataset are the following in alphabetical order: *Comparative European Politics, Development and Change, Europe-Asia Studies, Foreign Policy Analysis, Globalizations, Global Governance, Government and Opposition, Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies, Journal of Common Market Studies, Journal of European Public Policy, Middle Eastern Studies, Pacific Review, Review of International Studies, South European Society and Politics, Southeast European and Black Sea Studies, Third World Quarterly, and Turkish Studies*. The three Turkey-based journals we have included in our dataset are *New Perspectives on Turkey, Uluslararası İlişkiler Dergisi*, and *METU Studies in Development (ODTÜ Gelişme Dergisi)*. In total, we found 108 articles published in 22 journals. Table 1 demonstrates the number of IPE articles that have been published in each journal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>International Journals</th>
<th>Number of Articles</th>
<th>Number of articles that examine Turkey</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Turkish Studies</em></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>New Political Economy</em></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Review of International Political Economy</em></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Third World Quarterly</em></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>South European Society and Politics</em></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Middle Eastern Studies</em></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies</em></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Government and Opposition</em></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Southeast European and Black Sea Studies</em></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Comparative European Politics</em></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
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It is worth elaborating on the journals in our database that either are Turkey-based (METU Studies in Development, Uluslararası İlişkiler and New Perspectives on Turkey) or publish articles that are exclusively on Turkey (New Perspectives on Turkey and Turkish Studies). Although Uluslararası İlişkiler gives much greater weight to mainstream IR subjects and METU Studies in Development is overwhelmingly dominated by articles on economics, IPE articles have still been able to find a place in these journals. Nevertheless, the share of IPE articles in both journals are miniscule. For example, we found 22 articles with IPE content in Uluslararası İlişkiler from 2004 to 2018, which corresponds to a mere 4% of the entire number of research articles that appeared in the journal in this time period. In METU Studies in Development, among the 318 articles published between 2000 and 2018, we found 11 IPE articles which accounted for 3.45% of all articles. Turning to international peer-reviewed journals, we were especially curious about publications by scholars of Turkish IPE in Turkish Studies. From among the 372 articles of Turkish Studies that are covered in the Web of Science database from 2008 to 2018, only 14 fell within the remit of IPE. This accounted for 3.7% of the articles published in this time range in Turkish Studies.

We have found that Turkish IPE scholars are more prone to write in English than in Turkish even in national journals. Of the two national journals (Uluslararası İlişkiler and METU Studies in Development) that publish articles in both languages, articles written in

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Journal</th>
<th>Number of Articles</th>
<th>Number of articles that examine Turkey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Development and Change</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal of Public Policy</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Policy Analysis</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Globalizations</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe-Asia Studies</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal of Common Market Studies</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Global Governance</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Review of International Studies</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Review</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>69</strong></td>
<td><strong>47</strong></td>
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**Table 1.** IPE articles written by Turkish scholars in international and national journals
English constitute around 70% of the total. In addition, no IPE article in Turkish appeared in *Uluslararası İlişkiler* or in *METU Studies in Development* since 2012. Although the disposition to write in English might at first glance seem to be related to the dominance of scholars who hold foreign PhDs, we have noticed that homegrown IPE scholars also prefer to publish in English. This is an inevitable trend as getting published in journals that are listed in SSCI or are indexed in databases such as Web of Science and Scopus become an integral part of the promotion process in leading research universities in Turkey. Writing in English can also be associated with greater international recognition and reputation regardless of promotion concerns.

In terms of collaboration among Turkish IPE scholars, we have found that the corresponding percentage for the co-authored articles by Turkish IPE scholars in international journals is around 36%, whereas the co-authored articles by Turkish IPE scholars in national journals constitute 20% of the total number of 39 articles in our dataset. Even though the underlying dynamics in which Turkish IPE scholars are more encouraged to collaborate in international journals than in national journals are unknown to us, we believe that there is room for improvement in the co-authorship networks in Turkish IPE. That being said, that prominent IPE scholars in Turkey increasingly co-author with graduate students and young scholars of the subfield is a positive trend.

