

inter

The compilation of featured articles on INSAMER English

Notional

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THE OTHERING OF
SRI LANKAN
MUSLIMS

DANCING
WITH THE CHURCH:
RELIGION-STATE
RELATIONS IN
RUSSIA

TURKISH
FOREIGN POLICY
IN TRANSITIONAL PERIOD

Turkey's Special Representative
for the Western Balkans

Why are the EU and Turkey
moving away from each other?

Operation Peace Spring and
the West's Love of PKK

Two Allies in the Black Sea:
Turkey-Ukraine Defense
Industry Relations



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If you care for an
Orphan, your
goodness lasts
a lifetime

Everyone smiles
if an Orphan
smiles

COST OF
OPRHAN
SPONSORSHIP
\$30



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EDITORIAL

Soon after we published InterNotional's first edition we received very positive and appreciative feedbacks. İNSAMER strives to direct public attention on the world with more focus on humanitarian and social perception. The developments in the MENA region for example, which we discussed in our previous edition, have once again demonstrated the necessity to voice out the regions' humanitarian and social aspects.

Once we are introduced with the abovementioned aspects of the World, it would naturally become critical to fathom the shaping of Turkish foreign policy. Henceforth in the light of the rapid global transformation and the uncertainties brought about by the global economic system, we decided to raise the issues regarding Turkish foreign policy in our second edition.

It is crystal clear that we are now living in a transitional time. Actors, actions, powers and needs in the international arenas change in a rapid manner. The most visible arena at the moment is the arena of alliance. So it would be fascinating to see how Turkey catches up with the global change through its foreign policy in order to maintain good relations with different regions and actors.

This edition presents various geographical regions and countries in relation to Turkish foreign policy. Zones from both East and West will be examined, particularly in terms of the significant development regarding the Peace Spring Operation and the changing concept of Turkey's security. We believe we could uncover and clarify issues that the West are misinterpreting, especially regarding Turkey's fight against terrorism.

Aside from analytic articles on Turkish foreign policy, this edition of InterNotional will also discuss topics on Muslim minorities, climate change, education etc.

These papers have been selected with our modest work and offered to you for a pleasant reading.

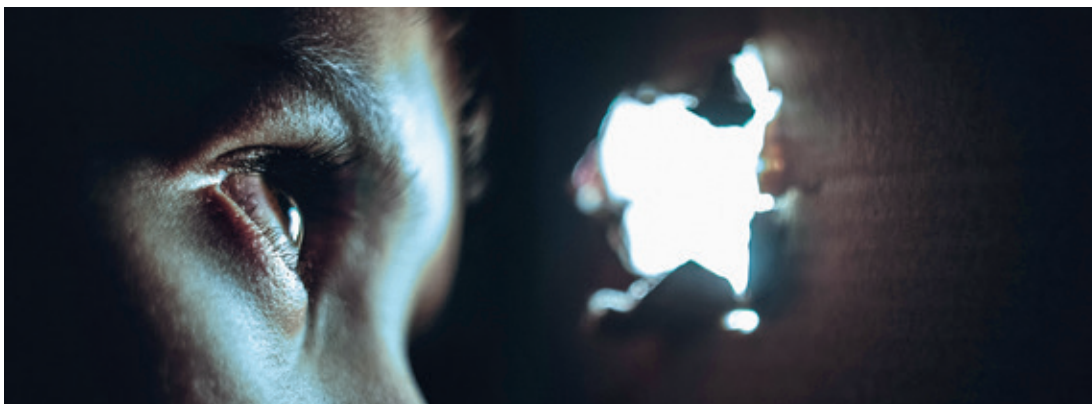


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JANUARY FEBRUARY MARCH APRIL MAY JUNE JULY
AUGUST SEPTEMBER OCTOBER NOVEMBER DECEMBER

ISLAMIC WORLD IN 2019

TURKISH SUMMIT

The 7th Summit of the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking Countries took place on October 15th 2019 in Baku. The Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States (Turkic Council) was established in 2009 as an intergovernmental organization, with the overarching aim of promoting comprehensive cooperation among Turkic Speaking States. The organization seems to increase its influence in regional geopolitics with the new members such as Uzbekistan



ISIS AFTER BAGDADI

ISIS leader Abu Baker Baghdadi died in a US raid on a compound near the village of Barisha in north-west Syria. The killing of Baghdadi will not only lead to the regression of ISIS, but the elimination of a factor that has long been the reason for foreign interventions in the Middle East will bring new moves by the regional forces for the new era.



KASHMIR

On 5 August 2019, the Indian government revoked the special status of Jammu and Kashmir through a series of amendments in the Parliament. This move by the Indian administration is seen as a sign that the long-standing rights violations in Kashmir will increase exponentially.



DEMONSTRATIONS IN MENA

In 2019 the Middle East societies are still demanding their basic human rights such as equality, freedom, justice and equal economic circumstances. Demonstrations in Algeria and Tunisia resulted in new wave of reforms; while Sudan, Lebanon and Iraq's demonstrations led to deep governmental changes.

DEATH OF DEMOCRACY

Imprisoned first democratically elected civilian President Mohamed Morsi collapsed during a court session and died on 27 th June 2019. The death of a former president in the courtroom was a striking development, demonstrating the extent of rights violations in Egyptian prisons.



EASTERN TURKISTAN

New materials reveal how Beijing's internment of Uyghur Muslims actually works and who is complicit. A series of leaked documents shows some realities of the Chinese government's Xinjiang detention centers, indicating what behind Beijing claims are voluntary training schools for Muslim-majority Uyghurs are in fact heavily policed re-education camps. Ethnic and cultural genocide of China on Uyghur Muslims continues harshly since 2017.

JANUARY **FEBRUARY** MARCH APRIL MAY JUNE JULY
AUGUST SEPTEMBER **OCTOBER** NOVEMBER DECEMBER

TURKEY IN 2019

OPERATION PEACE SPRING

Turkey launched a military operation across its border in Northeast Syria on 9 October 2019, securing control of a large swathe of territory in the region and establishing a "safe zone" to resettle some of the refugees in the country. Turkey's move, first is to prevent the establishment of a terror state right next to its own borders. In addition, it is a preliminary move against the intrigues of foreign forces to change the Syrian borders.



TURKISH-LIBYAN AGREEMENT

Ankara signed an agreement (on November 27) with Libya's internationally recognized government denoting new maritime boundaries between the two nations. The area spanning from Southwest Turkey to Northeast Libya cuts across a zone currently claimed by Greece and Cyprus, where plans for a future gas pipeline are in the works to link eastern Mediterranean gas fields with European markets.



TURKEY'S ECONOMIC GROWTH



Turkey's economy has entered a growth path, but it has also been affected by the trade war waged by the US and China. And then there is the political uncertainty that also contributed to problems within Turkey's economy throughout the year. The Turkish Statistical Institute (TURKSTAT) announced on Dec. 2 that in the third quarter of 2019 the country's economy expanded 0.9 percent year-on-year. In the first two quarters of 2019 the economy contracted 2.3 percent and 1.6 percent respectively, on an annual basis.

BALANCING EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

The Cyprus administration (GASC), Greece, Israel and Egypt established a multilateral agreement to establish the "East Mediterranean Gas Forum" organization excluding Turkey. Against such a hostile attempt to exclude her, the Ankara administration signed an exclusive economic zone agreement with Libya to explore natural resources in Eastern Mediterranean. The region remains a significant in the eyes of Turkey particularly in terms of natural gas and geopolitics.



CARING THE WORLD'S HEALTH



Within the scope of setting up a platform to supply data on international education, health, economy and technology, Turkey has been organizing Health Weeks in 20 countries since 2006. The program that had been carried out in Asia, Africa and Europe involved no less than 5,000 surgeries, 26,000 health consultations as well as training 5,700 foreign health personnel.

HOW MANY REFUGEES?

The latest UN data shows that there are now 70,8 million people worldwide forced from home, 25,9 million of which are refugees. Turkey alone has hosted around 4 million refugees until 2019.



Turkey's Special Representative for the Western Balkans

EMİN EMİN



While the US has appointed a Special Representative for the whole Balkans and especially to boost the dialogue process between Serbia and Kosovo, Germany and France have announced that they will also appoint their Special Representatives. But Turkey, with its close relations with the Balkan countries and who sees the Balkans as a strategic region still does not have any official Special Representative there.

In late August, the US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has appointed Deputy Assistant Secretary Matthew Palmer as his Special Representative for the Western Balkans. Two weeks later, the White House stated that its top diplomatic representative in Germany, Richard Grenell, would be its new special envoy for the dialogue process between Kosovo and Serbia. This is a process that has been stalled since November 2018, when the Pristina administration imposed a 100 percent tariffs on imports from Serbia as a retaliatory measure against Belgrade's aggressively campaign on the country. At the time Belgrade worked to persuade third countries not to recognize Kosovo's independence and made diplomatic moves to block Kosovo from joining multilateral organizations and sports bodies such as the International Olympic Committee, FIFA, UNESCO and the INTERPOL.

Following the aggressive US return to the region, the two largest EU countries namely France and Germany, also

announced that they would appoint their Special Representatives, particularly for the Kosovo-Serbia dialogue process. But the recent cancellation of the start of EU membership talks with North Macedonia and Albania, vetoed by France, will have arduous consequences between the union and the region. Once again, a veto done by a powerful EU country proved the union's failure to deliver its promises, which leads to the EU's undeniable crisis of identity.

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shared
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the Western
Balkan with
the
EU is no
longer seen as
an EU's ally,
but
rather as a
competitor.*

It is interesting how in the last few months the US who until recently had lost interest in the Western Balkans has taken a sharp U-turn to the region. The reason why Western powers have restored their interest in the Balkans cannot possibly be merely to promote the rule of law, democratic institutions and economic growth. Underneath the aforementioned slogans, it is safe to say that their action aims to prevent the increasing influence of significant actors in the region such as Russia, China and Turkey. For example in the analysis written by the recently-appointed US Representative, it is stated that the new

Special Representative should seek, again working with the EU, to reset the working relationship with Russia, China and Turkey in the region.

This shows that Turkey, despite its shared policies on the Western Balkan with the EU is no longer seen as an EU's ally, but rather as a competitor. This is why Turkey has to review its policies and political strategies regarding the Balkans and to be able to reciprocate any step taken by the EU and the US.

The first step that Turkey must take is to appoint its own Special Representative for the entire Balkans country or appoint one Representative for each Balkan country to start initiatives for the region. Turkey has proven its political success in the Balkans. For example Turkey has started a Turkey-Bosnia initiative with Herzegovina-Serbia and Turkey - Bosnia with Herzegovina - Croatia. In these Trilateral Summits, on top of overcoming existing issues among the countries in question, relations between those countries have also developed. But Turkey's internal problems such as the failed coup attempt in July 2016, problems surrounding the Syrian war and its refugee crisis that affected Turkey the most compared to any other country, have shifted the country's energy and interest away from the Balkans.

After six years of attempts and failure, the Turkey-Bosnia and Herzegovina-Serbia Trilateral Summit was finally realized this year during Erdogan's visit to Serbia.

The success of the Summit proofs that Turkey is capable to become an important actor in the region. But the Turkish political system has no tradition of appointing a Special Representative to a region other than the non-crisis regions.¹

There are regional divisions within Turkey's different Ministries. Yet we have to admit that such divisions would not create substantial political effect, since the Special Representatives appointed by the Western countries occupy the public opinion of the region, unlike the much lesser known presence of such divisions in the Ministries of the Republic of Turkey.

The appointment of a Special Representative to the region will show

Turkey's interest and seriousness about the Balkans. It will also ensure that Turkey's foreign policies there are carried out in a more coordinated manner. Because trying to develop good relations with any country in the Balkans would most probably cause problems with other Balkan countries with the same level of relations. For example, Albania and Bosnia – Turkey's strategic allies – were quick to protest about Turkey's visit to Serbia along with its 200 businessmen. On the one hand Turkey must maintain its relations with its strategic allies, but on the other hand creating more allies in the region is no less important for the sake of regional stability.

At the same time, Turkey should also use its good relations with international powers. Turkey from one side is "strategic partner" of the US and the EU, and from other side it recently has developed good relations with Russia – although they don't share the same goals in regards to the Balkans – which is known as a troublemaker in the region. Due to this expanded relations to the Eastern and Western powers, Turkey has a privileged status, which enables it to act as a mediator.

Furthermore, appointing a Special Representative will also contribute to the fight against FETO, a terrorist organization that is working against Turkey and has created a great damage to the country's diplomatic system. The Special Representative may also gain support from other countries in the region against the injustices imposed on the minorities in Greece, in particular the Turkish minority living in Western Thrace.

Currently there is a black propaganda against Turkey on the international media

*Creating
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stability.*



about its counterterrorism operation in Northeastern Syria. Turkey could benefit from conducting similar activities in the Balkan countries to create a positive global public opinion that Turkey is not interested in being an invader to another country, but it is more interested in eradicating terrorism in its own country as well as in its neighboring countries.

A few issues need to be taken into consideration regarding a Special Representative to the Balkans. Firstly, it should be underlined that the appointed Special Representative should not be of the Balkan origin. Because we have seen how politicians influential in Turkey's Balkan policies and who are also Balkan origin have implemented policies that strengthened only their circles in the region instead of gaining everyone's win. Instead of such Representatives, diplomats who are well acquainted with the region and have an equal proximity to all actors should be appointed.

In order to train such diplomats, they should serve at embassies in all Balkan countries from a young age to provide them with adequate knowledge about the region. For example, Special Representative of US Palmer comes to the Balkans as a diplomat with relevant experience in region. His first foreign mission was in Belgrade in 1993 and he speaks Serbian because his wife is a Serb.

Finally Turkey shouldn't decline the investments with which it is trying to finance and help the Balkan minorities and ensure the stability in region. Otherwise, Turkey's painstakingly built investments will be destroyed and to rebuild it would take Turkey more than 30 years, to say the least.

Considering all of these potential benefits, in this period, when Turkey's transition to a new system is taking place, such a leap of faith in its foreign policy would be fruitful.

End Notes

- 1 For example there are special representatives of Turkey for Iraq and Libya.

INFOGRAPHICS

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HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN JERUSALEM!

According to the 1947 UN Plan, an international administration had to be established in Jerusalem! However, today almost the entire Jerusalem is under occupation!

VIOLATIONS AGAINST PROPERTY!

- The sales of housing among Arabs are being blocked.
- Palestinians' homes are being destroyed by Israel!
- Palestinians are denied the right of inheritance

PALESTINIAN REFUGEES

- Around 8 million Palestinian refugees around the world are struggling to survive!
- UN resolution No 3236 says refugees have the right to return! Yet Israel is blocking the exercise of this human right!

ACCORDING TO INTERNATIONAL LAW, JEWISH SETTLEMENTS ARE ILLEGAL!

