

Great Power Politics in Greater Eurasia

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**Regional Alliances, Institutions,
Projects, and Conflicts**

Edited by Rahman Dağ and Özgür Tüfekçi

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Chapter One

Power Politics over Syrian Crisis

A New Battleground Among Global, Regional and Sub-National Powers

By Rahman Dağ and Özgür Tüfekçi

The twenty-first century has been experiencing labor pain for a new world order in which all of the states can posit themselves. Once changing dynamism at the global level is felt, ever actors ranging from great powers to non-state actors have been seeking, as much as possible, to extend their spheres of influence or gains. If not, they aim to keep what they already have. This protracted struggle for new positioning reflects itself in every national, regional, and global issues. In the first sentence of the conclusion of his prominent article, William C. Wohlforth (2009: 56) maintains that “narrow and asymmetrical capabilities gaps foster status competition even among states relatively confident of their basic territorial security for the reasons identified in social identity theory and theories of status competition.” What triggered systemic discussion of world order dates back to the 1990s when an embedded bi-polar world system ceased. Most of the academics and practitioners took the possibility and longevity of unipolarity on their agenda as there was no other state that could even close to American capability in terms of both hard and soft power (Ruggie, 1994; Posen, 2009; Harrison, 2004; Waltz, 2000). The First Gulf War and conflicts in Eastern Europe, Africa, and Latin America were all considered a testing ground for a unipolar system led by the US, and none of them ended up perfectly for the US. It is because of that that they have not been sorted out but are left protracted regarding core disputes are still intact and diplomatically unsustainable. These unresolved regional and national issues have resurfaced in the early years of the twenty-first century with the involvement of regional powers and sub-national actors (Deudney and Ikenberry, 2009). This time, regional powers have not preferred bandwagoning with great or superpowers but construct a relationship with their own regional agendas, which is quite the opposite in bi-polarity and unipolarity in the last decade of the twentieth century.

can be traced to all actors involved in the Syrian crisis. Possible reactions from other states have always been a part of foreign policymaking, and having an embedded balance eases the process but not having it causes sudden changes to test external dynamics. In this regard, the Syrian crisis can be considered as a testing ground for the coming multipolar world order, and it seems that neither fledgling world order nor a solution to the Syrian crisis finds its way out.

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