**Thematic Distribution and Methodological Orientation of Articles**

In constructing the dataset, we also aimed to find out the thematic distribution of the IPE articles published in SSCI journals written by Turkish or Turkey-based scholars. In order to do that, we coded each article according to their main themes. We gave each article maximum three themes. As Figure 2 below demonstrates, the political economy of finance has been the most popular theme explored by scholars of Turkish IPE. Accordingly, 20 articles addressed financial crises, while 11 articles dealt with matters related to finance/monetary policy beyond financial crises. While the financial crisis of 2001 in Turkey sparked the Bourgeoning of this literature, the global financial crisis of 2008-09 consolidated this trend. Scholars, who wrote on crises were mainly interested in exploring the international and domestic sources of Turkey’s financial crisis of 2001. The 2001 financial crisis was mainly interpreted as a consequence of Turkey’s rapid, but unsuccessful integration to the
global economy in the age of global neoliberalism.\textsuperscript{22} Turkish IPE scholars have also scrutinized the consequences of the 2001 financial crisis for the restructuring of the Turkish economy within the neoliberal paradigm led by the World Bank, the IMF and the European Union.\textsuperscript{23} As for the global financial crisis of 2008-09, however, the literature has mainly focused on the consequences of the crisis for Turkey’s macroeconomic performance and policy space for structural reforms.\textsuperscript{24} The divergence of Turkey’s response to the crisis from other emerging market economies was a phenomenon studied in detail.\textsuperscript{25}

Articles on financial crises were followed by 19 articles on development. We found that there was no specific thematic concentration of the articles that fell within the larger theme of development. While scholars of IPE of development have focused on a wide range of issues, there is convergence around the question of how the neoliberal paradigm has shaped developmental policies in Turkey. For instance, Şenses analyzed the role of international institutions in designing poverty alleviation policies throughout the globe, and the effective remedies for structural poverty in Turkey.\textsuperscript{26} Turkish scholars have also focused on the origins and promises of the post-Washington Consensus\textsuperscript{27} as well as its rather puzzling decline after the global financial crisis.\textsuperscript{28} More recently, in line with the intensifying critic of the neoliberal paradigm that was coupled with the renewed importance of the state for attaining national developmental goals, Turkish IPE scholars have examined neo-developmentalist policies that governments in Argentina\textsuperscript{29} and Turkey\textsuperscript{30} have implemented.


\textsuperscript{25} Öniş and Güven, “Global Crisis”.

\textsuperscript{26} Fikret Şenses, “Missing Links in Poverty Analysis in the Age of Neoliberal Globalization: Some Lessons from Turkey”, \textit{New Perspectives on Turkey}, Vol 38, 2008, pp. 61-81.


\textsuperscript{30} Mustafa Kutlay and Hüseyin Emrah Karaoğuz “Neo- Developmentalist Turn in the Global Political Economy? The Turkish Case”, \textit{Turkish Studies}, Vol 19, No 2, 2018, pp. 289-316.
14 articles in our dataset examined the political economy of energy through varying conceptual and thematic perspectives such as asymmetric interdependence, energy security, climate change, and pipeline politics. We noticed that the articles on energy overwhelmingly dealt with geopolitical or foreign policy issues. Several scholars approached the issue from a global perspective and focused on the effects of the transformation in the energy order on geopolitical rivalry in the 21st century. Scholars of Turkish IPE have also explored the importance of natural resources and pipelines in the Middle East and the Eastern Mediterranean regions for Turkish foreign policy and energy security. This body of literature has been particularly interested in uncovering the causes of and prospects for conflict and cooperation emanating from the rivalry over access to and the delivery of energy resources.

14 articles, on the other hand, addressed globalization, mostly with respect to its impact on Turkey in various issue areas. For example, Uzgören has explored the strategies that labor movements in Turkey have pursued in the face of globalization as well as the impediments for a united front vis-a-vis globalization and EU membership. Beyond the Turkish case, Tsarouhas and Ladi looked at the relationship between globalization and Europeanization through the interaction between the EU and the International Labor Organization.

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It is also worth evaluating the non-salience of several crucial issue areas for the study of IPE in Turkish academia. One surprising finding was the low number of articles published on international trade. Alongside international finance, monetary policy and foreign direct investment (FDI), international trade is one of the founding blocks of IPE in North America and Britain. In the past three decades, various aspects of international trade such as the world trade regime, protectionism, non-tariff barriers, and domestic interest groups on trade policy have constituted the core of IPE research worldwide. As Figure 2 highlights, we found only 8 articles that addressed international trade in our dataset. These articles mostly focused on Turkey’s trade policy, or the effect of trade on Turkey’s relations with its neighbors or the EU.\textsuperscript{37} One exception in this regard is Aydı̇n’s piece on Turkish citizens’ attitudes towards free trade and globalization.\textsuperscript{38} Similarly, we found very little interest on FDI and Transnational/Multinational Corporations (TNCs) among scholars of Turkish IPE.\textsuperscript{39} The very

\textsuperscript{37} Kirişçi, “The Transformation of”; Özlem Tür, “Economic Relations with the Middle East under the AKP – Trade, Business Community and Reintegration with Neighboring Zones”, Turkish Studies, Vol 12, No 4, 2011, pp. 589-602.