APPROXIMATELY
560 THOUSAND
JEWS LIVE
IN JERUSALEM!*

VIOLATIONS AGAINST FREEDOM OF FAITH AND WORSHIP

- Masjid Al-Aqsa is being systematically destroyed!
- Jews carry out raids in and around Masjid al-Aqsa!
- Excavation and demolition work continues in Harem!
- Muslims are banned from entering the mosque!

TORTURE

- Was legalized in Israel between 1987-1999
- According to the UN, Israel still uses at least 200 different forms of torture!

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*SOURCE: PEACE NOW



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Why are the EU and Turkey moving away from each other?

SELİM VATANDAŞ



A potential major conflict among the European states is undoubtedly not over yet. However, what we know from the European and world history is that conflicts have never brought peace and prosperity except for the political elites.

In the new century, no power is allied with another one until the end. Cooperation and competition are as closely intertwined more than we can imagine among political units. Despite all political frailty, it is not possible to move forward without the collaboration of political and non-governmental actors for the sake of people's welfare.

Today, the idea of a *United Europe* stands as a remarkable blueprint of a regional integration in the international system. There is no doubt that the European Union [EU] has taken its place as a spectacular collaboration practice in political history. But, nowadays the wind of populism seems to be the greatest test of the EU, as it is in many other countries all over the world.

While populist politicians fueled their idea of conflict and separation in order to consolidate their privileged positions, they are also undermining the motivations of EU member and candidate countries. Furthermore, the Union has many problems beyond populism such as its foreign policy, budget deficits management, Europhobia, NATO-dependency, migration, enlargement fatigue, populist elites and far-right movements. In fact, Turkey's situation is no different from the European Union.

Turkey has also faced many challenges especially in the last decade. All these issues have caused Turkey and the EU to focus on their own internal issues and have subdued their interest in each other. Today, neither

Turkey is focusing on the EU membership process nor the EU is concerned about Turkey's membership motivation.

After 2013, Turkey's security concerns, government's election-based legitimacy efforts and economic depression dominated Turkey's main problems that need solving. Besides, the European Union had gradually lost its credibility with its candidate countries in the last decade. During Jean-Claude Juncker, the European Commission president (2014-2019)'s term, the EU seemed to be too busy to motivate the membership of its candidate countries. Moreover, the Commission criticism against Turkey has become increasingly politicized, while the EU agents must adhere to the technical *acquis communautaire* accession process.

Security Challenges in Turkey

The European Union - Turkey relations have a memory of 60 years. In the accession period, the parties have witnessed many ups and downs, but the best period of relation was between 1999 and 2005. During this period, Turkey signed a number of reforms within the framework of the EU membership process. One-third of Turkish Constitution was amended and the anti-democratic laws were eliminated from the Constitution. Between 1999 and 2005, the European Union was the dynamic foundation of Turkey's political and institutional transformation; and Turkey made a remarkable progress in the field of human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

In 2005, Turkey formally became a candidate country of the EU. Yet Turkey's EU membership prospect worried the Turcophobic wings and Turkey's opponents began putting the Cyprus and Armenian issues on the table. Paradoxically, despite Turkey's EU candidate status, political

obstacles like the Cyprus and the Armenian issues locked down the EU membership process; and as a result Turkey gradually moved away from gaining its EU membership. At this point, the breakdown of the Cyprus and Armenian issue has caused both sides to focus on their own paths since 2006.

Turkey's foreign policy turned her face to the Arab uprisings that began in late 2011, but could not pin point what to expect from the people's demands of freedom. Turkey also focused primarily on its security challenges since 2013. In May 2013, hundreds of thousands of people protested Erdogan administration's unilateral policies in Gezi Park, Taksim, and the movement spread all over the country. Despite international criticisms against excessive use of power by the police, the government considered the protests as a threat to its existence and took survival security measures against the protesters.

The second issue was corruption allegations especially against four government ministers in the last month of 2013. In the morning of December 17 and 25, Istanbul and Ankara public prosecutors, who were alleged to be the members of the Gulen Movement or FETO – decreed as an illegal organization following the July 15 coup attempt in Turkey – arrested about 130 people on corruption charges. The government viewed the arrests as a jurisdiction coup attempt and began to take measures against the FETO structure in Turkey. The crisis then escalated between the government officials and the Gulen Movement participants and dominated Turkey's domestic policy until mid 2014.

The National Security Council adopted 14 different decrees and declared the Gülenist Terrorist Organization/Parallel State Structure [FETÖ/PDY] organization as a terror threat to Turkey's national security of in the period of February 2014 to May 2016.¹

The third critical security challenge of Turkey was FETÖ/PDY-led coup attempt on July 15, 2016. The infiltrators within Turkey's military attempted to suspend the Constitution, impose martial law and enforce a nationwide curfew. As troops and tanks blocked the traffic from Asia to

Europe over the Bosphorus Bridge, Istanbul, a number of government buildings including the Parliament, the Presidential Palace and the intelligence headquarters were heavily assaulted.²

The July 15 coup plotters not only targeted politicians and government institutions, they also did not spare the life of innocent civilians who took to the streets to protect the democratically elected government.³ Unlike other coups in Turkey, the July 15 coup attempt failed, thanks to the resistance of the Turkish people. But this had to be paid dearly with so many

human lives. As much as 249 people were martyred and 2,195 others wounded in the bloodiest coup attempt. The failure of the coup proved two important dynamics of Turkey. First is the current presence of the Turkish society as a prohibiting power against the coup. Second is the ability of the Turkish people to unite under the circumstance. The *July 15* was a rare global case where civilians could stop a carefully planned military coup attempt.⁴

After the failed coup the Turkish government declared a state of emergency

The July 15 coup attempt has been an important breaking point between the European Union and Turkey.



to take action against FETO as the leading group of the coup. The state of emergency lasted for two years and during this period many people were detained in Turkey. Although EU officials felicitated the overcoming of the coup, it criticized the unjust arrests and human rights violations that followed.

According to EU Commission, many decrees issued during the state of emergency were constraining certain civil and political rights. Since the introduction of the state of emergency, over 150.000 people have been taken into custody, 78.000 were arrested and over 110.000 civil servants were dismissed.⁵ The 2019 EU Commission report underlines the broad scale and collective nature of measures taken since the attempted coup under the state of emergency, such as widespread dismissals, arrests and detentions, which continued to raise very serious concerns.⁶

The July 15 coup attempt has been an important breaking point between the European Union and Turkey. The European Union officials did not respond immediately and made any formal visit to Turkey or publish an official statement condemning the coup attempt. The hypocrisy of the EU on the coup attempt caused it to lose its credibility on Turkey's democracy rhetoric. Besides, Turkey's post-coup extreme security measures have led Turkey to gradually move away from the EU norms.

Free-Fall of the Lira and Election Fatigue

As the economy deteriorated since 2016, Turkey began to focus more on its domestic issues and put its foreign policy on the

side. The Turkish lira fell as much as %50 against the US dollar and it was the world's worst performing currency in 2018.⁷ The purchasing power of the Turkish people has fallen by half and the ruling party had to respond to public criticism.

This has led Turkey to move away from export-based production and increase the country's dependency on imported goods. Policy makers failed to carry out economic reforms in time and construction-based investments did not produce value-added results. The shrinking economy caused the citizens to focus on only bringing home the bread.

Besides, within this period, the ruling party decided to go to the ballot box 9 times in the last 5 years [2013–2019] to consolidate its political legitimacy. The frequent elections and referendums were important for democracy, but while decision makers should find solutions to Turkey's economic problems, focusing on elections has developed negative public reactions against politicians and created the election fatigue effect in the country.

Deepening Challenges of the European Union

The reasons for the gradual neglect from pursuing the European Union membership target are not only due to Turkey's challenges, but because the European Union is also responsible in dampening the motivation of the candidates. Two of the most important reasons for the failing membership motivation are the EU's enlargement fatigue and absorption capacity.

Focusing on the EU's own self-absorption capacity has especially driven Turkey away from the very Union.

In 2004, the accession of 10 new members to the European Union brought a great burden for liabilities of member states. Enlargement fatigue is defined simply as a reason for the unwillingness of some Union members to admit new countries or as a symptom that the willingness was fading.⁸ Besides, the capacity of the EU's internal market and Eurozone were not strong enough to absorb new member states.

The rise of populism, Euro skepticism, Xenophobia, and racism were seen as the renewed challenges of Europe.

factor of stability in the Western Balkans especially in the early 2010, as well as the dynamism for political reforms in Turkey. Focusing on the EU's own self-absorption capacity has especially driven Turkey away from the very Union.

In addition, the rise of populism, Euro skepticism, Xenophobia, and racism were seen as the renewed challenges of Europe. The continent was particularly exposed to a large influx in 2015, and the migration triggered *phobias* within the borders. Unfortunately, the EU's full membership approach towards Turkey has changed in the struggle with the Middle East and North Africa migration flow; and the Council has put Turkey in a secondary instrumental position. Turkey also used

Syrian immigrants discourse as a trump card against the European Union.

Conclusion

Democracy, the rule of law, human rights and other fundamental norms can no longer be considered as alien values of the international community aside from our own. The European Union is also believed to play the role of discourse platform for the humanitarian values, whether the member states comply with it or not. For Turkey, the European Union is a kind *league* preference. In order to become a remarkable actor in international relations, Turkey has to consider the norms, policies and rules established by international and supranational organizations.

As for the EU, they should address its Commission's progress reports from increasingly becoming politicized and deviated from its objective. All in all, both parties should focus on common interests and values rather than a disjunctive rhetoric.

In the short term, no progress is possible unless political actors of both parties change, and no activity will happen until chronic issues are resolved in the Turkey - EU relations. The Armenian and Cyprus issue have iconic statuses for Turkey's EU membership accession. So, if the European Union wants to repair its relation with Turkey, it should definitely refrain from putting the Cyprus and the Armenian issue as a political obstacle for Turkey.

Today, there is no alternative supranational organization for Turkey aside from the EU. So if both parties want to advance in a win-win solution they should pay attention to their political sensitivities and look for new ways to realize Turkey's EU membership.



End Notes

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INFOGRAPHICS

www.insamer.com/en



ECONOMIC CONDITIONS IN ISLAMIC COUNTRIES AND WORLDWIDE



TOTAL INCOME (GDP) (Trillion dollar)

Islamic Countries in Total

19,4 \$

Worldwide in Total:

127 \$

PER CAPITA (GNP) *Based on purchasing power.*

Average of Islamic Countries:

11.137 \$

Average of Worldwide:

17.225 \$



UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

Average of Islamic Countries:

7,5

Average of Worldwide:

5,5

INFLATION RATE

Average of Islamic Countries:

6,5

Average of Worldwide:

5,5





Operation Peace Spring and the West's Love of PKK

RIAD DOMAZETI



Through its play victim and hero over ISIS, the PKK/PYD threatens both Turkey's border security and Syria's territorial integrity. Operation Peace Spring

launched by Turkey on October 9 as a reaction to this created de facto situation still continues. Clearing the region from the threat of terrorism, providing a safe return for Syrian refugees in Turkey, protecting Syria's territorial integrity, and rescuing the whole people of the region from the threat of terrorism are constantly emphasized as the purpose of the operation. Turkey bases its operation in northern Syria on Article 51 of the United Nations Charter; and its operation against the PKK/PYD is also carried out in this context.

Turkey launched its Operation Peace Spring as a reaction to the systematic threat that stem from Syria. Ankara had previously demonstrated its decisive stance through Operation Euphrates Shield and Operation Olive Branch to eliminate the terrorist formations intensified in its Southern borders. Because a non-state actor's control in Turkish-Syrian border, who carries out terrorism, is against the present status quo and customs of the international system, and it also composes a threat that would paralyze Turkey's geopolitics in the Middle East in the long run. The corridor to be built in Northern Syria via these non-state actors attenuates the communication channels in the Arab World and also has the potential to seriously harm Turkey's geopolitical maneuvers.

Speaking about the operations in the field, the increasingly condemning voices

from the West shows that the operation is given different definitions beyond being a counterterrorism operation. Aside from serious reactions in the USA and Europe, the Arab League, Iran and Russia also expressed their concerns about the operation and stated their disagreement.

The Western World, convinced with the idea that the YPG is the most effective ally in eliminating ISIS, appears to be concerned about the rise of ISIS' power since it may cause the YPG to loose control. In order to spread and consolidate this argument in Western public opinion, the PKK diaspora in the West as partisans of the

Fethullah Gulen's Terrorist Organization (FETO) and their local allies both in Europe and in the US, use the media efficiently. The media appears to be one of the most crucial mechanisms influencing the mentality of the contemporary Western public opinion. Monophonic and manipulative publications of international media institutions controlled by particular capital groups settles a negative perception towards Turkey.

The pro-PKK/PYD approaches created over the last five years been successful in manipulating the Western public opinion against Operation Peace Spring. As

if this sympathy is not enough, the West's historical memory also plays an important role in putting itself as an opposition to Turkey, hence making it ignorant to the terror threat that Turkey is facing. Europe's particular historical traumas due to the Ottoman conquests have not only evolved into a mere product of the subconscious, it actually entered into Europe's political realms.

It seems the Western media and its politicians are likely to forget the fact that Turkey is one of the most important members of NATO.

However, despite all the hostile formations, there is no doubt that the operation in the East of Euphrates disrupts the medium and long-term geopolitical objectives of regional and global powers. Other Western powers, especially the US who prioritizes Israel's security, is willing to establish a new order with States' administrations that would not constitute problems for them, not only in Syria but also in every country where the Arab Spring takes place. The most influential medium for this purpose is to create a puppet State via the YPG as the second 'Israel' in the region to provide the Western powers an opportunity to intervene whenever needed.

Nowadays it seems the Western media and its politicians are likely to forget the fact that Turkey is one of the most important members of NATO. Yet ignoring disinformation activities and terror threats targeting Turkey also contradicts the functioning of the international system created by the West itself. While the international balance of power seriously changes, the West has started to undermine itself due to its attitude towards Turkey. With its sentiments about Islam and about everything that is related to Islam, the Western public opinion is in a state of applause even for the military coup in Egypt.

Unable to speak clearly about the anger they have in their minds, the easiest argument the West has seems to be focused on the lies within the framework of "the Kurdish population in Syria". In Syria, where perpetual operation of perception is performed and false information is served relentlessly, many manipulations are carried out with modern communication tools. Again, unilateral publications produced

by the Western media aiming to create perceptions are instrumental in placing groundless and false information in the minds of the international community.

Taking the demographic structure of the region into consideration, contrary to the laid-out perception, the Arab population is

at least twice the amount of the Kurdish population in the entire East Euphrates, especially from Tal Abyad to Manbij. Approximately 70% of the population in northern Syria is composed of Arabs, 20–22% by Kurds and the rest by the Turkmen. Strategic and important cities such as Raqqa and Deir az Zor's Arab population is over 90%. On the other hand it is also a known fact that 50% of the Kurdish population living in Northern Syria escaped from the PKK/PYD-controlled regions where they have taken refuge in Turkey and Iraq.

