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ORGANIZATION OF TURKIC STATES: OLD TURKISH IDEAS WITH MODERN TEMPLATES

Shaher Ismael Al Shaher

Associate Professor, School of International Studies, Sun Yat-sen University, Zhuhai Campus,
China

Email: shaher@mail.sysu.edu.cn

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ABSTRACT:

Turkey today is in a state of clash with several regional and international countries, even with its western allies. To the extent that there are calls for Turkey to be expelled from NATO. Likewise, it is in conflict with neighboring states in the Middle East, the Balkans, and the Caucasus, and clashes may occur with the Russians and the Iranians due to a historical conflict of interests, in addition to tensions with China. Turkey got involved in conflicts in Syria and Libya, and is getting ready for a new armed conflict in the Eastern Mediterranean, i.e. with (Israel, Egypt, Greece and Cyprus). This study proposes the following question: What is the aim of this aggressive Turkish policy? The paper concluded that the Turks are seeking to reconsider their post-World War I arrangements.

INTRODUCTION:

The First World War broke out between great powers (the German Empire - the Ottoman Empire - the Bulgarian Kingdom - the Empire of Austria and Hungary) in the face of the Allies (America - Britain - France - Greece and Japan ... etc.).

The First World War in 1918 ended with the defeat of the Central Powers, i.e. the defeat of the Ottoman Empire. Consequently, the victorious imposed their conditions on the vanquished, so they imposed unjust conditions on them from the viewpoint of the defeated states.

With regard to the Ottoman Empire, the Treaty of Sèvres 1920 imposed on it through dismantling and stripping it of all its former colonies and other strategic Turkish lands. Turks at that time felt very unjust, so Mustafa Kemal Atatürk led the war of independence against Greece. This war probably improved the negotiation terms for Turkey at the time, and thus the victorious countries re-negotiated with the Turkish state led by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and they reached the Treaty of Lausanne 1923 which led to the demarcation of the borders of the modern Turkish state.

Turks at that time accepted the Lausanne Agreement, which was better for them than the Sèvres Agreement, but it still meant for them an expression of the defeat of the Ottoman Empire. In 1926, Turks made the Ankara Agreement, which result that the **Mosul** province belongs to **Iraq** not to Turkey. (Al-Jazeera, 2016). That is, the Turks at that time accepted the exit of Mosul and the rest of the lands under the pressure of defeat and weakness, and they believed that in the future if they regained their strength, they would be able to reconsider these agreements then.

Nineteen years have passed since the Lausanne Agreement, and during these years Turkey became a part of the Western camp and a member of NATO. Today, Turkey sees that it has an “excess of power,” which means that Turkey is no longer the defeated one of 1918. Nowadays Turkey has a large economy in the Middle East with \$850 billion. (Dana, 2014). (i.e. it is larger than the Saudi economy, the Iranian economy, the Egyptian economy, and the Israeli economy...etc). (Kaddoura,2021).

Today, Turkey has great potentials such as industrial and commercial progress; therefore, Turkey feels economic superiority over the neighboring countries. Turkey also has the second largest army in NATO after the United States of America, and excels in the field of drone industry, which has become of great importance in the world today, with a population of 80 million people, and Turkey today has become a part of several international networks that play a role in arranging the whole international security.

Thus, Turkey is a main actor in the United States confrontation with China and Russia, and it is important for the European Union and for Russia, which made Russia seek to establish agreements with it in Syria, and even Moscow supplied it with S-400 missiles, which are very important for states in the Middle East, as well as in the Balkans and the Caucasus.

All this made Turks ambitious to play a greater role, and this idea was crystallized by Ahmet Davutoglu, the former Turkish Foreign Minister, Prime Minister and former leader of the Justice and Development Party, as he mentioned in his book: *Strategic Depth*, that Turkey should not be only a link between Europe, the Middle East and Asia, for Turkey today has the potential to become an international power. Thus, it should have policies that are independent from the United States, the European Union...etc.

Davutoglu have built this idea on the premise that Turkey should restore its former influence as an Ottoman Empire, which mean it should restore the countries that were under the Ottoman Empire. Therefore, the term "Neo-Ottomans" has been used for this group of the Turkish ruling elite, by other countries concerned about the new Turkish policies. The Greeks had used the word "neo-Ottomans" in the seventies of the last century when Turkey invaded Cyprus and occupied northern Cyprus which meant that the Turks had returned to their expansionist colonial behavior during the Ottoman Empire, which lasted for more than four centuries before World War I.