\textsuperscript{39} The only Turkish IPE scholar, who has concentrated on this theme is Caner Bakır from Koç University.
few examples on this body of literature have focused on the motivations and behavior of Turkish multinational corporations (MNCs) in international markets.\footnote{Caner Bakır, “Bargaining with Multinationals: Why State Capacity Matters”, \textit{New Political Economy}, Vol 20, No 1, 2014, pp. 63-84.}

Finally, and worryingly we found that Turkish IPE has not developed a big interest on climate change, global warming or environmental politics. While a good body of literature has addressed the issue from a domestic political economy perspective\footnote{See for instance, the various contributions in Fikret Adaman, Bengi Akbulut & Murat Arsel (eds.), \textit{Neoliberal Turkey and its Discontents: Economic Policy and the Environment under Erdoğan}, London: I.B. Tauris, 2017}, Turkey-based scholars are yet to explore the international dimensions of the 21\textsuperscript{st} century’s most pressing environmental issues. One exception to this trend is a special issue published in \textit{Uluslararası İlişkiler} in 2017 dedicated to the Paris Climate Agreement.\footnote{See H. Akin Ünver, “Paris İklim Anlaşmasına Teorik Yaklaşım: Neo-Neo Tartışması, Eko-Marksizm ve Yeşil Kapitalizm”, \textit{Uluslararası İlişkiler}, Vol 14, No 54, 2017, pp. 3-19; Volkan Ş. Ediger, “Enerji Jeopolitiğinin Uluslararası İklim Değişikliği Girişimleri Üzerindeki Etkisi”, \textit{Uluslararası İlişkiler}, Vol 14, No 54, 2017, pp. 45-70.} As the looming climate crisis will continue to shape the intellectual and academic debate globally, we can expect an increase in Turkish IPE’s attention to the issue.

All in all, our findings on the thematic distribution of IPE publications from Turkey demonstrate that scholars of Turkish IPE focus on a wide range of issues. We found that financial crises and developmental issues have attracted the biggest attention in Turkish IPE scholarship. This, we believe, shows that context matters in shaping the priorities and research agendas of scholars. In other words, crises and developmental issues have constituted Turkish IPE’s \textit{problematique}. Having gone through several severe financial crises since the 1990s, it is only normal for Turkey to have an academic community that accumulates scholarly expertise on this theme. Similarly, Turkey’s growing energy consumption and demand, and its geopolitical repercussions might have pushed Turkish scholars to explore the various dimensions of Turkey’s energy security. At the same time, it is rather surprising that Turkish scholars of IPE are yet to explore deeply themes such as trade, FDI, TNCs as well as IPE of gender and climate change. It is beyond the purposes of this article to find out the reasons behind this puzzling observation. In addition to these themes, newly-emerging topics in IPE such as sovereign wealth funds, knowledge, internet gambling, water, sports, and health have also been largely ignored by Turkish IPE scholars so far.
In terms of methodological orientation of the publications, our findings were even more surprising. Out of the 108 articles in our dataset, only 3 relied on quantitative tools.\(^{43}\) Moreover, no quantitative article has been published in Turkey-based journals in our dataset. Besides, no article in our dataset applied formal modeling techniques such as game-theoretic models or computational models. It is also interesting that even scholars with PhD degrees from American universities mostly rely on qualitative methods in their publications. Further scrutiny is needed to uncover the reasons behind this trend in Turkish IPE.