The number of Syrian Kurds fleeing from the persecution of the terror organization and taking refuge in Turkey and Northern Iraq is estimated to be between 300 and 400 thousand. In other words, the Arab and Kurdish population of Northern Syria chose to escape from the oppressions of PKK/PYD.

It is understood that the PKK/PYD liquidated all the oppositional Kurdish groups after establishing its dominance in the region; it also aims to intimidate the people through assassinations and suppression. For instance, the assassination of the leader of the Kurdish Future Movement Party Mashaal Tammo at the very beginning of the Syrian War, or the forcing of Saleh Muslim (YPG leader)'s brother Professor Mustafa Muslim to take refuge in Turkey, clearly reveal the

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living in
Northern
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controlled
regions.*



approach of the terror organization. In short, during the period when the PKK/YPG had influential power in the region, it committed many persecutions from imposing heavy taxes, seizure of lands and properties belonging to Arab and opposite Kurdish populations, recruiting young people by force up to ethnic cleansing.

Looking at the issue from the perspective of the decisions made in last 15 years by Turkey, it is unrealistic to claim that Turkish foreign policy is focused on Kurdish opposition. On the other hand, Kurds in Turkey comfortably enjoy the rights and freedoms that they have never had before in the history of the Republic. With the various steps that have been taken to encourage the PKK to lay down arms following the peace process, soon it could be seen clearly that the real purpose of the PKK, who exploited the positive environment of the peace process, is not about to protect the rights of the Kurdish population but to guard its own interests in the global agendas. Simply put, their true objective is neither the Kurdish issue nor Human Rights but to change the regional geopolitical equation in accordance to the interests of some powers like Israel.

*Kurds in
Turkey
comfortably
enjoy the
rights and
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they have
never had
before in the
history of the
Republic.*

If the accusation against Turkey's Operation Peace Spring was real, then why didn't Turkey carry similar interventions in Northern Iraq since it has a de facto Kurdish regional administration? Turkey believes that a military intervention in northern Iraq is out of the question since good economic and political relations are established between both parties. Even with the fluctuation in the relationship between Turkey and Iraq -given the regional instability and security issues- Turkey is still the most important trade partner of the Northern Iraq administration. Since Iraq's Kurdistan Regional Government has drawn a clear line between itself and the PKK, the basis of the relationship between the two countries has improved.

To sum up, any accusation against Turkey for having some kind of Kurdish antagonism in the last 15 years is baseless. It is obvious that Operation Peace Spring does not target the Kurdish population. Moreover, it is crystal clear that the PKK's operation and existence in the region do not promise a happy future for the Kurds, because the truth is, it only tries to produce a puppet regime to serve the West's agenda.

INFOGRAPHICS

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PYD/YPG/PKK'S HOSTILITY TO KURDS

DEMOGRAPHICS

PYD/PKK have changed the demographics in favor of themselves.



SUPPRESSION

They do not give any Kurdish organisation the option to live except PYD.



MURDER

They assassinated Mashaal Tammo, the leader of the opposition Kurdish Future Movement in 2012.



ATTACK

They closed and set the offices of the Kurdish National Council on fire, and arrested its leaders.



EXILE

They even exiled Mustafa Muslim, who is a tafsir scholar and the brother of Salih Muslim, the leader of the organisation.



DISPLACEMENT

They displaced thousand of opponent Kurds in the east of the Euphrates.



ANTI-ISLAM

They aim to estrange Kurdish people from Islam through their Marxist-Leninist rhetoric.



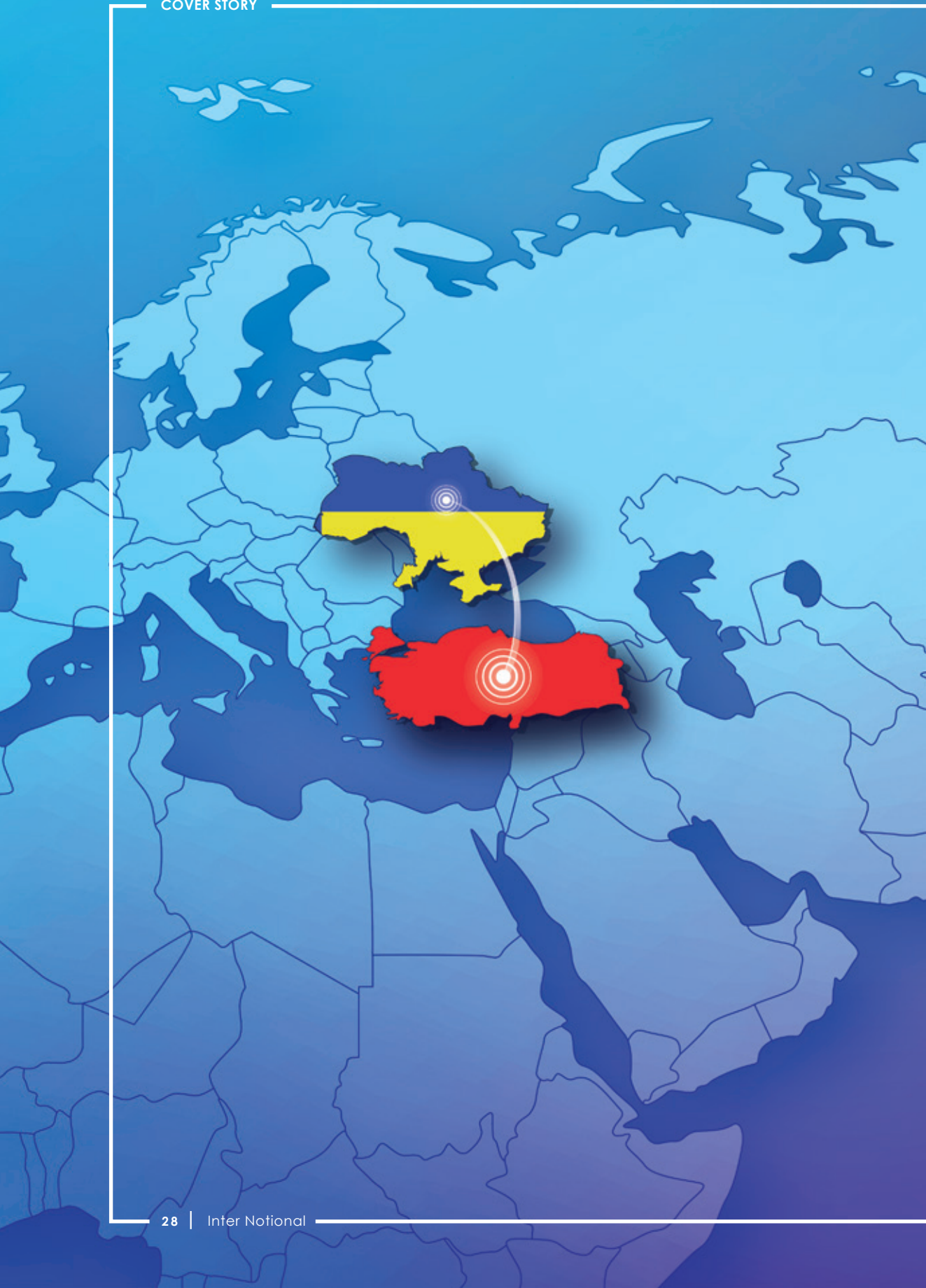
IMPERIALISM

They make the Kurdish youth, whom they influence via anti-imperialist rhetoric, an instrument for the policies and interests.



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Two Allies in the Black Sea: Turkey-Ukraine Defense Industry Relations

BURAK ÇALIŞKAN



It is important to note that the swiftly developing relations between Ankara and Kiev also touched the defense industry. Ukraine has been trying to modernize its military to adhere to NATO standards. Following the 2014 Russian invasion of Crimea, Ukraine stepped up its efforts to strengthen its military in facing any potential threat from its powerful neighbor. Henceforth, it is only natural that Turkey, being the second largest army in NATO and as the Black Sea's littoral state, had come up as an important actor.

Cooperation between the two countries has actually been around for a number of years. Ankara and Kiev had agreed in 2014 to pursue a number of joint projects, including that of the defense industry. In this process, joint production decisions were made in many areas such as warplanes, missile systems, aircraft engines, UAVs, radar production, armored vehicles, navigation and space projects.

The two countries' complementary objectives in the defence industry proved to be effective in relation to the previously mentioned decisions. Indeed, Turkey has made a significant progress in recent years in its defence industry as well as in its defence-related technology transfers. Meanwhile, its NATO allies have neither shared their defence technology, nor showed the willingness to cooperate with Turkey. Ukraine however has – inherited from the former Soviet Union – the knowledge and companies of defence industry. In this context, Turkey, who is trying to empower itself militarily and Ukraine, who is trying to modernize its armed forces, regard each other as a valuable partner.

Turkish and Ukrainian military industry representatives gathered in Ankara in 2015, where Ankara sent less than \$ 1 million of military ammunition to Kiev. In 2016, a strategic cooperation agreement was signed between the two countries in the field of defense industry. This was soon followed by Turkey's provision of \$ 4 million in

military ammunition and equipment to the Ukrainian Armed Forces.

In July 2018, Turkey and Ukraine conducted the first ever Turkey-Ukraine Defense Industry Cooperation meeting to accelerate their defense cooperation. The most significant outcome from the meeting was the cooperation protocol between Ukraine's state-own company Ukroboronprom and Turkey's company Aselsan.

A Cornerstone for Ukraine-Turkey Relations

In January 2019, Ukraine's then President Petro Poroshenko declared on social media that the country has signed a deal with Turkey regarding the Bayraktar's TB2 Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV). The purchase serves an important milestone for military cooperation between Ankara and Kiev.

The agreement included the delivery of six Bayraktar TB2 UAVs to the Ukrainian Army within one year. It also aimed to provide the systems and vehicles of three ground control stations in Ukraine. Ukraine announced that the delivery of UAVs and flight tests of Bayraktar TB2 were successfully performed in March. After Qatar, Ukraine became the second country to buy Bayraktar TB2 to other UAVs. Ukrainian delegations that attended the test flights for Bayraktar TB2 said they were impressed with its combat success and flight performance. The vehicles are purchased to fight Russia-backed militias, especially in Donbass.

Zelensky's Visit

Newly elected Ukrainian President Vladimir Zelensky made an official visit to Turkey on 7-8 August. Zelensky visited Baykar Makine's armed drone and its Research and Development (R&D)

facilities following his participation at the Turkey-Ukraine Business Forum and the Fener Greek Orthodox Patriarchate.

Zelensky listened to the details of the projects carried out in the previous administration within the Baykar's program framework; and he also had the opportunity to examine Baykar's new projects closely. Indeed, his stated wish to develop cooperation with Turkey in the field of defense industry proves how the Ukrainian President has taken concrete steps in this regard.

At this point, the joint company agreement between Ukrobonprom (Ukrpetrskport) and Baykar Makine was signed with the participation of Zelensky. This partnership company is expected to operate in the field of high precision weapons and aerospace technologies. The National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine also announced that the aim of the joint agreement is to produce modern weapons by bringing together the defense industry capacities of the two countries, which leads to the creation of many important projects in this regard. In this sense, what has been achieved previously gives hope for new, bigger and better projects.

Rising of Turkey's Defense Industry

Since mid 2000s in particular, Turkey with its accelerated domestic production activities in the defense industry has become an exporter in a short period of time, evident of its tremendous success.

According to Honorary Consul of Ukraine Gökem Şehsuvar, Turkey's success in defense industry technology has increased

the interest of other countries in these products. The agreements held between Turkey and Ukraine also demonstrates the value of Turkish brands. One of the leading Ukrainian security experts Maksim Gluşenko also uttered that Turkey made great progress in its defense industry in over the last decade; he also said that Ukraine needs to continue to work more closely with Turkey in this field.

In addition, it can be said that the problems that both countries have with Russia have served as a blessing in disguise in the development of Turkey-Ukraine relations. Tension did rise between Moscow and Ankara, especially over Turkey's downing of a Russian military plane in Syria back in 2015.

Despite the fact that Turkey and Russia are now in a normalization phase and are working together on Syria, the fact remains that the two

countries have disagreements and conflicts of interest in the Caucasus, Middle East and the Black Sea. In this framework, considering that Turkey and Ukraine are located at the south and north corners of the Black Sea, the geopolitical importance and interest of both countries become obvious. Regardless of how Turkey and Russia have to cooperate within certain aspects in Syria, Russia's influence in Southern Turkey (via its presence in Syria) can become a threat for many years to come. As such, a strategic partnership that Turkey develops with Ukraine has the potential to break Russia's lurking threat for Turkey (via its influence on Damascus) and reduce Russia's ability to maneuver in the region.

The problems that both countries have with Russia have served as a blessing in disguise in the development of Turkey-Ukraine relations.



Africa in Turkey's Foreign Policy: From Absense to a Notable Progress

SERHAT ORAKÇI





South Africa and Zambia were the last African destinations for Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's visit in July 2018. Since then Erdoğan has not paid any official visit to the continent. Amongst world leaders, Erdoğan is definitely the most frequent non-African leader visiting Africa. During his prime ministry and presidency he visited 27 African states. This fact alone indicates the depth of Turkey-Africa relations having gained momentum since 2005.

When one considered Turkey's modern political history since 1923, it can be seen that Turkey's diplomatic relations in Africa has only developed recently. A special foreign policy program called "*Opening up to Africa*" launched in 1998 was a first in Turkey's foreign policy. The program aimed to escalate Turkey's diplomatic and commercial presence across the continent in improving cultural and academic ties between Turkey and Africa. The program was engineered by the former Foreign Minister Ismail Cem and former Ambassador Numan Hazar. However lack of strong political support during that time made this ambitious program unrealistic.¹

After 2002 general elections Turkey's political atmosphere has improved for the first time after a long period of domination by unstable coalitions. AK Party (Justice and Welfare Party)'s victory demarcated an important twist for Turkey's role in its region as well as its foreign policy. With the new government, Turkey's diplomatic opening was focused on a multi-dimensional foreign affairs approach, covering previously less prioritized areas such as Africa and the Latin world.

It is a widely accepted fact that Africa has taken a special page in Turkey's foreign policy since AK Party came to power. Following a road map since 2005, Turkey has achieved so much in Africa and appeared an emerging partner to African

states. As it can be remembered, Turkey announced the "Africa Year" in 2005 and escalated its efforts in the continent in various dimensions. In a short time Turkey became a strategic partner to the African Union (AU) in 2008 and member of the Africa Development Bank (AfDB) in 2013. During Abdullah Gul and Erdoğan's presidency considerable number of African countries have been officially visited and in some cases firsts happened.