This paper deals with the topic of neo-Ottomanism and the tools to achieve it. The Organization of Turkish States and its importance as a tool for implementing the new Turkish policies. And the strategic dimensions of the Organization of Turkish States. The United States and give the job role to Turkey. The Organization of Turkish States and Political Messages to China. Turkish ambitions to increase its influence in Asia. And the position of Russia, Iran and the European Union on the Organization of Turkish States

First: Neo-Ottomanism and the Tools for Its Achievement:

This (neo-Ottoman) idea to be realized requires internal and external tools:

A- Internal Tools:

When Turkey's ruling elite wants to implement these policies, it will be in a state of conflict with the outside world, and a state of internal conflict with the Turkish society, which was brought up on the ideas of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk (national - secular), which sees Turkey as part of the Western world. Therefore, Erdogan and Turkey's ruling elite today are trying to change the Turkish collective consciousness to gather it around the idea of "neo-Ottomanism" and "new identity." This "new identity" will make Turkey a country with a clear Islamic character instead of being a secular state. Thus, Turkey must strengthen its relations with the Arab and Islamic world. (Oglu, 2011).

Over the years, Erdogan has been able to attract a large segment of Turkish society to his side. During the last hundred years, Turkish society has been divided into two prominent groups:

1. The Kemalist group (which believes in Mustafa Kemal Ataturk's ideas of identity and secularism).
2. The other group that believes in the unity of the Islamic nation, and which sees the importance of Turkey's return to the leadership of the Islamic world.

In December 2014, Turkey re-taught the ancient Turkish language, making it written in Arabic instead of the Latin language that Mustafa Kemal Ataturk had imposed in 1928. That is, since 2014, the Turkish language began to be written in

Arabic instead of Latin, which Erdogan saw as a major mistake that distanced Turkey from its long history with the Islamic world.

The Justice and Development Party also began expanding religious education. Thus, the number of Imam Hatip schools increased, bringing the number of students in 2018 to more than one million three hundred thousand students, after they were only fifty thousand students in 2003 when the Justice and Development Party came to power.(Bakir, 2013).

B.External Tools:

The most important of these tools are:

1. Alliance with Islamic groups particularly the Muslim Brotherhood because it is a very influential group in the Islamic world, and for the past eighty years, this group has been calling for the idea of an Islamic caliphate and rejecting the idea of the nation state. It differs here with the neo-Ottomanism, which believes in the strength and influence of the Turkish state, but this strength can only be achieved under the Islamic caliphate, and this is the mutual agreement between the two. (Al-Shabib,2006).
2. The alliance with the Turkish-speaking countries which are twenty countries, of which six are independent and the rest are not independent, but rather are republics and autonomous regions within other countries, including the Uyghurs in China.

Second: The Organization Of Turkic States Is A Tool For Implementing The New Turkish Policies:

The idea of establishing this organization goes back to the dream of establishing the so-called a "Great Turkey", which goes back to the era of the wars between the Seljuks and the Roman Empire in the eleventh century. It is the dream that the Justice and Development Party has always pursued, for they believe that these countries constitute a political and economic unity, and therefore must work to reach the cultural and monetary unity. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, five Turkish-speaking countries declared their independence: Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Turkmenistan. In those years, a new era began in Turkish foreign policy called the "Turkish Union from the Adriatic Sea to the Great Wall of China". (Kashlakji,2021).

In this context, Turkey provided assistance to the Turkish-speaking countries and supported them in solving their problems. In addition, summits of the heads of the Turkish-speaking countries were held, starting in 1992 in order to develop cooperation among the Turkish republics. Although important decisions were taken at the first meeting, relations between the Turkish republics did not develop at the required level.

The most important meeting in this regard was the one that was held in the Azerbaijani city of Nakhchivan on October 3, 2009; during which it was decided to establish the Turkic Council which had been proposed by the President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev in 2006, after the emergence of Turk nationalism, and their attempt to re-gather them, which was separated many years ago. Its official name is: the Cooperation Council of Turkish-Speaking Countries (CCTS), similar to the Arab League and the European Union. He took the flag in the middle of which there is the Islamic crescent as a flag for the Council, considering that all countries are Muslim (Akrisi, 2021).

The organization, of which Turkey, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan are its founding members, officially started its activity in 2010. Subsequently, the Turkic Council held summits in different cities of the member states annually and worked to enhance cooperation in the political, economic and cultural fields among the members (TRT, 2021).

The Turkic Council became stronger when Hungary joined it as an observer member in 2018, and Uzbekistan gained full membership in 2019. At the seventh summit hosted by Baku in 2019, the supportive statement of Turkey's Operation Peace Spring was adopted against the organizations it classifies as terrorist (PKK-PYD-YPG), and the Turkish Council became more apparent in the political arena. The Turkish Council also supported the operation launched by Azerbaijan in 2020 to liberate the Karabakh region and the seven surrounding areas from occupation. With the victory of Azerbaijan, the Turkish Council took the lead on a larger scale, and greater convergence was achieved between its members.

The Turkish-speaking countries changed the name of the Turkic Council to a name in line with their geopolitical strategy after they were meeting under the name «Turkic Council». At the end of the eighth summit, the 121-item "Istanbul Declaration" was published.