**Countries and Regions Covered**

We were also interested in understanding the regional concentration and country focus of the articles published by Turkish IPE scholars. We found that Turkish IPE scholars have overwhelmingly studied Turkey as a case in their respective articles. Out of the 108 articles we have in our dataset, 63 articles, which correspond to 58.3\%, were either single case studies on Turkey or a comparative analysis with Turkey as one of the two cases (see Table 1). That was followed by 19 articles (17.6 \%) that covered the EU countries or a region that is part of the EU such as Southern Europe or Central Europe. Most of the EU-related articles have put the EU-Turkey relations at the center, approaching relations from the perspective of integration\(^{44}\), financial globalization \(^{45}\), and core-periphery relations\(^{46}\). Interestingly, there are only five IPE articles on the Middle East, which examine widely varying topics such as energy\(^ {47}\), bilateral economic relations\(^ {48}\), trade\(^ {49}\), and gender\(^ {50}\). Most likely due to lack of

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\(^{49}\) Özlem Tür, “Economic Relations with the Middle East Under the AKP-Trade, Business Community and Reintegration with Neighboring Zones”, *Turkish Studies*, Vol 12, No 4, 2011, pp. 589-602.

regional expertise, concentration on regions such as East Asia and Latin America has been quite limited. Eurasia/Post-Soviet Space has also received little attention, despite the region’s geographical proximity to, and increasing political and economic interaction with Turkey.

Despite its rising status, China has been addressed in only four articles in our dataset. While Bulut and Lane compare the labor rights and standards in China and Turkey, Yağcı and Akçadağ Alagöz, in separate pieces, examine China’s Belt and Road Initiative and Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank from a soft power and smart power perspective respectively.\(^{51}\) Greece has been covered by four articles, followed by three articles on Argentina\(^ {52}\). Despite the growing ties between Turkey and Russia, we found only two articles on the latter\(^ {53}\). The two articles on the U.S. have focused on, respectively, the U.S. hegemony\(^ {54}\) and financial regulations.\(^ {55}\) Given their importance to the study of IPE in the 21\(^{st}\) century, the U.S. and China do not seem to be sufficiently covered in publications of the Turkish IPE scholars.

On the other hand, the share of articles in which Turkey was taken as a case has been considerably low in Turkey-based journals. To put it more bluntly, among 68 articles published in international journals, 49 (72%) articles have dealt with Turkey, whereas only 16 (41%) out of 39 articles published in Turkey-based journals have studied Turkey as a case (see Table 1). This fits an observation that Bilgin and Tanrısever made about a decade ago; in their domestic publications, IR scholars in Turkey tend to “tell Turkey about the world”, while in their international publications, they “tell the world about Turkey”.\(^ {56}\) In this sense, Turkish IPE scholars resemble a general trend in IR scholars in Turkey; having found themselves in a disciplinary division of labor and increasingly encouraged publishing in


\(^{55}\) Yağcı and Young, “Status Quo Conservatism”.

internationally peer-reviewed journals, Turkish IPE scholars concentrate on Turkey as a case study in international peer-reviewed journals as well as in their book projects. While in and of itself not a negative phenomenon, this still demonstrates that the majority of Turkish IPE scholars lack expertise on different regions of the world. The causes as well as remedies to this seeming weakness fall beyond the scope of this paper.

**International Scholars and Turkish IPE**

In order to have a fuller picture of the current state of Turkish IPE, we have also looked at the international scholars working in Turkish universities.\(^57\) We observed that international scholars in Turkish IPE have been following a similar pattern as their native counterparts in focusing on themes such as globalization and neoliberalism\(^58\), Europeanization\(^59\), and Turkey’s bilateral economic relations.\(^60\) In addition to solo-authored pieces, non-native scholars in Turkey have also co-authored articles with native colleagues.\(^61\) In addition to international scholars who work in Turkey, there are also foreign scholars who work outside Turkey, but have co-authored with Turkish IPE scholars. 12 journal articles in our dataset have been authored or co-authored by foreign scholars, most of whom are affiliated with universities outside Turkey. Nevertheless, they contribute to the field of IPE in Turkey by either publishing in Turkey-based journals, examining Turkey as a case from an IPE perspective, or collaborating with native IPE scholars. All in all, foreign scholars who are based in Turkey, and hence are part of the Turkish IPE community, as well as foreign scholars who collaborate with their Turkish colleagues have contributed to the internationalization of Turkey’s higher education, which is an integral aspect of the success recorded by several Turkish universities in the past few decades.

**A Glance at Books and Edited Volumes**

While this article has primarily focused on articles published in peer-reviewed journals, Turkish IPE scholars have also published books on a wide variety of themes. At a very quick glance, we found that similar to articles, books have also mostly focused on financial crises. An edited volume by Öniş and Şenses, for instance include a collection of

\(^57\) Our dataset includes 2 non-Turkish scholars who have taught at Turkish universities.


