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# PROJENİN BAŞLIĞI

(Blue Black Sea: New Dimensions of History, Security, Politics, Strategy, Energy and Economy,)

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#### **PREFACE**

The book presents the opinions of experts and researchers from the Black Sea states with respect to the political, economic, social, and cultural relations in the region, and explains various dimensions of the present relations and problem areas from both theoretical and conceptual perspectives. While some articles in the book study existing and newly emerging institutions, others examine areas of disagreement and suggest peaceful resolutions for conflicts. Offering the reader a comprehensive approach that covers a wide range of affairs, we hope that this book will fill an important gap in international relations studies. While the added word "Blue" in the title indicates our shared aspirations for a clean and peaceful future, overall this book is intended to provide valuable academic assessments and share them with the wider world community, thus disseminating findings about the regional and global policies being

pursued in the Black Sea region today. Given that all regional issues impact globally, it is surely true that any steps towards peace achieved at the regional level are also highly significant for the world overall. To be able to attain a peaceful world order, we need to address each other's requirements and dissatisfactions with an attitude of understanding. To pursue further research projects that

examine related problems in an unbiased way, and to find sound and acceptable solutions for ongoing issues, is absolutely necessary. In this sense, I hope that this book will also serve the cause of world peace.

—Associate Professor Dr. Giray Saynur BOZKURT

#### INTRODUCTION

We are living through an extraordinary period and the Black Sea region has not been exempted from this. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union and the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, two decades ago, the Black Sea region has gradually passed out of the sphere of influence of the Russian state.

With the end of the Cold War, the USSR collapsed and left the United States as the only superpower. Though the Russian Federation, successor to the USSR, is still a great regional power that is trying to regain its former global status, it so far has insufficient weight to counterbalance US power. Meanwhile, this geopolitical power gap creates new opportunities for other regional and global actors. The fifteen former Soviet republics have been faced with radical movements linked to ethnic and religious fanaticism. While the whole world has been affected by these events, they have struck most firmly at Central Asia, the Caucasus, and the Black Sea regions.

Today we can observe that further changes are brewing, and that important developments are taking place in the Black Sea region. The coastal states of Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine, and Georgia, and the wider Black Sea regional states of Moldavia, Macedonia, Albania, BosniaHerzegovina, Croatia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia, are increasingly siding

with the Western world and turning away from the Russian Federation.

The importance of this development becomes more obvious when we remember that until recently these states were either members of the former Warsaw Pact or acting under the influence of the Soviet Union. The term "Greater Black Sea Region" encompasses the countries situated in the corridor that links Asia to Europe as well as those situated in the transportation zone of the Caspian energy sources to the west

(Albania, Serbia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan), in addition to the standard countries of the Black Sea. Both the energy resources in the region and the energy transport lines used for these energy resources to the West have increased the importance of the Black Sea. In addition, the so-called Colour Revolutions have started a new power struggle around the Baltic, Black, and Caspian Seas. The United States and Russia, as well as other global and regional powers and coastal states and institutions, are competing for influence over the strategically prominent Black Sea region. The strategic rapprochement with the Western world is likely to produce a new Black Sea, one which will be part of the Euro-Atlantic zone, the European Union, and NATO. Such a geopolitical shift in search of identity will have significant repercussions for the future of the states involved, and also means that the Black Sea region will come into closer contact with two major powers in world politics in addition to Russianamely the United States and the European Union. The full implications of this rapprochement are not yet in sight. On the other hand, the security of the Black Sea is not just a matter for the region; it has global impacts, and directly affects the political and

economic security of the global powers—particularly the United States, which encourages and supports new democracies in the region. Their success, stability, and prosperity are all essential to the security and peace of the whole region, and thus also of the world.