The eighth summit of the Turkish Council was of special importance. The summit was attended by the presidents of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, who are full members of the organization along with Turkey, as well as the President of Turkmenistan and the Prime Minister of Hungary, whose countries have observer status, furthermore, the name was officially changed to the Organization of Turkish States, and thus the organization was politicized and upgraded to a political union embodying at its core the rise of Turkic nationalism. "Turkic" is actually a historical and cultural concept. With the accession of Turkmenistan as an observer member, all the Turkish republics in Central Asia became members of the organization. There is no doubt that the participation of Turkmenistan, which has rich energy resources, will contribute to the strengthening of energy supply and economic relations.

The only Turkish country that is not currently a member of the organization is the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. Turkey looks forward to obtaining the support of members and observers to ensure the accession of Turkish Cyprus. The

final statement stressed the recognition of Turkey's request to invite the Turkish Cypriot population to participate in the relevant activities of the Organization of Turkish States. If the Turkish republics officially recognize the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus in the coming period, the latter may also join the organization.

The meeting focused on enhancing cooperation within the Organization and in the areas of energy, infrastructure and transportation, as well as the situation in Afghanistan and other regional and international developments. The platform offers leaders an opportunity to use their partnership for political consumption inside the Organization, gain some independence from the struggle of global great powers such as the United States, Europe, Russia and China, and build a regional diplomatic economy and security complex.

At the summit that was held, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan announced that the countries agreed to the document "The Turkish World Vision 2040", which will outline the future plan of the Organization's work, and which will restore Turkistan to its strong position in the international arena.

What Is Expected From The Organization:

- Forming a political-economic bloc in front of two very large blocs, the Russian and Chinese in the east, and the European Union and the United States in the west.
- The Silk Road will only pass through these lands, so these countries seek to increase their economic and tourism potentials. Through the Silk Road project, which intersects with the emerging Chinese role, which the United States fears and calls for its encirclement by besieging China.
- They want to turn it into an effective organization, so the former Turkish Prime Minister Bin Ali Yarzed was appointed as the head of this new organization.
- Continuity of work and cooperation among the countries of the organization, and work to issue a common visa similar to the European Union.
- These countries succeeded in helping Azerbaijan to liberate its "occupied territories" from Armenia.
- The organization announced that it will donate two and a half million Covid vaccines to Africa, Turkey will provide 2 million of them.

Third: The Strategic Dimensions Of The Organization Of Turkic States

The Organization of Turkic States owns a fertile lands that bring together the peoples of the Turkish-speaking countries in terms of language and geographical proximity to the ethnic and historical ties to strengthen brotherly relations between Turkey and the Turkic Central Asian countries and the Caucasus, where Turk is spread as a major nationalism, the total number of Turkish-speaking countries is more than 300 million people, constituting a large force, in a geography with an area of about 5 million square kilometers within the federated republics within the Russian Federation (Tuva, Bashkortostan, Yakutia, Tatarstan, Altai) and the East

Turkestan region in China, and as minorities in Crimea (Tatars), and the Balkan countries (the Balkan Turks), and Syria and Iraq (the Turkmen) (al-Beik, 2021).

The Organization Of Turkic States Has A Major Role In International Politics, For Several Reasons:

- Possession of energy resources.
- It has large and developing economies to some extent. The gross domestic product of the "Organization of Turkic States" is approximately 3.8 trillion dollars, the volume of mutual trade between its countries is about 20 billion dollars, and the foreign investment contribution to it totals 460 billion dollars.(Chidiac,2021).
- The number, type and ability of the population to work.
- The important strategic locations of these countries.
- The military and defense capabilities of these countries.

Economic And Commercial Cooperation

According to the “Turkic World Vision 2040” and the five-year strategy 2020-2025, which were accepted at the Eighth Istanbul Summit, the Organization of Turkic States seeks to achieve convergence of economic policies and related regulatory frameworks, achieve full trade integration, create a single investment space, and achieve digital integration for member states that emerge in the global policy through rich energy resources, growing economies, dynamic population, strategic locations, and growing economic capabilities. The Gross National Product of the Turkish republics is more than \$2 trillion and The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the Turkish Council countries is \$3.8 trillion with purchasing power parity. Mutual trade is \$20 billion, and foreign investment contributes to it with a total of \$460 billion (Bedeli, 2021).

The Political Aspect:

The Organization of Turkic States works to promote regional integration, mutual trust and friendship among the parties of the member states, to develop common positions on foreign policy issues, to coordinate actions aimed at combating international terrorism, separatism, extremism and cross-border crimes, and to strengthen legal cooperation. The institutionalization of the Turkic Council through transforming it into the “Organization of Turkic States” has implications related to the organizational and legal framework for the work of the new organization. While the Council was a cooperative advisory body whose decisions were not binding on its members, it has now become a regional organization aimed at achieving political, economic and defense integration, and its members are committed to implementing the taken decisions jointly. Moreover, there is another dimension to the recent change. By virtue of its transformation into an international organization, the Organization of Turkic States will be able to gain observer status at the United Nations and influence international policy more effectively.