\(^59\) Ladi & Tsarouhas, “Globalisation and/or Europeanisation?”.


chapters on Turkey’s neoliberal restructuring and integration into the global economy after the 2001 financial crisis.\textsuperscript{62} A highly-read volume in Turkish, edited by Şenses, Öniş and Bakır, examines various country responses to the global financial crisis.\textsuperscript{63} More recently, Kutlay offered a comparative analysis of the impact of financial crises on the success and failure of reforms in Greece and Turkey.\textsuperscript{64} A volume co-edited by Tsarouhas addresses financial crisis in Greece, Spain, Ireland and Portugal.\textsuperscript{65} A forthcoming volume, edited by Parlar Dal, on the other hand, offers a broader view with chapters addressing Turkey’s foreign aid, economic relations with Africa, the Middle East and the Asia-Pacific, and position in the global political economy as an emerging power.\textsuperscript{66}

\textbf{Conclusion: Summary and Reflections on IPE in Turkey}

This article has demonstrated that Turkish IPE has evolved into a mature sub-field with a large number of researchers, who specialize on a wide range of themes in the contemporary international/global political economy. What emerged as a sub-field dominated by Marxist development economists in the 1970s has evolved into a non-paradigmatic and mostly puzzle-driven one with a wide range of thematic interests. This is in parallel with the evolution of IPE in core countries such as the U.S. and the UK. Unlike their American and British colleagues, however, Turkish scholars do not limit their research interests to study IPE exclusively, but also publish on other sub-fields such as security studies, foreign policy analysis or comparative politics. Our research does not shed light on the causes of this phenomenon, but we believe it needs to be studied in detail to better understand the sociology of the IR discipline and its sub-fields in Turkey.

Our examination of the articles published in leading international and national peer-reviewed journals has then encouraged us to explore the leading scholars of Turkish IPE. Ziya Öniş emerges as the leading figure in this regard. We found that Öniş was either the single or co-author of 16 out of 108 articles in our dataset, corresponding to 14.8\% of our pool of articles. Öniş’s articles were published in both of the leading international IPE journals,

\textsuperscript{64} Kutlay, “The Political Economies”.
Review of International Political Economy (RIPE) and New Political Economy (NPE). Öniş has been an agenda setter for Turkish IPE starting from the 1990s. While the majority of his articles have had a political economy dimension, Öniş has also published on a wide range of topics such as globalization, political Islam, the European Union, Turkish foreign policy, populism and emerging powers. Throughout his academic career, Öniş has also published or edited numerous books on various dimensions of Turkey’s political economy. Moreover, Öniş has played a crucial role in the teaching of IPE as well as raising IPE scholars by supervising master’s theses and Ph.D. dissertations, or by co-authoring articles with young academics.

Another remarkable finding of this study is that Turkish IPE scholars rely overwhelmingly on qualitative methods; of the 108 articles in our dataset, only 3 were based on quantitative methods. We have also demonstrated that scholars of Turkish IPE follow a general pattern that is also visible in other sub-fields of IR; while writing for English-language outlets, they mostly focus on the case of Turkey. One major reason for this is that scholars of Turkish IPE can best get accepted to be published in core international journals if they remain loyal to the division of labor in international academia that expects scholars from non-core countries to write exclusively on their own countries or regions. In addition, regional expertise in Turkish IPE is rather limited with the exception of EU studies. Turkey’s economic and political problems and priorities seem to have shaped Turkish IPE community’s research agenda to a significant extent. This is how we explain the salience of financial crises, developmental issues and energy in the articles and books that we have covered.

Our findings demonstrate that Turkish IPE should strive for widening its focus to mainstream IPE issues such as trade and investment as well as newer IPE issues such as gender and climate change. Secondly, we believe the methodological imbalance that favor qualitative methods should be remedied by training graduate students the tools of quantitative inquiry. Thirdly, graduate students and junior scholars of IPE should be encouraged to explore countries and regions outside Turkey. That could help ameliorate the rather excessive focus on Turkey in IPE scholarship, and contribute to the much-needed accumulation of regional expertise in Turkish academia. Fourthly, it might be too early to expect the emergence of a journal dedicated solely to IPE in Turkey. At the same time, our extensive overview of the current state of IPE shows that the share of IPE articles in Turkey-based journals, which is around 4% of the total number articles, is well below the potential. Finally, despite the

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mounting pressure on publishing in English and in international journals, Turkish IPE scholars should publish books and articles in Turkish.