In the last 15 years a notable progress has been made in Africa. Nowadays Turkey has 42 embassies across the continent and Turkish Airlines flies to 54 destinations. Moreover, two Turkey-Africa summits were taken place in 2008 and 2014 and Turkey-Africa trade volume reached 20 billion dollars from scratch. Turkey has also become a development and humanitarian aid provider in African countries that need infrastructure, new schools and hospitals. It is also interesting enough that the largest embassy compound of Turkey is located in Somalia's capital Mogadishu and Turkey's military training compound was built and officially opened in the same city.

For academicians who are interested in Turkey's presence in Africa, what drives Turkey's Africa policy is the question that creates much debate nowadays. The answer to this question varies from the angle where one looks at the phenomenon. In related literatures one may find reasonable and absurd inferences altogether. For example according to Michael Rubin, Turkey's presence in Africa is just related to supporting terrorism.² Besides biased and speculative comments, reasonable academicians suggest that neo-Ottomanism, challenging the world order, achieving economic expectations, searching for new markets for Turkish products, balancing Europe, exploiting Africa's raw materials might be the real drives for Turkey's interest in Africa.

Frankly, it is quite difficult to explain Turkey's motto in Africa with just one

reason. One can likely notice that Turkey's approach to Africa has to be seen as multi-dimensional since diplomacy, trade, security, energy, aid and cultural affairs shape Turkey's presence in the continent. As it is well known, Turkey runs regional hospitals in Sudan's Darfur/Nyala and Somalia's Mogadishu; and the Maarif Foundation established by the Turkish Parliament Law in 2016 has involved extensively in Africa's education sector since the 15 July failed coup attempt. Moreover, the Turkish FDI is approaching 10 billion dollar of business target opportunities in the continent and as mentioned earlier Turkish Airlines' operations cover a wide list of destinations in the continent. Turkey's Africa policy has many dimensions and it seems appropriate to the new age modern political environment.

For me, Turkey's Africa policy can be evaluated in three separate fields: political, economic and socio-cultural. Economically, some aspects of Turkey's activities in Africa such as trade and direct investment are all related to economic expectations. Turkey as a regional power with a population of 80 million has a considerable amount of industrial production and Turkish producers seek new markets and investment opportunities not only in Africa but also in other regions. Africa with a population of 1.3 billion people presents new investment opportunities and it has a market value although the middle class of the continent is still weak and so is its purchasing power when compared to the world's average.

Politically, Turkey needs trustworthy allies and friends for cooperation in various fields that requires international cooperation such as migration, terrorism and security.

African countries have a considerable amount of vote potential in the United Nations (UN) and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). For Turkey, it is a very rational approach that it seeks strong diplomatic presence in the continent. Nowadays, Turkey's diplomatic missions in Africa cover more than two-thirds of the continent. As well recognized by the Turkish state, Turkey's need for cooperation with African nations escalated especially after the failed coup attempt on 15 July 2016.

Socio - culturally, Turkey is seeking to develop its cultural relations with Africa by using its historical past and commonness with the African culture that suffered under colonialism similar to the Islamic culture. For the first time in modern Turkish history, Turkey just recently re-discovered that the Ottomans has historical depth in the continent lasting from 16th to 20th Century. Long-time neglected historical ties

between Turkey and Africa has captured some attention and TİKA implemented projects aims in refreshing the Ottoman historical past in North and East Africa. Moreover, research centers and universities have started paying more attention to topics related to Africa.

I believe that the essence of Turkey-Africa connection lies around the communalities between both parties. That connection is highly related to common past experiences and resembling destiny. At the end of the day both Turkey and African nations are part of a global system dominated by unequal economic development and power sharing. Turkey and Africa have been suffering from similar wounds opened by colonial-imperial practices of the Western world for the last two centuries. For that reason

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“solidarity” becomes the key concept explaining the newly established modern ties between Turkey and African nations, as it can be seen from Turkey’s involvement in Somalia since 2011. Shortly, both parties are at the same pan of scale. For this reason, I think it is very meaningful that Turkey’s new policy for Africa started in 1998 just after the turbulence in Turkey-European Union (EU) during the mid-90s.

It is possible to reflect this fact in the statements of Turkey’s officials, such as the language that Erdoğan used during his Africa tours where he put extra emphasis on the colonial scars and exploitations occurred by the West in Africa. Obviously, in the imagination of Turkey’s officials, Africa is the victim of a colonial past and it is just a sleeping giant possessing enormous potential in terms of its demography, resources and cultural richness. It is also believed that for the rest of the century Africa may play a leading role in many fields if exploitation on the continent ends. This approach is definitely contradictory to how Africa has been seen by the West who is stubborn in changing its attitude towards Africa.

So far, by touching the continent in a positive way and adopting a visionary approach resulted in Africa’s much

appreciation for Turkey. While African students started preferring Turkey for their higher education under Turkey’s scholarship programs, the number of the African diplomatic missions in Ankara is also on the rise. According to the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 32 out of 54 African nations are being represented in Ankara and 4 more countries (Guinea-Bissau, Cameroon, Tanzania and Mozambique) are also planning to open their embassies.³ Furthermore, African airlines such as the Ethiopian Airlines and Bedr Airlines have regular flights to Istanbul. However, Turkey’s Africa policy faces serious challenges as well. I always think that Turkey’s economic and political stability is vital for Turkey’s long-term achievement in Africa. Investment, political vision, and even aids are all related to Turkey’s political and economic power and capacity. Unstable political atmosphere and weak economic indicators would bring negative effect on Turkey-Africa relations. For now, Turkey-Africa relations look like it stands at the level of short-lived stagnation due to Turkey’s involvement in the Syria crisis, FETÖ and poor economic performance; hence adjustments in its road map is needed to strengthen Turkey’s bigger presence in Africa after 2020.

End Notes

- 1 Tom Wheeler, “Ankara to Africa: Turkey’s outreach since 2005”, *South African Journal of International Affairs*, 18:1, 2011, s. 46.
- 2 Michael Rubin, “Turkey’s Africa Strategy Threatens to Breed Islamist Extremism”, *National Review*, 26.07.2019, <https://www.nationalreview.com/2019/06/turkey-africa-strategy-threatens-to-breed-islamist-extremism/> (17.09.2019)

- 3 “Turkey-Africa Relations”, Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs, <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkey-africa-relations.en.mfa> (21.09.2019)

INFOGRAPHICS

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NEO-COLONIALISM IN AFRICA

Colonialism continues with another face!

1st STAGE

**BETWEEN THE
16TH AND
19TH
CENTURIES
(300 YEARS)**

Westerners settled
in parts in Africa's
coastal areas,
stealing
humanitarian and
material wealth in
the continent
through the trade of slaves
and precious metals!



2st STAGE

1885-1965

80 years
after the Berlin
Conference
(1885), the
whole Africa
succumbed to
the occupation
of European
powers.



3st STAGE

**FROM THE
1990s UNTIL
PRESENT**

Even when the
countries in
Africa are
officially seen as
independent,
economic and
political
dependencies
continue in different forms.



WHAT ARE AFRICA'S DEPENDENCY INDICATORS?

- 1 Western companies control 80% of the African continent trade!
- 2 The amount of debt of African countries to Western countries is \$420 billion
- 3 African countries pay \$33 billion of foreign debt and \$11 billion of interest each year!
- 4 At least 12% of the African states' GDP goes to interest payments.
- 5 The "one percent" of Africa has at least \$1 trillion saved in Western offshore accounts.
- 6 The West only impose their own economic programs on the funds they provide to Africa.



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Shift in Turkey's Security Approach and Operation Peace Spring

MESUT ÖZCAN





Today, the lack of authority in countries such as Syria, Iraq, Yemen and Libya has led to the strengthening of non-state armed actors and terrorist organizations. The PKK terrorist organization is one of the structures that have turned this gap into an opportunity for itself in both Iraq and Syria. After the Assad Regime's withdrawal from North Syria due to the ongoing civil war, the Syrian extension of the terrorist group (YPG / PYD) which aims to gain dominance in the Turkish borderline has expanded its area of dominance to *Deir ez-Zur* by turning the instability in the region into an opportunity. Undoubtedly, the US' support for the PKK / YPG in the struggle against ISIS and its use as an armed apparatus in the field had a major impact on this expansion.

Thus, after the removal of Öcalan from Damascus, except for the establishment of PYD in 2004, the organization had the opportunity to make its presence in Syria permanent for the first time. In this process, the relations of regional and global actors active in Syria with each other and with non-state armed actors, the relations among those non-state actors, the areas of competition and conflict, and the ability of the competing actors to cooperate in different fields were also important determinants in the progress of the organization. Also, the fact that the organization's - which received US support under the name of fight against ISIS in the east of Euphrates - cooperation with Russia in regions such as Afrin and Tell Rifaat has been a facilitating factor in preserving its presence in the region. In a sense, these variables in the field, canton establishment by the organization and its effort to become permanent in the region has been important factors for Turkey to delay its operation.

This table has made "the quest for security" to become a priority for Turkey, a neighbor of Syria, which was affected the most from the conflicts and waves of migration. The uncertainties in the intentions of the active actors in the field, the use of organizations by different actors as apparatuses for different purposes, the instability experienced in the borders, the threat posed by radical organizations such as ISIS and the control of the PKK / YPG along the borderline has been decisive in Turkey's attitude. This situation has forced Turkey to adopt a new concept of security that leans towards creating deterrent and controllable areas based on its military power in the area, in the scope of "ensuring the security of the state" and "survival".

Changing Security Approach: Defense-Attack Perspective

Turkey revealed a "defensive" reaction, which aims to keep the threats outside its border and prioritizing border security in the post-2013 period, when the crisis in Syria has turned into a series of multi-faceted asymmetrical conflicts. As a part of this strategy, Turkey tried to combat against terrorists by cooperating with its allies. It also blocked the transit of foreign fighters and established new security structures along the border (border wall, establishment of electronic systems and so on.) Parallel to this, Turkey, which also participated in the international coalition formed to fight ISIS, prioritized responding to the attacks of the regime and terrorist organizations within the framework of rules of engagement.

However, the increase in ISIS attacks, expansion of the PKK/YPG's dominance in the area with the support of the United States and distrust in Washington pushed Turkey to change its perception of threat. In addition, the effects of global, regional

and sub-regional developments of actors in the region led Turkey to implement a new concept. In this sense, it can be considered that apart from global and regional actors, non-state armed actors' ability to influence the order affected the sensitivities on security.

Since in such structures threat is not only expected from global or regional actors but also armed groups, in Turkey's perception of threat, these armed groups began to occupy a larger portion. US support for one of those organizations, the PKK/YPG, increased Turkey's future security concerns. For Ankara, the US' arming of the PKK / YPG was not seen as a mere strategy to combat ISIS; training, logistical assistance and armed support provided to the organization are considered as a major risk for the country's medium and long term security. The dilemma that was created by the uncertainty of both the US and YPG's true intentions about future led Turkey to stress on how to weaken the current threat instead of taking defensive actions. This process has triggered a security dilemma for Turkey and has necessitated a new security concept foreseeing "threats beyond the borders and welcome in the forward line". Following are the factors that led Turkey to adopt such a security concept:

- Increased asymmetric security problems in the area extending from Iraq to Syria and the July 15 military coup attempt
- US military and logistical support for the PKK / YPG and an attempt by the SDG to form a corridor along the borderline

- Uncertainty of real intentions and main objectives of the actors in the region
- Mistrust and ambiguity in bilateral relations caused by US failure to comply with *Manbij* agreement

Under these circumstances, Turkey carried out the Euphrates Shield and Olive Branch operations. Also, in order to weaken the elements in Iraq, it organized the Claw Operation. With the effect of the difficulties in the field, Turkey aimed to realize the possible operation planning in certain stages. As a result, from 2016 onwards, Turkey has gone beyond the concept of "defense" and used active military force in the regions where it has vital interests and perceives a threat.

The lack of authority in countries such as Syria, Iraq, Yemen and Libya has led to the strengthening of non-state armed actors and terrorist organizations.

Negotiation with Global Powers

The military presence of two global powers - the USA and Russia - in Syria during this period has been one of the most important difficulties Turkey has faced. Indeed, Turkey had to take into consideration the actions of these two global powers. As a result, Turkey, while facing combat threats, also had to focus on the actions of the present actors in the region. This situation showed its impact during the Euphrates Shield and Olive Branch Operation. Before the operations, Turkey ran negotiations with the US and Russia on the potential difficulties that could be faced in the field. Within this framework, the gap between Ankara and Washington due to US cooperation with the PKK / YPG created new opportunities for the Ankara-Moscow line and facilitated



the establishment of various mechanisms, particularly the Astana Process in Syria. It is widely accepted that diplomacy with Russia has a facilitating effect in the process of Afrin's demilitarization from the PKK/YPG terrorist organization.

Dual Push and Peace Spring Operation

While trying to achieve its strategic objectives within the new security concept it adopted, Turkey initiated the Claw Operation to weaken PKK's presence in Iraq and its connection with Syria. Within this framework, Turkey established strategic bases and control areas outside its borders and took precautions against possible infiltrations of the terrorist organization, concentrating on preventive operations in Iraq, thus enabling Turkey to push east of the Euphrates from both the west and east. On the other hand, to create the necessary conditions for a new operation in east of Euphrates, Turkey began to bring forward the military option and focused on pushing the US to end its military support on the organization during diplomatic negotiations. In this context Ankara focused on the preparations of operation, however, due to the difference of opinion on both sides and lack of unity in the institutions of Washington, Turkey had to wait for a long time to take action. While President Trump's desire to withdraw from Syria and the different approaches of the Pentagon and CENTCOM shelved the withdrawal and led the process to uncertainty, the first serious agreement between Ankara and Washington was made months later in August 2019. Although the safe zone agreement between the two sides has begun to be implemented, delays and congestion in the process have led Ankara to regard this agreement as a second *Manbij* agreement syndrome, and consider the safe zone agreement as a distraction process.

As Turkey accelerated the preparations for operation in accordance with the 20-mile issue that was mentioned by President

Trump, Washington was pushed into an implicit consent process to carry out the operation. The factors that brought in this consent were undoubtedly the bilateral relations between President Trump and President Erdoğan; trade; preventing Turkey and Russia to grow closer ties; and finally Washington's ability to realize the importance of Turkey after the difficulties Saudi Arabia and other regional countries faced due to the recent developments in the Gulf. On October 9, after Washington's tacit consent, Turkey started the Peace Spring Operation. The Turkish Armed Forces (TSK), which acted with the Syrian National Army within the scope of the Peace Spring Operation, entered the region between *Ras al-Ayn* and *Tell Abyad*, and pushed the button for the operation to clear the terrorist organization from the border. With the operation, The Turkish Armed Forces and the Syrian National Army planned to establish a safe zone that covers the strategic area up to the M4 road and from Ayn al-Arab (Kobane) to Derik on the Iraqi border. During the operation its initial plan is to liberate centers like *Ras al-Ayn* and *Tell Abyad* from terrorism which would, in the second stage of the operation, facilitate the expansion of the operation in the east and west directions.