The Military Field

The Organization of Turkic States seeks to exchange military experiences among its members through joint maneuvers, and Bayraktar agreement is considered to be the most important deal between Turkey and the "Turkish-speaking countries" among dozens of agreements and memoranda of understanding among the ministries of member countries and their relevant institutions, with the aim of strengthening cooperation between them, and the major turning point in relations between Turkey and the "Turkish-speaking countries" was the military support provided by Ankara to Baku, especially the drones, which showed the ability to resolve the conflict in Karabakh during 44 days between Azerbaijan and Armenia at the end of 2020 in favor of the former. This paved the way to strengthening Turkish influence at all levels in Azerbaijan to the deployment of Turkish forces there, but the new reality and the loss of Armenia's role in relation to Georgia, and the Ukraine's use of Turkish Bayraktar planes against the Russian-backed separatists, urged the fears of Russia, which sees the strengthening of Turkish influence in Central Asian countries as a threat to its historical influence in the region (Jamal, 2021).

The Social And Cultural Development Field:

The organization pays great attention to the field of technology and communication through expanding the scope of interaction in the fields of science, technology, education, health, culture, sports and tourism, and through encouraging interaction between the media and other means of communication among the countries of the Turkish world. The logo of the current edition of the summit of leaders of Turkish-speaking countries in Istanbul which is "Green Technologies and Smart Cities in the Digital Age" reflects the extent of the council members' interest in the field of technology and keeping pace with modern tools.

Fourth: The Importance Of The Organization For Turkey

The Organization of Turkish States is of particular importance for Ankara, which sees it as a strong motive to deepen its political, economic, security and military cooperation with the countries of Central Asia and the Caucasus, and to seek to balance the growing Russian, Chinese and Iranian influence linked to geopolitical changes in the region. Some important points can be identified as follows (Maher, 2021):

1_ Opening new markets, establishing economic partnerships with Central Asian countries, and establishing a common market for goods, services and investment in order to face the pressures resulting from the severe economic crisis, which is embodied in the depreciation of the Syrian Pound to levels recorded at 11.19 against the dollar on November 22, and the stability of the inflation rate in the tens digits, recording 19.25% during last August, and the rise in the value of debts to 109% within three years, recording 2026,802 billion pounds in June 2021, up from the

level of 969,940 billion pounds in June 2018, in addition to the high levels of poverty and unemployment to record 12.2% and 10.6%, respectively.

2- The presence of the organization helps Ankara establish logistical infrastructure, develop transport corridors and reach global markets such as China via the Turkmenistan-Uzbekistan-Kyrgyzstan road. The corridor provides an economic alternative to the railway linking Asia and Europe via Siberia, which transports shipments from China to Europe.

3- Saving Erdogan's popularity internally by gathering political support and tickling the growing internally populist, nationalist and extreme right-wing sentiments by presenting himself as a leader of the Turkish world, especially after the noticeable decline in the levels of popular support for the Justice and Development Party.

4- Stabilizing Turkish influence in Central Asia and the Caucasus by forming an alliance with Turkish-speaking countries based on common identity, language, ethnicity and religion, in a way that enhances its regional and international influence, and enables it to establish a political and military alliance to be a framework for regional integration parallel with the Eurasian Union and to contain the Iranian and Russian influence in the regions of the Black Sea and the Caucasus. (Aydin,2021).

5- Ankara has developed a defense industries program that has achieved relative progress, which requires more investments, entering into multiple manufacturing partnerships, enhancing defense exports and military training, especially since Ankara has training agreements with some Central Asian countries and Kazakh, Kyrgyz and Uzbek officers receive training within Turkish military academies in addition to joint military production programs, for example the program that Turkey and Kazakhstan started in 2013.

Fifth: The United States and Giving the Functional role to Turkey:

The current US strategy is based on the principle of "offshore balancing", a strategic concept used by the realist school of international relations. This principle describes a strategy in which a great power uses its favorite regional allies to stem the rise of potential hostile powers. Thus, the great country that seeks to achieve balance from the outside must first seek to transfer responsibility to the regional powers, and intervene only if the threat is greater than the ability of the allies in the region to deal with.

In light of the primary focus of the United States of America on containing China, the Biden administration needs to reduce direct involvement in the Middle East, which is a continuation of Obama's strategy of "going towards Asia", which failed to mitigate that engagement by entrusting "moderate Islam" in its Turkish version - Turkey is a member of NATO and establishes good relations with "Israel" - to carry out the mission of preserving US interests in the Middle East.(Amin,2013).

Thus, after the Obama administration failed to assign a single and main party in a divergent and intertwined region, such as the Great Middle East, the Biden administration is moving towards achieving the same goal, but by distributing roles and relying on a number of allies to do this task.

