

Abstract: The new geo-political role of Turkey "Strategic depth" as an international concept

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Because of the position of Turkey at the meeting point of geo-political areas, and due to the shifted area-powers-constellation in Eurasia, in the Near East and in North Africa, "geo-politics" is not only a central concept, but also a central criterion for a new "assessment of the situation" of Turkish interests. Here, the development from object (or passive protagonist) to a player in international politics is informative. Due to the changes in international patterns and to the new area-powers-constellation in the Middle East, Central Asia and North Africa, the geo-political, geo-strategic, geo-cultural and geo-economic situation of interests of Turkey has changed fundamentally. Since the end of the conflict between the East and the West, Turkey has been looking for its new position in Eurasia. As is shown in this analysis, the "strategy debate" launched by Ahmet Davutolu represents a challenge for both Turkish and international security policy. The plan of „strategic depth" presented by Davutolu is one thing, but its practical implementation is something completely different. The Turkish national "strategy debate" is interesting insofar as the same person played a decisive role both in its theoretical drawing up and in its operational planning. His guideline for the Turkish international and security policy was "maximum cooperation combined with peaceful neighbourly policy", and its credo "no conflicts with our neighbours and in our neighbourhood, neither", basically a "soft power" plan. Since this claim became known, three discerning objections have risen:

- Firstly, Turkey itself does not meet its own model, because the human rights are violated in the own country.
- Secondly, the Turkish international policy is more ambitious than it correspond to its means.
- Thirdly, the role of a regional power Turkey claims requires peace and stability in the country in order to be able to be functioning internationally. On top of that, the so-called Arabian Spring nearly caused Davutolu's to fail in central fields. For this reason a new strategy was drawn up by the Turkish foreign ministry, the essence of which was called "maximization of Turkey's influence" by Davutolu. With this new strategy of "flexible reaction" the Turkish neighbourly policy found its way back to political reality.