Uncertainties caused by the US and Russia

There are some risks and uncertainties in the operation process. Firstly, the fact that US President Trump is an unpredictable leader and his ability to change decisions in a short time may cause some problems between Ankara and Washington during the operation. The fact that CENTCOM and the Pentagon are not in full harmony with the White House, their demands to limit the operation and the public debate can put pressure on Trump to push him against Ankara. As economically based decisions like the Senate's decision to impose sanctions on Turkey and the introduction of CAATS sanctions could create new

problems, the existence of US soldiers in the field also makes the process more difficult. At this point, it should be kept in mind that the PKK / YPG's propaganda where US soldiers are targeted can be repeated in the process. On the other hand, the eastern part of the Euphrates, unlike the Olive Branch Operation area, is the main center where the US provides arms, logistic support, and training aid directly to the organization. The military weapons and equipment in the hands of the PKK / YPG terrorist organization, which has approximately 65,000 to 100,000 militants, may also cause difficulties as the process stretches.

However, Russia, the Assad regime and Iran's attitude are among the factors that should be considered. Firstly, the Moscow administration, which does not react negatively to the operation on the axis of the protection of Syria's territorial integrity and Ankara's security concerns, carefully monitors the possible fragilities between Ankara and Washington. Secondly, since the Trump administration's decision to withdraw from Syria could allow Russia to increase its power in the region, the course of the process pushes Moscow to a "wait-and-see" position. Thirdly, a crisis between Ankara and Washington may provide new opportunities for Moscow and weakening of the PKK / YPG may create new opportunities for Putin administration. Moscow will be one of the decisive actors in the distancing of the PKK/YPG from Washington and a possible negotiation process with the Assad regime. As it seems preferable to negotiate with the PKK / YPG, which is weakened in the operation, the Damascus administration may take some new steps in areas such as *Manbij* and *Tell Rifat*. As a matter of fact, Moscow and the regime may see the gap that may occur in the region after the US announces that it will withdraw 1,000 troops from North Syria can be considered as an opportunity to dominate the PKK

/ YPG. Such an approach may pave the way for the regime, with the support of Moscow, to enter *Manbij* with the PKK / YPG, and may bring similar formulas to the east of the Euphrates. Since a possible agreement between the regime and the PKK / YPG cannot be achieved without Moscow's consent, Ankara needs to pay attention to Moscow's influence in the process. Given that the regime's capacity to dominate the region will be limited, it should not be forgotten that Moscow's actions would be decisive.

Just as how vital the threat in east of Euphrates is for Ankara, continuation of the PKK / YPG presence in *Manbij* will remain a similar threat. In such an equation, the entry of the Damascus regime into the region will mean that the PKK / YPG will continue to exist and that security threats will continue in the medium term. Considering the occasional harassment shots from *Tell Rifaat* (where PKK / YPG, Assad Regime and Russia still exist) to the Euphrates Shield area, the severity of this threat can be more clearly understood. Since the entry of the regime forces into *Manbij* and other regions in a similar way will not mean anything other than the maintenance of protected areas for the existence of the PKK / YPG, Ankara needs to be aware of the possible developments in areas such as *Manbij*, *Tell Rifaat* and *Ayn al-Arab*. This will strengthen the hands of the regime in negotiating for oil resources, such as *Deir ez-Zur*, in the east of the Euphrates. On the other hand, the picture in Idlib continues to stand out as the area that the regime would like to deal with in the first place. In Idlib, where a fragile ceasefire continues, it can be stated that the regime will want to utilize possible opportunities with the support of Russia.





‘La Françafrique’: The Special Relationship Between France and Its Former Colonies in Africa

TUĞBA KORKMAZ



Former colonial power France was the second largest empire in the world after Britain and the biggest in Africa during the 19th and 20th centuries. Even after the colonial times came to an end and most of the colonies gained their independence, the vestiges of colonialism remains and France maintains special relations with its former colonies. The first Ivorian President Félix Houphouët-Boigny introduced the expression 'La Françafrique' in 1955 to define the wish of some members of the African elite to maintain special relations with France after their independence. Since then, this term has been used several times in a pejorative meaning to describe French neo-colonial dominance in Africa.

'The time of what we used to call 'La Françafrique' is over' former French President François Hollande said solemnly before the Senegalese National Assembly on 12th October 2012. However, France still remains at the core of Africa through its military, cultural, economic and geopolitical presence. The country seems to pursue a strategy of domination on behalf of its own interest to keep the dependence of African States. So is Hollande's statement in Dakar entirely true? Is the time of 'La Françafrique' really over?

French Colonization of Africa (1830 - 1962)

French colonization of Africa started in 1830 with the invasion of Algeria. Gradually, new territories in Northern, Western and Central Africa as well as the East African coastal enclave of Djibouti were conquered, making France became the largest colonial empire in the continent. By 1914, French empire controlled 60 million people that spread out over 10,000,000 square kilometers.

Political motives for colonization differed from the search for markets, investments, raw materials and cheap workforce to the drive for victory and strategic advantage. There were also religious and cultural motives such as the desire to spread Catholicism, French culture and 'educate' indigenous people.

France governed its territories in two different ways. Protectorates preserved a relative autonomy and were ruled indirectly through existing local authorities. This was the case in Morocco and Tunisia. Colonies in West and Equatorial Africa were directly administered while Algeria enjoyed a status of French department.

Colonial Ideology: Racism and Propaganda

'Colonisation is a first-order political necessity. A nation that doesn't colonize is irrevocably destined for socialism and war between rich and poor'¹ said French philosopher Ernest Renan.

'Superior races have a right towards inferior races... because there is a duty for them... They have the duty to civilize inferior races'. This is what Jules Ferry, the proponent of secular, compulsory and free school affirmed in the Chamber of Deputies.²

The abolitionist Alexis de Tocqueville and Victor Schoelcher also supported colonialism. 'There is neither need nor duty to allow our Muslim subjects to have exaggerate ideas on their own importance or to show that we have to treat them as if they were our fellow or our equal citizens. They know that we have a leading position in Africa' wrote Tocqueville in his report on Algeria in 1847.³

By a reversal, colonization was also conducted on behalf of what the Europeans

deem as 'Human Rights'. It was to put an end to slavery in Africa and to bring progress and civilization to a 'barbarian society'. Slavery and trafficking were then replaced by the territorial colonization of Africa based on inequality and racism. Black people and Muslims in Arabic countries were seen as 'a retarded and imperfect civilization' (Tocqueville, 1847).

Colonial ideology was supported by 'racial hierarchy' theory and 'scientific racism'. In his book 'On the Origins of Species', published in 1859, British scientist Charles Darwin first set out his theory of the evolutionary mechanism as an explanation of organic change. Darwin explained evolution through three principles namely variation, conservative force and struggle for existence.⁴ His theory was then applied to human society and so Social Darwinism emerged. It became very popular among Europeans to justify colonialism, racism and social inequality. Social Darwinism is based on the 'survival of the fittest', the idea that the strongest nation (in this case the Europeans) was the best able to rule. 'White civilized' nations had the moral and inherent right to conquer and civilize the 'savage blacks' described as being of low intellect.

These racist ideas were supported by the press and advertisements, which portrayed Africans as wild and uncivilized. For instance, in an advertising poster published in 1915, Banania (brand of cocoa powder) demeaned black people by representing a Senegalese Tirailleur eating cocoa powder at war and being atrocious in French ('Y'a bon'). Propaganda and racist ideology allowed the legitimization of colonization.

African Resistance and Colonial Crimes

Since the very beginning, the colonization of Africa provoked resistance. Despite the disproportion of forces (most of the

Africans used arrows and assegais while French soldiers used rifles and artillery), some countries fought, some assumed noncompliance and others unwillingly complied. Colonization was done with the cruelest methods (forced labour, deportation, starvation...) and some conflicts were very bloody and full of atrocities. A few examples defining African resistance to European imperial expansion and colonial rule in Africa are cited below.

In Algeria, a resistance movement against the bloody conquest led by Emir Abdelkader began in 1832 and lasted until he was captured by France and exiled in 1847. In March 1843, lieutenant colonel Lucien de Montagnac's letter to his fellow embodies the violence of the war, 'All the good soldiers that I am honoured to command are warned by myself that if they bring me an Arab who is not dead, they will receive sabre blows'.⁵ Many Algerians lost their lives because of massacres, burned cities and villages, drought and deadly cholera outbreak. According to Dominique Maison (a research fellow in the National Institute of Population Studies) on the eve of the conquest, the population of Algeria was reportedly 3 million. However, Muslim population counted by French authorities was below this figure until 1881.⁶

In West Africa, around what Mali, Sierra Leone, and the Ivory Coast are now located, was the Mandinka Empire. Its ruler Samory Toure refused to submit to French colonization and combated the French both militarily and diplomatically. The Mandinka Empire resisted for many years, but Touré was captured in 1898, which ended the resistance.

In the Kingdom of Dahomey (today's Benin), the powerful king Behanzin resisted by attacking the French militarily and economically after their occupation of Porto Novo and Cotonou. However Dahomey ended up being first a protectorate and then a colony. Behanzin was exiled to the West Indies in 1894.



The Voulet and Chanoine military expedition, which is a military mission that bears the name of its two officers Voulet and Chanoine aimed to reach the Lake of Tchad. The mission that started on January 1899 and lasted for seven months embodies one of the greatest colonial violence lead by two out-of-control officers. The latter ordered their soldiers to massacre all the people who refuse to cooperate without any exception. Rape, dismemberment, decapitation, hanging, enslavement, burning and murder were just some of the numerous atrocities done to those who resisted. The exact death toll, estimated to be several thousand people, remains unknown.

Colonial Policy and Status of Colonial People

The Natives Law, called 'Le Code de l'indigénat' in French, was adopted in June 1881 and applied in all French colonies in 1887. In general terms, the law subjected natives and immigrant workers to forced labor, deprived them from their fundamental rights and made them subject to a tax on their reserves and to many others degrading measures. These measures intended to make sure that 'good colonial order', the order that was based on the institutionalization of the inequality of justice, was always in effect.

'L'indigénat' distinguished two categories of citizens: French citizens (from the mainland) and French subjects (indigenous people). French subjects and immigrant workers were deprived of the greater part of their freedom and political rights. On the civilian level, they retained only their personal status.⁷

As Algeria was a French department, Algerian people could have citizenship providing they renounced their civil status

of Muslim by applying for naturalization. It was only after 1919 that naturalization was possible for Muslims but several conditions had to be met such as being over 25, being veteran, owner of a company or officer. This system of social and juridical inequality was abolished in 1946.

Besides implementing 'L'indigénat', the French also educated the young African generation to tailor their concerns. **The school system in colonies** had two main goals; one of them was to inflict the European way of thinking and spread French civilization and language. Another one is to train local labour force for colonial interests.

In Algeria, from 1892 to 1948, education system was composed of two sub-systems: the first system was similar to the French one, where it gathered all the Europeans and some rich Algerians' sons. The second one was mainly composed by primary education called 'special education for indigenous' and had a civilizing mission.

Thereby, French was the only language allowed at school and education for indigenous was composed of practical works to train obedient subjects ready to serve and feed the Empire's economy. Textbooks addressed to indigenous education were based on the ideology that, 'France considers you as its children, we want you to be honest, good and able to become excellent laborers'.⁸

Inequalities were also visible in school access. For example, in 1889, hardly 2% of school-age Muslim children (aged 6 to 14 years old) had access to schools compared to 84% for European school-age children. In 1943, slightly less than 10% of school-age Muslim children had access to schools.⁹ It was a clear paradoxical situation in provinces belonging to a democratic and egalitarian country.

On the other hand, Senegalese Tirailleurs intervened in all the colonial conflicts and

the World Wars. The Senegalese Tirailleurs were a troop of soldiers within the French Army recruited in sub-Saharan French colonies. They were created by Louis Faidherbe in 1857, a military governor of Senegal (hence the name of those battalions). Senegalese Tirailleurs were mainly former slaves who were purchased by the French authorities upon release. They then signed an 'act of liberation' and an 'employment contract' for a service that lasted between 10 and 15 years.

During the First World War, about 134,000 Senegalese Tirailleurs served on the Western Front and were placed at the forefront. About 350,000 were recruited during the Second World War.

During the Liberation in the Second World War, French General Staff replaced black soldiers by white soldiers from metropolitan France, calling this action 'blanchiment' or 'whitening of the army'. Demobilized soldiers were then sent to transit camps like the camp of Thiaroye in Dakar. At the time, military authorities affirmed that the African soldiers were demobilized because they were not used to the cold. However, today some historians contest this statement by saying that the demobilization aimed to celebrate victory without the presence of black soldiers and to make it look like French people had emancipated themselves from the war.

According to the official French version, in Thiaroye on 1st December 1944, black soldiers started to shoot on French officers demanding more money. Officers were therefore obliged to respond with repression, resulting in the deaths of 35 Senegalese Tirailleurs. However, 70 years after (in 2014), this official version was contested by many researches including those of Armelle Mabon, a historian and lecturer in the University of Bretagne Sud. Armelle Mabon talked about 'a planned mass crimes' in her interview with 'Le Monde'. She said that this event was in reality organized by the French authorities

to avoid paying Senegalese Tirailleurs by killing them. She affirmed that the death toll greatly exceeded 35 (between 300 and 400 deaths buried in mass graves).¹⁰

Decolonization

Tunisia and Morocco

Between the two World Wars, nationalist movements emerged in these two protectorates:

- Neo Destour Party led by Bourguiba in Tunisia
- Istiqlal Party led by Allal El-Fassi and Ahmed Balafre supported by sultan Mohammed Ben Youssef

For example, in Tunisia a nationalist movement (Neo Destour Party) led by Bourguiba emerged. The same way, in Morocco, the nationalist Istiqlal Party, led by Allal El-Fassi and Ahmed Balafre (supported by the sultan Mohammed Ben Youssef) became very popular.

Initially, they demanded autonomy and reforms but after the second World War, they claimed for independence. France first responded with repression. Some demonstrators were killed and the leaders were imprisoned. Then negotiations led to internal autonomy in 1954 and to independence in 1956. Nationalists leaders, Bourguiba and Mohammed Ben Youssef, became respectively president of Tunisia and King of Morocco.

French sub-Saharan Africa

Decolonization in sub-Saharan Africa was more peaceful because France seemed to have weaker commitments as few settlers lived there and it was already concerned by the Algerian problem.

- In 1946, France established the French Union; the colonized could now elect deputies in the French Parliament.



- In 1956, the Defferre framework law (Loi-cadre Defferre) gave a considerable degree of internal autonomy to France's African territories. They could now have an autonomous assembly elected by universal suffrage.
- In 1958, De Gaulle asked the colonies to choose whether they want to be independent or to be a part of the French Community (The second option giving more autonomy to colonies). Aside from Guinea, all the colonies chose independence and gained it in 1960.