In application of the "offshore balancing" strategy, the United States is trying to maintain balance in Asia by using allied regional powers to restrain the growth of Chinese and Russian influence in the region. In view of the movement of Turkish diplomacy, the growing Turkish influence in Asia, the reconciliations that Turkey is making with countries such as Egypt, in addition to the closure of many Muslim Brotherhood offices and media stations in Turkey, it seems that the US is relying on a Turkish role for balance in Asia, on the condition that Turks preserve what they were able to gain from influence in the Middle East and North Africa.

Turkey Believes That It Is The Most Acceptable Country In Africa For The Following Reasons:

- Turkey does not have a colonial past in Africa, like France and Britain.
- There are cultural and religious factors that unite Turkey with many African countries.
- Turkey is historically and geographically closer to Africa than Russia, China and Brazil.
- Turkey is the third country in terms of providing unconditional humanitarian aid in Africa.
- Western concern about the escalation of the Chinese role.
- Turkey is freer than countries like Israel and Iran because of the relatively hostile environment or boycotts and sanctions.
- Turkey has practical experience in development and infrastructure issues.
- Turkey has security and military experience due to its presence in NATO.

Therefore, the US realize that dealing with China must be a mixture of cooperation, partnership, competition, and containment, and that any proposal that focuses on wars and Cold War-like strategic competition will not be acceptable to allies and partners. Thus, the ability of the United States of America to use the strategy of "offshore balancing" is based on benefiting from the Turkish strategic ambition for hegemony and the extension of influence in the regions of Asia.

Thus, the Turkish role (as a regional influence) plays the role of balancer to Russian and Chinese influence through the use of the natural space that Turkey possesses in Central Asia, the Caucasus, and Southeast Asia, provided that the United States intervenes when the Turks are unable to perform this role and the region is moving towards beneficial instability to China or Russia.

Sixth: China and the Organization of Turkic States:

Before talking about China's position on the Organization of Turkic States, it is necessary to provide a quick overview of China -Turkey relations in order to know the real context of the establishment of this organization, what political messages Turkey wants to convey to China, and what is the Chinese position on it.

China-Turkey relations have been tense since 1971 due to Turkey's position on the Uyghur issue, as well as some problems related to trade where a large number of Uyghurs reside in Turkey, which always declares its supportive position towards them.

After the anti-Chinese activities of the Uyghurs in the eighties, relations between China and Turkey stopped between 1990 and 2000, and then they improved with the arrival of the "Justice and Development Party" to power. However, relations weakened significantly again with the riots that broke out in 2009 in Urumqi as the Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan described the events as a "genocide" which prompted Beijing to cut ties with Ankara. (Hassan,2018).

Relations between the two countries developed a lot between 2010 and 2018. Perhaps Ankara's relations with Beijing witnessed the best stage in history when Turkey moved closer to the Sino-Russian front during this period, as the two countries exchanged high-level diplomatic visits and signed economic, cultural and educational agreements. By 2018, the number of Chinese companies in Turkey had exceeded 1,000.

Turkey is considered a strategic partner of China in implementing the Belt and Road Initiative. Ankara has expressed its support for the project on all platforms. In May 2017, President Erdogan attended the Belt and Road Forum held in Beijing with senior government officials, and assured China of Turkey's readiness to provide all kinds of support for the Belt and Road Initiative.

However, this friendship did not last, for on February 9, 2019, relations stressed again, after China was accused of killing the Uyghur poet Abd al-Rahim Heit, as the Turkish Foreign Ministry issued a harsh statement condemning China, but China denied this, and the next day published a video clip that showed that the Muslim poet was still alive which caused great embarrassment to the Turkish Foreign Ministry.

Despite all this, the Chinese authorities refrained from making any harsh statements and avoided interfering in sensitive Turkish issues, but what happened in the last months of this year made China take a different position. For the first time, China is talking about issues affecting Turkish politics especially the Kurdish issue. This was a response to Turkey's actions: on October 22, 2021, 43 countries, including Turkey, urged China to "ensure full respect for the rule of law" regarding the Muslim Uighur community in Xinjiang, and this was the first time that Turkey supported such an invitation which provoked China. (Dorsey,2022).

Seventh: Announcing the Organization of Turkic States and Political Messages to China:

The establishment of the Organization of Turkic States was announced on November 12 which is the day in which the first East Turkestan Republic was established in 1933, including part of the Xinjiang Uygur region, and the second

was established on November 12, 1944. This means that Turkey has chosen this particular day to send certain political messages to the Uyghurs in China that it will not abandon them and will provide them with support, which has raised political tensions with China where nearly ten million Uyghurs live.

In their meeting on November 17, 2021 Erdogan and the chairman of the Nationalist Movement Party, Devlet Bahçeli stood in front of the cameras with the "Turkic World Map". The map included Xinjiang; the homeland of the Uyghurs.

These successive and provocative incidents pushed China to act against Turkey, as the Chinese Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Geng Shuang, accused Turkey of violating human rights in Syria. Geng described Turkey's actions in northeastern Syria as "illegal". He said, "Since Turkey illegally invaded northeastern Syria, it has cut off the water supply service to the Allouk water station regularly."

Consequently, a violent argument occurred between Geng and Turkey's representative, Feridun Sinirlioglu. In response to these allegations, the Turkish delegate said: "His country will not learn from those who violate international human rights and humanitarian law." And he added that "the People's Protection Units (YPG) and the Syrian regime are repeatedly misusing the Alouk water station issue for the benefit of their malicious agenda," according to his claim.

On November 24, 2021, Erdogan made a statement in the Organization of Islamic Cooperation as he said, "We observe the situation of the Uyghurs and other Muslim minorities in China with great sensitivity. We expect that the OIC will show sympathy towards the Uyghurs in line with its founding goals." Beijing responded quickly. A day later, Geng Shuang criticized Turkey's air operations in Iraq at the United Nations and said civilians had been killed by the air strikes, calling for the respect for Iraq's sovereignty.

The Chinese movements have sent a clear message to Turkey that China will respond if Ankara continues to interfere in the Uyghur issue, and thus, Beijing will put Turkey's actions in Iraq and Syria on the international agenda. With China's increasing presence in the Middle East, Beijing may become a new and important player in the Kurdish issue which means that China-Turkey relations are likely to enter a turbulent period in the future.

Eighth: Turkish Ambitions In Central Asia

Since the 1980s, students of Fethullah Gulen have established many schools in Central Asia, as well as other neighboring regions. The main goal of the Gulenists was to restore Islam to these countries, so some former Soviet republics banned Gulen's schools. Education was one of the points of difference between Uzbekistan and Turkey-Erdogan even before the 2016 coup attempt, while the regime of late President Islam Karimov closed all Turkish high schools linked to Gülenists. (Rizk,2021).

With Erdogan coming to power in 2003, Turkey tried to expand westward, so it sought to join the European Union, which did not agree to its accession for several reasons. It believes that the main reason is that it is an Islamic state. Therefore, the Turkish foreign policy tools towards Central Asia shifted during the Erdogan era, and these changes accompanied Turkey's reorientation from the West towards Eurasia, and were linked to Turkey's internal political conflicts.

Central Asia was the second destination for official development assistance from Turkey. In 2020, aid amounting to 166.12 million US dollars was given, which is more than the total Turkish aid to Africa (102.64 million), and less than that provided to Europe (233.31). Ankara's assistance includes cultural, educational, academic, infrastructure and health aspects. (Rizk,2021).

After the coup attempt in 2016, Ankara through the "Education Institution" (Maarif Waqvi) seized the resources of the Gulenists in Central Asia, and the Turkic Cooperation and Coordination Agency, TİKA, and other intergovernmental institutions have become more important since then.

The Central Asian countries were rejecting Turkish influence, but with the withdrawal of the United States and NATO from Afghanistan, a vacuum and fear of instability occurred in the countries of the region, especially with the increasing role of China in Central Asia, and the geopolitical changes taking place. With Beijing maintaining its economic, military and political hegemony in the region, Central Asian countries are trying to establish close relations with parties such as "Israel", Pakistan and Turkey to create a balance.

Turkey competes with Russia in the South Caucasus and Syria, and enhance its image in Ukraine as a partner. Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan have already referred to Turkey as a "strategic partner". Uzbekistan became the fifth member state of the Council. Russia's power has increased in Central Asia, but the Russian language is losing its place in the region, and some countries are trying to defend their common Turkish heritage.

Under these circumstances, Turkey provides military aid to the countries of the region, as a Turkish-made Bayraktar TB2 aircraft was offered to Turkmenistan during the celebration of the 30th anniversary of independence, and Turkmenistan finally joined the Turkic Council.

Central Asian countries are deepening their defense ties with Turkey, and Ankara is trying to expand its influence in ways that were not possible in the 1990s. The relationship with the Turkic states can be beneficial to Erdogan at internally. The idea of nationalism gains more favor in Turkish society than the Islamic idea and it may lead to a rise in his popularity when the elections are coming, and create a homogeneous right-wing front.

Ninth: Turkish Initiatives To Increase Its Influence In Asia:

- "Asia Anew" Initiative

On August 5, 2019, Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu announced the "Asia anew" initiative, stressing that the approach of heading towards Asia again does not constitute a pivotal shift in Turkish foreign policy. The declared objectives of the initiative are to give greater importance to cooperation with Asian countries based on 4 main pillars:(Nicola,2021).

1. Improving relations with Asian countries.
2. Expanding the commercial capacity of the Turkish private sector with these countries.
3. Promoting academic cooperation.
4. Developing interaction between Turkish society and the local communities in those countries.