Algeria

In the early 1950s, Algeria was a colony where more than 1 million Europeans called 'Pieds-Noirs' lived. Algeria gained its independence after a long and painful conflict that lasted for eight years (1954-1962). The French army responded by imposing torture and summary executions to the Algerian nationalist attacks of National Liberation Front (FLN). This escalation of violence favored General de Gaulle's return to power. He ended the conflict by signing the Evian Agreements. Finally, independence was proclaimed in 1962.

Yet despite the independence, all former colonies maintain close ties with France today. This is what we can call as neocolonialism.

French Neocolonialism in Africa

At the time when independences were being negotiated, France took advantage of the situation and lured its colonies to sign cooperation agreements promoting its interests. Those agreements, sometimes called as neo-colonial pacts, allowed

France a direct interference in its former colonies' affairs in order to control them. This marked the beginning of French neo-colonial dominance.

De Gaulle (the President of France at the time) tried to transfer power to politicians who were proponents of 'La Françafrique' like Houphouët - Boigny and Léopold Senghor who became respectively the first President of the Ivory Coast and the first President of Senegal. The latter were supporting the 'paternal role' of France, believing that it was to help them after the independence. Other leaders like Silvanus Olimpio (the first President of Togo), who were in favour of a new State and to be entirely independent from France, were assassinated.

Cooperation agreements included diverse issues (economic, monetary, cultural, juridical and military...) and most of them were done in secret. They aimed not only to provide means in order to form new armies capable of facing the Cold War pressures (size, training, provision of weapons - everything was planned). But they also consisted in maintaining the ties that held Africans under the domination of France.

Through the same way, these agreements imposed French as the official language of the new territories and required colonies to retain the franc CFA as their national currency. Furthermore, they provided France with privileged access to its former colonies' raw materials and markets. Economic cooperation agreements maintained trade preferences between France and new independent States. In return, France had to guarantee national security and provide a steady flow of aid. In other words, it had to protect its former colonies, provide them with military assistance and help them to develop through economic assistance (ODA/ Official Development Assistance).

The planned cooperations were no less than continued dependence. It was actually the transition from colonialism to neocolonialism. Just after the proclamation of independence, there were eight agreements signed with eight different African States (Cameroun, Central Africa Republic, the Comoros, the Ivory Coast, Djibouti, Gabon, Senegal and Togo). Today, even if some of them have been revised or suppressed, they still have effect on governments.

ODA; development assistance or a dependence appliance?

The Official Development Assistance (ODA) is an assistance provided by developed States, to improve the economic development and living standards of developing countries.

Since decolonization, some Northern countries (including France) have provided economic aid to developing countries. France was the fifth largest global donor in 2016 with 10.1 billion euros. 1/4 of its bilateral ODA was used to subsidize sub-Saharan projects. The first rank recipient of French bilateral ODA in the region was Cameroun (€215.12 million), followed by Senegal (€79.3 million) and Ghana (€68.11 million).

However, the ODA's effectiveness is doubtful. While the proportion of development assistance (provided for more than a half-century) is increasing every year, most of the sub-Saharan countries remain dependent and poor. For instance, the total global ODA was less than \$80 billion in 2000 and \$142.6 billion in 2016, being 8.9% higher than 2015. This results in the drop of ODA for poor countries.

ODA is often criticized as an instrument of corruption. It allows statesman and elites to become richer at the expense of local population. Corrupt leaders often use the loans for their own benefits instead of financing projects for the

sake of their country. This explains the underdevelopment in most of African countries, due to corruption. In the book *'Dead Aid: Why Aid is not Working and How There is a Better Way for Africa'*, Dambisa Moyo, Zambian woman economist, says 'With aid's help, corruption fosters corruption, nations quickly descend into a vicious cycle of aid'. She depicts the vicious cycle of aid, 'In response to growing poverty, donors give more aid, which continues the downward spiral of poverty. This is the vicious cycle of aid'.

On the other hand, developed countries use ODA as a means of pressure on developing countries. African States, getting deeper in debt, are compelled to remain subject to Northern needs. This situation is helping to accentuate their poverty instead of improving the situation. To ensure its effectiveness, ODA needs to be reviewed urgently.

Trade Relations Between France and Africa

France and Africa have a special trade relationship. Economic and trade relations between France and Africa are characterized by diverse factors due to changes in French and African economies but also to the colonial and postcolonial historical past.

During the Cold War, France maintained strong political and economic links with its former colonies fearing communist and capitalist expansion. It considered new African states as an essential element of its international influence hence provided them with assistance and budgetary support. The collapse of the Berlin Wall, the end of the USSR, the enlargement of Europe and the acceleration of globalization resulted in the standardization in France-Africa relations.



Despite everything, France remains an important trade partner for Africa. It is the second largest European exporter to the continent after Germany. According to 'France Diplomatie' over a third of French exporters export to Africa.

Bilateral trade between France and the Ivory Coast remains strong and is an important feature of the larger relationships between the two countries. In fact, the Ivory Coast accounted for about 32% of French exportations to Western Africa in 2018. Conversely, the majority of French imports from Western Africa come from Ivory Coast. In September 2018, we could observe trade surpluses for France with every Western African country. This means that it exported more than it imported. Except for the Ivory Coast, Mali, Niger and Togo, French exports to Western African countries increased.

Moreover, the French public agency, Business France, encourage French companies to invest in Africa. Each year it organises 'Ambition Africa' event to facilitate French and African businesses to meet over three days. The latter aims to familiarize French businesses that are not yet present in Africa with the continent's key trade issues.

All of this proves French special interest in Africa, that is also manifested by economic and trade agreements since decolonization. The Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) is one current example of these agreements at the European level. Research proves that foreign aid promotes exports for the donor country (France in our case). Per consequent, the special trade relationship between France and Africa cannot only be explained by the colonial historical past but also by the economic assistance that France gives to sub-Saharan countries.

However, nowadays, even if 'la Grande nation' has not lost sight of its own

interests, it is losing market share due to the growing competition from emerging countries, especially from China.

French Companies in Africa

Following the 1980's wave of privatization and due to Africa's natural resources, Northern and emerging countries' firms have been predominant in Africa. According to 'France Diplomatie', in 2017, there were more than 2,109 French subsidiaries in the continent. In order to enhance their presence, those companies invest heavily. For instance, French FDI flows to Africa have increased tenfold between 2000 and 2017. Nevertheless it had the third largest FDI stock after the UK and the USA in 2017.

French companies maintain a massive presence in the ex-colonies and intervene in several sectors such as:

- Energy (example: Total)
- Transport (example: Air France)
- Industry (example: Lafarge)
- Construction (example: Bouygues, Sogea-Satom)
- Services (example: BNP Paribas, Bolloré)
- Mass distribution (example: CFAO)
- Agro-industry (example: Bel)
- Telecommunication (example: Orange, France Telecom)

Total is making one-third of its hydrocarbon production in Africa. Eramet is producing manganese alloys for steel industry in Gabon. Bolloré has hectares of palm groves in Cameroun. Orange is present in 19 African countries and affirms to have more than 100 million African clients. Three French banks such as Banque National de Paris, Société Générale and Crédit Lyonnais had accounted for some 70% of the turnover of all banks within the Franc CFA zone in 2006.

Economic Exploitation

CFA Franc (African Financial Community / Cooperation Franc)

The CFA Franc was created in December 1945 under the government of De Gaulle, and is the last colonial currency still working today. It is the common currency of 14 African States in Central and Western Africa (+ The Comoros) bounded by a policy of monetary cooperation. There are two monetary institutions for the two respective zones namely the Central Bank of Central African States (CEMAC) and the Central Bank of Western African States (UEMOA), both influenced by the Bank of France, with the right to veto over decisions.

While France presently supports the advantages of this currency for Africa, many economists like Demba Moussa Dembélé accuse it to slow African countries' development down, 'the CFA Franc is an obstacle to the economic development because it does not benefit small and medium-sized enterprises'.

From the perspective of France, this currency has many advantages for Africa because it offers a fixed exchange rate with euro (1€ = 655 CFA), price stability, free movement of capital within the CFA Franc zone and unlimited convertibility to euro. Countries using the CFA Franc might have 'a certain credibility on the international level' and must be attractive for foreign investment. However, if those advantages do not allow the development of Africa, what good are they for? And to whose benefits do they serve?

It is the French Treasury that guarantees the unlimited convertibility of the CFA Franc to euro. In return, countries in the CFA Franc zone are required to deposit 50% of their foreign exchange surpluses into a French operations account. Besides, due to the fixed parity, countries that use the CFA

Franc suffer from the highly valued euro and have difficulties to export their goods because their prices are not competitive. For example, they cannot devalue the currency or create money according to their needs. On the other hand, they purchase most of the foreign goods in a strong currency (euro) while they sell local products in dollars (a weaker currency). Per consequent, they have higher expenditures and lower revenues. Fixed parity with euro seems to benefit more foreign investors who want to repatriate their money.

African economists denounce a 'monetary servitude'. According to Demba Moussa Dembélé, those bank deposits 'deprive concerned countries of cash'. 'Can you imagine the European Central Bank deposit 50% of their exchange reserves in Washington? This seems to be unthinkable' affirmed Dembélé.

Plundering of Natural Ressources

Resource-rich countries (like most of the African States) are among the less developed countries. There is a paradox that many economists label as 'resource curse', which leaves us with question. Indeed, Niger, which has uranium, and the Democratic Republic of Congo, which has diamonds, gold and cobalt are two of the 10 poorest countries of the world. What are the reasons for this?

On the one hand, it is difficult to manage and regulate natural ressources when there are corruption, political crisis, embezzlement and traffickers. According to a 2014 report of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 19% of corruption cases occur in extractive industries (mining, oil and gas sector) that concerned many African States. As Angel Gurría (the Secretary-General of the OECD) pointed out, corruption causes significant damage to the country's economic growth and development, which is one of the reasons for Africa's underdevelopment.



On the other hand, the situation will not improve so long as Northern governments (including France) support and finance corrupted regimes faithful to their interests. Indeed, Africa suffers from Northern countries' commitment to exploit their natural resources and become more powerful. Many Northern multinational firms, present in the African continent, are accused of looting and misappropriation of funds. Their activities often receive criticism and people denounce their plundering of natural resources that disrespect the environment and the rights of the workers.

For example, Total was sued by NGOs that believe the oil company was not respecting the French legislation imposing a 'duty of vigilance' abroad. Its Tilenga project in Uganda could reportedly lead to 50,000 people displacement and can have serious consequences on the environment.¹¹

Similarly, in Arlit (Niger), Orano (ex Areva) has been mining uranium since 1976. Its exploitation causes serious damage on the people and the environment that Amina Weira, a Nigerian director denounced in her documentary 'la colère dans le vent'. In fact, during a part of the year, radioactive winds of sand blew and covered up the whole city because of Orano's activity. As radioactivity is invisible, people are not informed of the potential threat. 'Since my childhood, I have been seeing people suffering strange disease that cannot be named' she says.

Furthermore, unpaid taxes have negative impacts on local populations: less funding for infrastructures, environmental conservation, education, health and feeding program. It is difficult to prove embezzlement with figures because there is a lack of transparency due to corruption. However, progress has been made thanks to Publish What You Pay (a group of civil society organizations that advocates for financial transparency in the extractive industry).

French Military Presence in Africa

Despite African States' independences, France has maintained a military presence there. Defense agreements allowed French troops to intervene in the continent since the 1960s. Africa has been the setting for 60 military operations where France has been involved since the independence. This also constitutes a pillar of neocolonialism.

There are two types of French military presence abroad; Opex and pre-positioned forces.

- Opex are military missions that initially aim to maintain peace. 45% of Opex troops are deployed in Africa.
- Pre-positioned forces are deployed permanently outside the metropolitan France. Today, France has four permanent bases in Africa; Djibouti, Senegal, Gabon and the Ivory Coast, all being former colonies. Those forces have a strategic role, which is to protect France and its economic interests as well as intervene quickly when necessary.

Today more than 20,000 French soldiers are deployed outside the metropolitan France. Claiming to be an advocate of peace, France intervenes in many African conflicts using the pretext of 'intervention against terrorism' or 'help to restore security at the request of the country concerned President'. This was the case with Operation Serval in Mali (2013-2014) and Operation Barkhane in the Sahel since 2014.

Derived from a misdivision (due to colonization), many African States are inhabited by several ethnic groups with different cultures and religions. Ethnic differences, poverty and political instability are thus major sources of conflict threatening the continent. For instance, Mali is divided between more than 10

different ethnic groups. The Malian conflict started when some terrorists (AQMI, ANSAR DINE, MUJAO) and an arabo-berber group (Touaregs) invaded North Mali.

The image of France coming to deal with terrorism may be true, but it loses value when its sole purpose is to preserve French interests when they are threatened. In fact, the repression of rebel movements or the elimination of terrorist groups means less disputes, less opponents and by anyway an easier implantation and exploitation of natural resources. For example, during the Operation Serval, it first secured the cities of Gao and Kidal, both being potential zones of uranium exploitation.

French intervention in African conflicts seems to be useless because most of the time it does not resolve the problems. For instance, neither territorial problems are solved nor safety is insured in Mali today. Furthermore, French soldiers did little to stop the bloodbath when the Hutu regime in Rwanda murdered about 800,000 Tutsis in the 1994 genocide. All of these events question their involvement as peacekeepers and prove just how incapable they are to solve problems.

Moreover, there seems to be a lack of coherence in French interventions when they support some African dictators or corrupt leaders (who are in favor of French interests) on the one hand and fight for freedom and Human Rights on the other hand. It is the case with Idriss Déby, the president of Tchad since 1990. Déby, in favour of 'La Françafrique', is known for

his authoritarian practices (which do not respect Human Rights), and is supported by France. This is a paradoxical situation because it is coming from a country that promotes peace.

Dusk of 'Françafrique', Dawn of 'Chinafrique'

To put it in a nutshell, 'La Françafrique' changed aspects according to the economic and geopolitical context over time. Even if relations between France and Africa are weaker today than they were in the colonial times, 'La Françafrique' is not completely over as François Hollande affirmed. Indeed, insofar as the CFA Franc exists, cooperation and defense agreements are not suppressed and France interferes in African affairs according to its needs, we cannot speak of an eventual end of 'La Françafrique'. Africa and its resources are still a topical issue in French politics.

However, today France is facing growing competition from emerging countries especially from China, which has been the largest trading partner of the continent in recent years. Chinese firms are challenging those in French in many sectors. For example, Bolloré has lost the construction project of a railway line connecting the Ivory Coast to Benin against a Chinese company. Moreover, according to a survey published by 'Afrobaromètre' in 2016, 63% of Africans are in favour of the Chinese presence. The French influence decreases while the Chinese one increases. We may talk about a transition from 'Françafrique' to 'Chinafrique' in the future.