The Turkish expansion towards Asia is not new, but rather it has been going on since after the fall of the Soviet Union. It expanded in 2010, as Turkey opened new embassies in Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Brunei, Cambodia and Laos. In 2013, Turkey became a dialogue partner of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. In the same year, it joined partnerships with South Korea, Indonesia, Australia and Mexico, and subsequently became a sectorial dialogue partner for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

- "Middle Corridor" Initiative

In an attempt to become a key partner in the new Silk Road, Turkey launched an initiative known as the "Middle Corridor". The Trans-Caspian International Transport Route (TITR), known as the "Middle Corridor", is the development of a multilateral network for the transport of goods between China and the European Union, passing through Central Asia, the Caucasus and Turkey, and then to Eastern Europe, and also linking those geographical regions through Multiple modes of transport across the Caspian and the Black Sea. (Nicola,2021).

Turkey is marketing its own version of the New Silk Road initiative by planning to establish a regional railway network, starting from Turkish lands to Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and others), and passing through the Caucasus (Georgia and Azerbaijan).

Turkey's main objectives in launching this initiative are to make Turkish geography a primary point of contact to connect Europe with Asia, especially the Caucasus, Central Asia, East Asia and South Asia, and for Turkey to become a center of intersection between the "East-West" corridor and the "North-South corridor", and a center of attraction for regional cooperation in Eurasia.

Strengthening Multidimensional Connections (Nicola,2021).

Turkey is trying to deepen its political, economic and commercial relations with the countries of Asia, taking advantage of the natural space in those regions due to the presence of an overwhelming majority of the Turkish-speaking population in the region, and thanks to the historical ties dating back to the Ottoman era. Culturally and socially, many Turkish state-sponsored institutions have spread throughout the region. Moreover, Turkish public and private institutions, corporations, and humanitarian aid organizations also become more visible in Southeast Asia.

Turkey has maintained strong relations with Muslim-majority countries in Southeast Asia, Indonesia, Malaysia and Brunei through its membership and activities under the patronage of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and has expanded its ties in the ten ASEAN member states.

Tenth: Russia's Attitude From The Organization Of Turkic States:

There was a Turkish-Russian agreement that the presence in this region would not turn into the control of one of the two countries, because there are two races, the Russian race, the Slavic race, and the Turkish race, with its diversity. The Ottoman state, as a patron of Muslims, was defending Chechnya and Ukrainian Muslims. Turkey believes that Russia today is not strong to impose what it wants in this part of the region, as Russia is still losing parts of its territory, such as Ukraine. Therefore, Moscow sees in this organization a nourishment for the Turkish national feeling and Islamic affiliation, which will encourage the separatist tendencies among some nationalities in it.

Russia is also suspicious of Turkish academic and religious missions, and considers them "a threat to Russian nationalism and the Caucasus countries", and it is concerned and warns against the spread of the "Diyamet" and "TIKA" organizations, and believes that these two organizations "develop the Turkic national sense in the republics of the former Soviet Union."

In addition to these two organizations, an additional role is emerging for a modern Turkish charitable non-governmental organization, the "Turkish Youth Foundation", which was established in 2020 in Istanbul, as an alternative to the Foundation for Human Rights and Freedoms and Humanitarian Relief (IHH).

It offers educational scholarships for young people from the Organization of Turkic States to receive education in Turkish universities. Moscow considers that these scholarships hide other projects, all of which fall under the category of "supporting extremism", through "recruiting immigrants from the countries of the organization". All this is in order to invest these "recruits" in areas of geopolitical importance for Ankara, especially in countries such as Syria, Libya, Yemen and Iraq.

Although there is no official representative office of the "Turkish Youth Foundation" in Russia, Moscow considers that these projects are being implemented

and worked on by employees in other countries, such as Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan and Turkey itself.

Central Asia has always been an area of Russian influence, and therefore, the heavy Turkish involvement in the region will lead to a threat to Russian interests in Central Asia, so Russia has done:

1. Excluding Ankara from participating in the Moscow conference on Afghanistan: Because it considers it a representative of NATO, whose military presence in the region is strongly rejected by Russia.
2. Objection to the sale of Turkish weapons to Ukraine in 2020, including the Turkish “Bayraktar” drones, that after Ankara refused to recognize the legitimacy of the accession of Crimea to Russia and its rapprochement with Ukraine, and the two presidents exchanged visits during the last period. Ankara also participated in the "Crimea platform" in Kiev, in 2021, which was objected to by Moscow. Ankara also announced, in December 2019, that it had granted about \$12 million to the Georgian Ministry of Defense to reform the country’s military logistics after the recent war against Russia, which Moscow considered an infringement on Russian national security. Moscow also resented the continuation of arms deals and the export of Turkish military equipment to Central Asian countries; which threatens Russia's position as the first supplier of weapons to that region.
3. Work to obstruct the energy corridors that Turkey intends to establish; because Turkey's success in becoming a strategic corridor of energy supplies, would enhance its position as a gateway for energy transfer to Europe, and would lead to a decline in the strategic importance of Russian gas to Europe, especially in light of its rising prices globally, and the increasing political differences between Europe and Moscow.
4. The conflict of interests between Turkey and Russia in a number of strategic regions, including Syria, Libya and the eastern Mediterranean, and the increase in Turkish influence in the Balkans and the Caucasus. Therefore, Moscow seeks to provoke disputes to pressure Ankara and keep it away from Central Asia.
5. Strengthening Turkish influence in Central Asia will contribute to strengthening its relations with the European Union and the United States of America; because its geostrategic importance will double, as it will act as a political and military agent for NATO and Washington in the countries of Central Asia; which threatens Russian influence in the region.