End Notes

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The Othering of Sri Lankan Muslims

ABDUL WAHEED PARRY
KHURSHEED UL AALAM



Sri Lanka has been involved in ethnic conflict since the country – formerly known as Ceylon – became independent from British rule in 1948. The three largest ethnic groups in Sri Lanka are the Sinhalese majority, Tamil minority (about 13 percent of the population), and Muslim minority (almost 10 percent). In the years following the country's independence, the Sinhalese, who resented British favoritism toward Tamils during the colonial period, made Sinhala their official language. This is followed by the tensions between Sinhala and Tamil ethnicities that grew with time. In 1976, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) was formed under the leadership of Velupillai Prabhakaran, and it began to campaign for a Tamil homeland in the northern and eastern part Sri Lanka, where most of the island's Tamils reside. In 1983, the LTTE ambushed an army convoy, killing 13 soldiers and triggering riots in which 2,500 Tamils died. India, which has its own Tamil population in the south, deployed a peacekeeping force in 1987 that left three years later amidst escalating violence.

The conflict between the Sri Lankan government and LTTE has lasted for nearly three decades. Commonly known as the Tamil Tigers, LTTE wanted an independent state for the island's Tamil minority. The European Union, Canada, United States, India, and Australia labeled LTTE as a terrorist organization, which made it more difficult for the group to get financing from abroad. The civil war killed nearly 70,000, and watchdog groups have accused both LTTE and the Sri Lankan military of Human Rights violations, including abduction, extortion, and the use of child soldiers. In its final weeks, around 40,000 people – mostly Tamil civilians – were killed, bringing the war's total casualty to more than 100,000 from a population of around 20 million. Following a year of

fierce military offensive, the Sri Lankan government claimed in May 2009 that it had defeated the separatist group and killed its leader Velupillai Prabhakaran.

Muslims as Minority

Sri Lanka's history has always been rich due to its pluralism. The country, being an island at the center of trade routes, is home to a diversity of faiths. Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam and Christianity have been practiced side by side for a long time.

Sri Lanka has nearly 10 percent Muslim minority population, who are predominantly ethnic Tamils. Sadly they have been at the margins of recent conflicts in Sri Lanka. They are also excluded as Tamil speakers, but at odds with the more numerous Hindu Tamils. However, they also have long been subject to Sinhalese persecution, with anti-Muslim riots dating back at least as far as the early 20th century. As the Tamil Tiger war progressed, Sinhalese Buddhism grew more radicalized. Some Sinhalese claimed that the entire Sri Lanka should be exclusively Buddhist. With the Tamil Tigers defeated, Sri Lanka's non-Buddhist communities were again persecuted. This culminated in 2013 with a Buddhist attack on a mosque. Anti-Muslim riots in 2014 resulted in a 10-day state of emergency. Last year, more anti-Muslim riots were waged. Buddhist monks have also disrupted Christian church services. So it is safe to say that Sri Lanka's history of extremist violence is far from new; where Sinhalese Buddhist prejudice has been the driver of much of this conflict.

Though the Muslim community has been a frequent target of both Tamil separatists and Sinhalese forces, there is little history of Islamist violence in Sri Lanka as compared to Buddhist and Tamil extremism. In a few isolated cases, response from Muslims has been directed only at those who attacked first. There has never been violence between Muslims and Christians as such.

Since the Tamil insurgents were defeated, Sri Lanka's Muslim community has often found itself filling that role of an imagined threat. Buddhist extremist organizations have spread rumors on social media and elsewhere that Muslim businesses were secretly sterilizing Sinhalese women through medicated food and underwear. These stories, as strange as they are, have resulted in the arson of Muslim businesses, attacks on mosques, and the persistent harassment of Muslim Sri Lankans. There is an unverified assumption that money from Saudi Arabia is used to build madrassas and mosques and this money is being sent to promote Wahabism in Sri Lanka. Though Islamic practice in Sri Lanka may have grown somewhat more conservative in recent years, there is no such evidence which could prove the alleged violent radicalization of the Sri Lankan Muslim community. So what happened then, to the Colombo Easter bombings?

Easter Bombings and Muslim Fears

Easter Day bomb blasts at three Sri Lankan churches and four hotels killed 259 people and wounded hundreds more, following a rather peaceful-terror free environment, since the end of the civil war 10 years ago. On the Sunday of 21st April 2019 attack, a string of explosions occurred at three luxury hotels frequented by foreigners and three churches holding Easter services in Sri Lanka's capital Colombo, as well as Negombo in the north and Batticaloa in the east. Another 15 people, including six children, died on the following Friday in the country's eastern province after soldiers raided a house in search of suspects. Attacks took place in the capital's historic St Anthony's Shrine church. The three hotels hit in the initial attacks were the Shangri-La, Kingsbury Hotel and the Cinnamon Grand, all three located in Colombo. The first six explosions were all reported

within a short period in the morning just as church services were starting. Hours later there were two further attacks in the outskirts of Colombo. The explosions led to an immediate clampdown, with the government declaring a curfew and blocking access to most major social media and messaging sites. Sri Lankans have lived through a brutal 30-year civil war and two violent insurrections, but the last 10 years saw a comparatively peaceful era. Now the bombings have revived painful memories and a sense of new fear has evolved. Authorities in Sri Lanka had received warnings about the attacks about two weeks prior, Sri Lankan Minister Senaratne said at a news conference. The New York Times reports that tensions over the status between Sri Lanka's Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe and President Maithripala Sirisena were at least partly responsible for an error in communicating the warnings.

The government blamed a tiny militant Islamist organization, the National Thowheeth Jama'ath (NJT) and Jammiyathul Millathu Ibrahim, while the Islamic State has claimed joint responsibility. NJT is a previously little-known extremist Islamist group that appears to have surfaced over the past year or so in Sri Lanka, mainly in response to anti-Muslim riots and other violence against Muslims inflicted by the island-state's majority Sinhalese Buddhist population.

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After the Easter attacks, the country's Muslim communities are living in fear, though they share the nation's shock and grief. Mosque leaders stopped broadcasting prayer calls over loudspeakers to avoid offending mourners. They were quick to put up banners with messages of condolence for the victims. They met with Catholic Church and police officials, and packed food kits for funeral volunteers. Despite these acts of sympathy to the victims, Muslims still fear a wave of anger and possibly violent retaliation that has begun to emerge. Hateful online messages blaming Muslims for the attacks had evaded the government's emergency social media ban, and stones had been thrown at several Muslim homes and businesses. Rampaging mobs from the majority Buddhist population attacked Muslim communities, police and witnesses said, igniting fears of a new phase of violence in Sri Lanka following the Easter church bombing. The new attacks occurred in a cluster of towns in the country's northwest, where many Muslim minorities own shops and other businesses. The mobs ransacked homes, burned vehicles and looted shops. They vandalized mosques, burned Qurans and urinated in water stored for ablutions, reports said. Sri Lankan police arrested 23 people on 7th May in connection with the increased attacks on Muslim-owned homes and shops in apparent revenge for the Easter bombings. Mobs moved through towns in Sri Lanka's northwest using dozens of motorbikes and buses, ransacking mosques, burning Qurans and attacking shops with petrol bombs,

reports said. Reuters reported that in the town of Kottampitiya, a group of about a dozen people arrived in taxis and attacked Muslim-owned stores with stones just after midday on the following Monday. They attacked the main mosque in the city, 17 Muslim-owned businesses and 50 homes.

Eight Muslim government officials in Sri Lanka were eventually forced to quit their portfolios on 3 June in solidarity with the Minister of Industry, who was accused by the opposition of supporting Islamist militants. Muslim leaders said there is growing persecution against them on the majority Sinhala Buddhist Island. The resignations undercut a planned no-confidence motion led by supporters of nationalist former President Mahinda Rajapaksa against Minister of Industry Rishad Bathiudeen, who also resigned from the Ministry on Monday, making the motion unviable. Bathiudeen's accusers have not provided evidence for their accusations. Galagoda Aththe Gnanasara, head of the hardliner Bodu Bala Sena (BBS) or "Buddhist Power Force", threatened to press for national protests if the men were not sacked. Gnanasara had been serving a six-year sentence for contempt of court, but was freed thanks to a presidential pardon. Despite public rallies and hate speech being prohibited under emergency laws, no arrests were made. This sets a disturbing precedent, especially in Sri Lanka, where the repeated violation of the due process rights of minorities and political dissidents has directly contributed to Sri Lanka's decades of extreme political violence.

INFOGRAPHICS

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conflicts.



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are affected by famine
arising from
climate change.



10 MILLION PEOPLE

are affected by famine
arising from
economic crisis.





Dancing with the Church: Religion-State Relations in Russia

MOKHMAD AKHIYADOV



Orthodoxy became a major part of Russian identity following its approval as the official religion of Russia. Since

then, the Orthodox Church's-Russian government relation turned into one of the most controversial subjects in the social and political life the former Soviet Union. This issue sprang out once again soon after Latvia granted free access to its KGB's archives in December 2018; as well as the exposure of the connections of Russia's clergymen - who are in high positions in the Moscow Patriarchate - with the KGB in the USSR period. In order to comprehend the relations between the political and the religious authorities in modern Russia, it is important to clarify the consistencies and changes that happened throughout history.

Russia, who adopted Orthodoxy in 988 AD, also adopted then-Byzantine's 'Symphony' model in religion-government relationship. This harmony and/or equality centered-model believes that both the state and the church was obliged to support one another, prohibited to interfere each other's area of authority nor to carry out actions that might affect each other's independence. In other words, while the church was supporting the political goals of the government, the government served as the protector of the religion.

After The Symphony Model

The Russian governmental and religious authorities acknowledged the polemics surrounding the 'Symphony' particularly when dealing with the threat of the Ottoman Empire in the 15th century, the church then announced their separation from the Istanbul Patriarchate in 1448, discharged cardinal Isidore of Kiev who

was Pontic Greek descent, from the degree of Moscow's metropolitan bishopric and replaced him with Ion the protégé of Vasily II who was Russian descent. However, a patriarchate in Russia could only established in 1589. After Iov - the Moscow metropolitan bishop at the time - became the Moscow patriarch, Orthodox Church's influence on the government was steadily increasing. On the 17th Century, it was as if a double-headed body was emerging in the administration of the country. Naturally the church and government got into a political conflict due to their equally powerful positions. During the period of Peter the Great, the 'Symphony' model was terminated and this paved the way to the establishment of the Holy Synod, which was dependent on the government instead of the patriarchate. This marked the beginning of the church becoming an instrument for the government. Seeing itself as the protector of the Orthodox Christians living in the 19th Century Ottoman Empire, Russia used the church as their foreign political means even more. However, even when the significance of the church increased in the eyes of the government and the people, it was neither able to save itself from being a mere instrument nor did it enjoy its independence.

Even prior to the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, the church was divided into two and the Modernist movement, which was fed up with the clergy, was formed. The modernists quickly made contacts with the communists who seized power after their successful revolution. However, the Bolsheviks, who received the support of the clergy after promising them freedom of faith when they seized power, started taking actions to neutralize the church in less than a year. During the 23-year process between 1918 and 1941, most churches were shut down, tens of thousands of clergymen were massacred, and all possessions of the church were seized.

When the Nazi struck the USSR in 1941, the country needed the help of the Russian Orthodox Church to drive people to join the war. The patriarchate, which was deserted after 1924, was reinstituted and a new patriarch was elected in 1943. Similarly, the churches were reopened and executions of clergymen were stopped. But even after everything, the church could not enjoy its independence; on the contrary, it became a governmental institution controlled by the KGB.

As a consequence of the USSR's downfall in 1990, the government control over the church came to an end. In that period, the ultimate goal of the Russian Orthodox Church was to temper the power of foreign missionaries that were raiding Russia following the religious lacuna due to the USSR's downfall. It can be clearly seen that the Russian Orthodox Church was anxious about losing its influence on the Russian population and its distinguished place over the country's religious bodies. For this concern, the church started to play an active role in the political life of Russia in the 90's. The church developed a type of collaboration with its traditionalist and Eurasian oppositions against the Liberal Yeltsin authority. When Russia's law on religion came into effect in 1997, Orthodox Christianity, Buddhism, Judaism and Islam were recognized as the official religions of Russia, whereas "external" religions' activities were limited. Another result of the law was the emphasis that the Russian Orthodox Church once again had a distinguished rank among religious bodies.

The main reason behind the alliance between Putin and the church are related to their shared views on the Russian national identity.

Putin and Orthodox Church

The alliance between the high-status Russian Orthodox Church and the government was almost official in the beginning of 2000's. Understanding that the Russian Orthodox Church shared a similar view with the Russian government regarding the role of Russia in the world,

and the fact that this view is empowering the Russian nationalism, Vladimir Putin drew the church close as an ally and kept elevating its important rank in the Russian community. Correspondingly, the law on returning the churches' possessions was approved in that period. In the last 18 years, millions of dollars were allocated by state-owned enterprises for the restorations of thousands of churches that had been harmed or ruined by the USSR. Since the beginnings of the 90's, about 25,000 Orthodox churches were either built or restored. Additionally, the Russian Orthodox Church gained

many rights that widened its role in Russia's social life. For example, in 2010, Orthodoxy lessons were obligatory for trial purposes in governmental schools throughout Russia's 19 regions. With Putin's re-election in 2012, the church's distinguished status among religious bodies was elevated even more. Within the scope of anti-terror law that was passed in 2016, missionary activities of non-governmental religious bodies were banned, leading to the intensified authority of Russian Orthodox Church.



The main reason behind the alliance between Putin and the church are related to their shared views on the Russian national identity. Both Putin and the church believe that Russia belongs to neither the East nor the West; that Russians are an exceptional community with an exceptional status. Adhering to the values of Alexander Dugin, this view developed a special kind of perspective on the relationship between the government and people. According to this notion, the government must be sovereign, the church must be open to collaboration with it, and the civilian must always support both the church and the government at all time. This understanding is used by the government to oppress the opposition and to justify the collaboration between the church and the government on oppressing non-governmental organizations and religious bodies who have different views on the country's national identity.

Another factor that is strengthening the alliance between the church and the government is the notion of "canonical territory" held dear by the Russian Orthodox Church, which describes religious authority with a specific geography. The Russian Orthodox Church's notion of "Russian/Slavic world" entails that all Orthodox bodies in neighboring countries are parts of one main church, hence transforming the church into an instrument for foreign policies for Putin administration, with the aim of being the sole power in its vicinity. Accordingly, Russia's main goal in the

international arena is to control Eurasia as a whole. As for the Russian Orthodox Church, it serves as a part of a softer force to support the Putin administration's expansionist policy in its vicinity.