Eleven: Iran's attitude from the Organization of Turkic Countries:

Iran is concerned about this organization and the growing Turkish role, this is because Azerbaijan has a problem with Iran. The northern province in northern Iran is called the Azerbaijan Province, and about 30 million Azeris live in it. In other words, the number of Azerbaijanis in Iran is greater than the number of Azerbaijanis in Azerbaijan itself, which is only 10 million.

During the summit, both Erdogan and Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev stressed the importance of the so-called Zangezur Corridor, a transport route that Baku

aspires to adopt through Armenian territory to connect the independent Azerbaijan mainland in Nakhchivan. For Turkey, this Corridor means not only a land connection with Azerbaijan, but also a gateway to the Caspian Basin and Central Asia, which is why it will not give up.

The Turks are fighting for the Zangezur Corridor to have an absolute center for all the goods that will go to Central Asia, the Caspian Sea, and Azerbaijan through Armenia. If the Zangezur Corridor becomes Turkish, this will be the end of Armenia, as the southern part of Armenia will be carved out. Turkey will dominate Armenia, and may have the same fate of Georgia, where the Turks first subjugated Ajaria, and then the whole of Georgia."

Iran is also concerned about Baku's relationship with "Tel Aviv", as Tehran has believed for years that "Israel" is using this relationship to spy on it through tools, such as surveillance drones, as well as the increase in Israeli intelligence activity in this country.

After the defeat of Armenia, Azerbaijan regained areas along the 130 km of its border with Iran, which Armenia had occupied in the 1990s. It also reclaimed part of the main highway linking Iran with Armenia via Azerbaijan, an important trade route to the Black Sea and Russia. Azerbaijan's decision to impose duties on trucks transporting goods to Armenia angered Tehran, which responded by conducting military exercises on the border with Azerbaijan. Then this dispute quickly took on a regional dimension, with Turkey announcing that it would conduct military exercises with its ally Azerbaijan in the Nakhichevan region. Iran also fears for its energy lines, in a region where pipelines shipping oil and natural gas to the West intersect.

Since 1994, BP has invested more than 70 billion dollars in energy and transportation development projects from Azerbaijan. The projects include a pipeline linking the production of the Caspian Sea with the Turkish port of Ceyhan. Turkey's strengthening of its political and economic relations with the Turkic-speaking countries will help it in the future to develop the terminal of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline to include Turkmenistan's oil and gas. This line will be a competitor to the proposed Iranian pipeline, which extends from the south of Iran's Pars field towards Europe through Iran, Iraq, Syria and Lebanon, to Europe.

Therefore, it is unlikely that the regional rivalry between Tehran and Ankara in the Caucasus will subside, as is the case in many other arenas. Russia desires to find a six-party platform that brings together, alongside Russia, Turkey, Iran, Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia, for regional cooperation. Erdogan had proposed the formula of six-party cooperation among the countries of the region, for several goals, including containing Iranian anger. But the proposal seems difficult to achieve, and needs to address the bilateral differences between these countries, before bringing them together at one table. There is a historical problem between Azerbaijan and Iran, as well as Azerbaijan and Armenia, and the same applies to Russia and Georgia.

In light of these facts, it is unlikely, in the foreseeable future, that the tensions between Baku and Tehran will subside. It is also unlikely that the regional rivalries between Tehran and Ankara will subside in the Caucasus, as is the case in many other arenas.

Twelve: European Union's position from the Organization of Turkish States:

The European Union needs this bloc to put pressure on Russia and China, which have a problem with the Uighurs, who are of Turkic ethnicity. The European Union also needs Turkey to help it prevent the arrival of refugees from the Middle East to Europe, as well as to cooperate in combating terrorism, as the European Union considers that Turkey separates it from the countries of the Middle East, where terrorism is currently spreading.

CONCLUSION:

These Turkish policies will cause a Turkish clash with all the countries worldwide because they want to change the map of the world that was drawn after the First World War, which will put it in a clash with Syria, Iraq and basically with all the countries of the Arab Mashreq (the eastern part of the Arab world), as well as a clash with Egypt, Greece, Libya, Russia, the European Union, the United States, as well as a clash with Iran and China. With reference to this Turkish project, it is welcomed by a large number of Muslims and herein lies the problem.

Therefore, Russia and China should be careful, and China should remain vigil against the spread of Turkic and Islamic nationalism that the Organization of Turkic States may lead to because the spread of such ideas can represent as inspiration for some extremist and separatist forces that have tried to divide China.

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