Both the Putin administration and the Russian Orthodox Church are trying to deem the disputes between the West and Russia as a clash of civilizations. With this, especially after 2012, Kremlin increased its emphasis on the exceptional Russian identity discourse and began to demonstrate Putin as the protective saint of Russia. This policy which was used as a reaction towards the street protests that started after Putin's 2nd re-election in 2012, was maintained later on to be used to counter Putin's worsening image in the country's economic fall. Since the beginning, until Putin's 3rd administration, his legitimacy was based on his ability of elevating the life standards of Russian people. This was possible through the hot money flow provided by the high prices of natural resources being its main revenue. However, the sudden drop in the prices of energy resources in the beginning of his 3rd

*Both the
Putin
administration
and the
Russian
Orthodox
Church are
trying to deem
the disputes
between the
West and
Russia as
a clash of
civilizations.*

administration and sanctions of the West on Russia caused the Russian economy to crumble. As a result, people's support in Putin plunged. Following these developments, Kremlin and the Russian Orthodox Church portrayed Putin as the protector of Russia against the West. Meanwhile, the West was portrayed to be spreading its values in Russia, changing the Russian national identity and becoming a nemesis that is trying to undermine Russia.

However, it would be a mistake to say that the church's support to the political authority as absolute. When an opposition within the Russian Orthodox Church takes form, it gets oppressed before it can grow. The most obvious example of that situation took place in 2012 when Putin was elected for the third time as president. Kirill, who was elected as the patriarch for the Russian Orthodox Church in 2009, gave an impression that he was standing close to liberal policies during the first 3 years of his term of office. The turning point was the street protests that started after Putin's re-election in 2012. On the day when the protests started with the participation of thousands of people, the patriarch Kirill didn't rush to support Putin and instead made statements that were implicitly supporting the protestors. Yet after critical news about patriarch's fondness of luxury were published on government-backed media, the Russian Orthodox Church changed its tone and declared that protestors who are occupying the streets of Moscow were followers of the Western liberalism and that they were trying to tear the country apart.

Patriarch Kirill, who was describing Putin as "the God's miracle", started to support Putin's policies regardless of their incompatibility with the benefits of the church. The latest example of this situation was the position of the Russian Orthodox Church, which supported the Putin administration during the annexation of

Crime in 2014 and supporting separatist groups in Ukraine. While the Russian Orthodox Church was defending the idea that Orthodox Ukrainians should be a part of the Russian church; the Putin administration, with its expansionist policies against Ukraine, accelerated Orthodox Ukrainians' efforts of separating itself from the Moscow Patriarchate. Even though the Russian Orthodox Church was aware of the fact that these policies were completely adverse to its interests, it didn't defy the Putin administration in the fear of losing its position in the government.

All in all, at present, with the fact that the relationship between the church and the government was reached through many different phases, the Russian Orthodox

Church has evolved into a government's soft force instrument in both internal and external policies. Even though Putin's period is said to be similar to the times in 17th Century when the relationship between religion and government was within the power of Czars; this notion seems to be too simplified. On one hand, the relationship between the church and the modern Russia government does bear some similarities with the Czarism era; on the other hand, modern Russia can also be compared to the USSR era when the Russian Orthodox Church was under the control of the KGB. Within this context, it is safe to say that the Putin administration is a nostalgic fusion of Russia's politics.

*The Putin
administration
is a nostalgic
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Russia's
politics.*





Trauma on Children

A. HÜMEYRA KUTLUOĞLU KARAYEL



An event or an experience which threaten psychological and physical integrity' is called a trauma. The term "threat" is used because there is a threat against lives, body, integrity, belief system and loved ones in traumatic events. This threat comes suddenly and unexpectedly, where it breaks the daily rhythm of people's lives, effects people negatively and fray them out emotionally.

This article will look at the destructive effects of trauma upon children, the nature and symptoms of trauma as well as its coping methods.

Types of Trauma

Trauma is also defined as normal reactions to abnormal events, because responding abnormally to abnormal events is considered normal in trauma process. There are many factors that might cause trauma. Some of them are man-made causes such as war, violence, homicide, while some of them occur beyond the control of human being such as natural disasters. Below are the most occurring types of trauma:

- Sex-related trauma (sexual abuse, rape, incest, pornography etc.)
- Loss-related trauma (loss of another human, animal, organ, relationship and grieving process)
- Emotional Violence-related trauma (neglect, insult, derision, curses etc.)
- Parental Attitudes-related trauma (authoritarian, authoritative, permissive, uninvolved, excessive concerned, etc.)
- Physical Violence-related trauma (experiencing or being a witness of violence from parents, friends or adults)

- Illness-related trauma (chronic disorders, terminal diseases, surgery, hospital environment etc.)
- School-related trauma (excessive punishment, neglect, sexual or physical violence from teachers or friends etc.)
- Relationship-related trauma (to be deceived, divorce, to be insulted, humiliated, subject to community violence, bullying etc.)
- Life Alteration-related trauma (divorce, separation, dismissal, financial difficulties, frequent moving etc.)
- Natural Disaster-related trauma (flood, earthquake, fire, drought, blizzard, etc.)
- Other Traumas (imprisonment, terrorism, abortion, early childhood traumas, discrimination, being refugees, asphyxia, complex trauma, etc.)

The Process of Trauma

Some traumatic events can occur only once in a person's life and it happens in a short time such as natural disasters, accidents, abuses and so on. However, other traumatic events can happen for a long time such as persistent sexual abuse, being a refugee, being held hostage and so on.

Small children in particular, when they are faced with traumas, might suffer greater damages compared to that of adults such as botulism, burning, asphyxia and fall. Therefore many trauma-related death cases can be seen among small children.

Symptoms of Trauma

Cognitive Symptoms

- Weak verbal ability
- Memory problems
- Concentration and attention problem

- Learning difficulties
- Negative flashbacks
- Recurrent thoughts of traumatic events
- Nightmares
- Re-creating the traumas

Behavioral Symptoms

- Seeking attention with positive or negative actions
- Committing violence, having problems of anger and aggression
- Disturbing behaviors in public places
- Imitation of trauma or abuse
- Cursing
- Excessive crying or screaming
- Hyper arousal
- Family and friendship problems
- Trusting issues
- Self-blame
- Fear about traumatic things
- Excitement, sadness, nervousness
- Introversion
- Avoidance
- Low self-esteem
- Fear of separation/being alone

Psychological Symptoms

- Shock
- Fear
- Grief
- Anger
- Guilt
- Shame
- Helplessness
- Lack of interest

- Depression, anxiety, stress and other psychological disorders

Physical Symptoms

- Lack or excessive appetite
- Digestion problems
- Headaches, chest pain
- Queasiness and stomach problems
- Fainting and psychosomatic disorders
- Sensitiveness against noises
- Hyper vigilance
- Persistent fatigue
- Shortness of breath and becoming sickly

At times like these, children might want to be closer to their parents and vice versa. During this period especially, children can show regression symptoms where they return to childish actions or act in unsuitable behaviors according to their ages such as bed-wetting, thumb and nail biting or transient tic. These regression symptoms are normal provided they happen in a short term. Therefore parents should not react in extreme reactions to these symptoms. Otherwise, these symptoms will not stop and continue in a long run.

Trauma Healing Techniques

- Awareness Raising: training children and their families about trauma and it's effects may help to understand the danger of trauma and how to cope with it.
- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy: talking and discussing about traumatic events with children and doing some relaxing exercises before confronting the traumatic events (this should be done by professionals). At the same time, play therapy, art therapy, EMDR



and other psychological techniques may be helpful in coping with trauma.

- Understand that they have a valid reason to be afraid and have anxiety even if you perceive their fears as meaningless.
- Talking with children about their personal traumatic event, fears, dreams, nightmares, future thoughts as much detailed as possible and according to their ages.
- Listen to children and encourage them to speak out.
- Sharing emotions between children and their parents is important. If children see that their parents also have fear at times, then they can relax knowing that it is normal to have fears.
- Being together as a family is important during traumatic and stressful times. Usually after a traumatic event children may think that their family will leave them and they will end up being alone. Families of traumatic children should stay close to them to prevent the children from having this feeling.
- Trusting children is important but telling them that they are trusted is not enough, it has to be proven with behaviors. Therefore parents should spend as much time as possible with their children and do activities together.
- Sometimes children develop sleeping problems, like sleeping late at night or wanting to keep sleeping with their parents in order to talk to them before falling asleep. When children have these wishes, allow them to do so for a limited time. However, do not extend this for more than two or three days, as they need to quickly go back to their normal routine.

- Children yearn to be appreciated as it makes them happy. Focusing to appreciate their positive behaviors and thoughts is so important in these critical times. Parents can ask for the simplest favors from their children and then appreciate their help. This small gesture will make children feel appreciated and increase their confidence and the feeling of being loved.
- Saying 'I love you' frequently and giving supportive messages such as 'these days will pass' to traumatized children is one of the many helpful reassuring techniques.
- If children do not want to go to school due to trauma, parents should try to send them to school. However talking to the school counselor about the trauma faced by the children is very important.

Conclusion

Summarily, we can see how the destructive effects of trauma do not only show on adults, but also on children. Children can also develop difficulties while coping with traumas. Therefore, they should never feel alone and if they need professional help it should be provided. It needs to be noted that if children receive enough professional support in the right time and place, their traumas will not be transferred to future generations. However if they lack the support that they need, then the risk for them to recreate and transfer their traumas for future generations is high. Therefore when a child who suffered from trauma start to show the aforementioned symptoms and have some difficulties to maintain her/his life then immediate professional and social help should be provided immediately.

INFOGRAPHICS

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ANTI-REGIME PROTESTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

The emergence of more despotic regimes after Arab Spring, **triggered new searches in the Middle East.**

The successive protests in countries such as **Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon and Sudan** reveal the demands of change in the region.

Who are in the target?

- Those with interest from current system
- Those with interest from social disunity
- Ignorant and ineligible leaders
- International power

Who are in the streets?

- Unemployed youth
- Displeased apolitical civilians
- Depleted ordinary people
- Those bored of social seperation

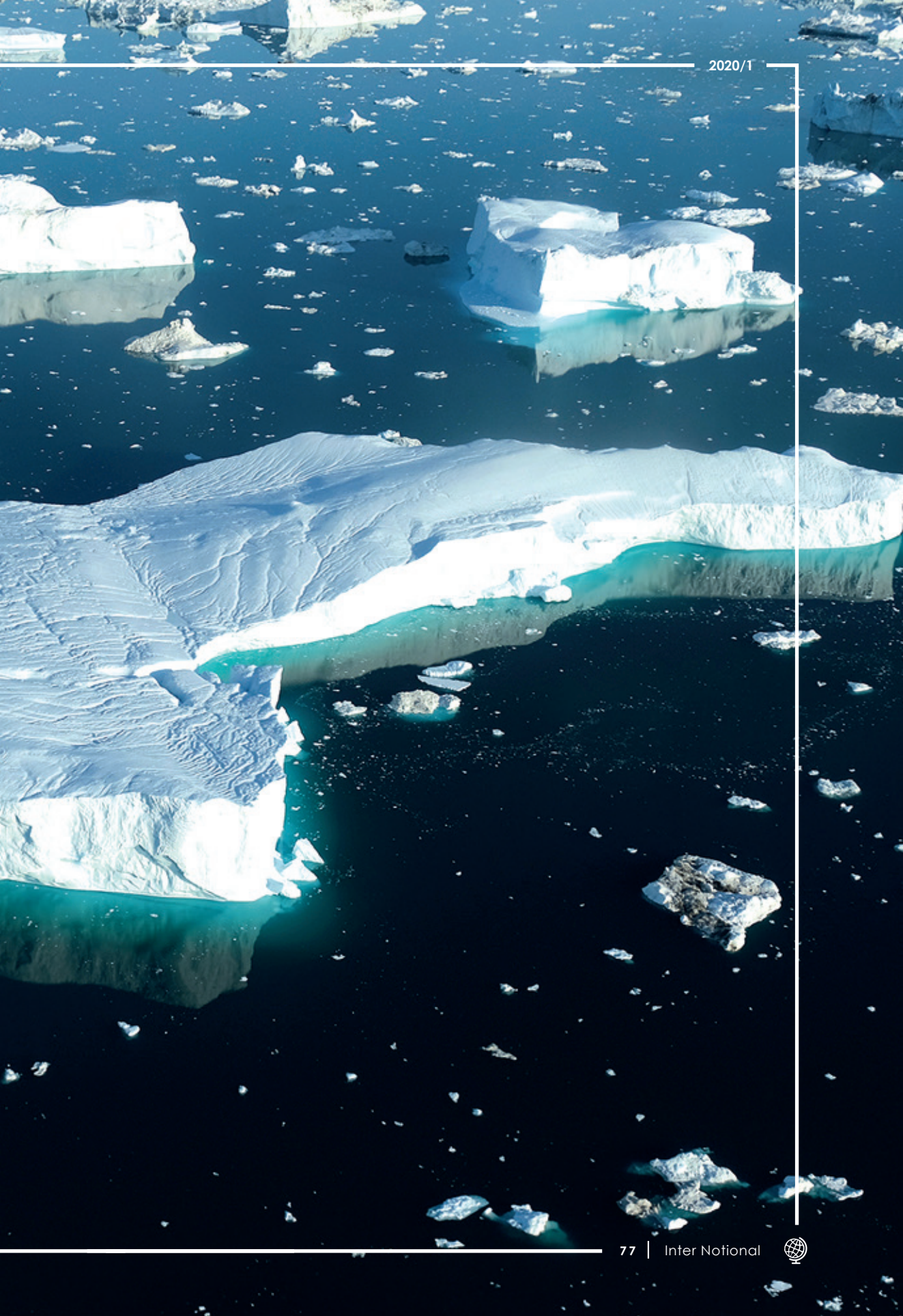
What are the reasons of protestors?

- Unemployment
- Poverty
- Cost of living
- The glorious life of the ruling elite
- Ethnic and denominational seperation
- Insufficiency of public services
- Political pressures



Focus on Climate Change in 2019: What Motivates Climate Change Activism?

HUTHAIFAH BUSUULWA



Mankind has always lived on this planet earth and enjoyed its abundant resources to their hearts' content, but the idea that the earth is a finite planet threatened by our very own activities has only received a proper attention since the late 1960s. Since then efforts have been gradually intensified to ensure that the worst would not come, so that this planet is protected and preserved for future generations. Despite the various campaigns held to raise awareness about the upcoming crisis, results still indicate that we are losing the fight. Global emissions are reaching record levels, evident in the fact that the last four years were the hottest world temperature on record while winter temperatures in the Arctic have risen by 3 degrees since 1990 according to the United Nations Climate Action. The reaction to this dilemma is ironically two-folds; more activists are stepping up their pro-climate action campaigns while sceptics are also increasingly becoming more cynical and in denial to the crystal clear facts.

On September 20th young climate activists delivered a strong message about how they care about their future and the future of the earth. Inspired by Swedish teen activist Greta Thunberg, the youths staged a global climate strike and threatened world leaders that their inaction on climate change would have grave consequences, beginning with being voted out of Office. Greta Thunberg had started a school strike on climate in August 2018 outside the Swedish Parliament. It galvanized into

regular Friday demonstrations by school-going children to show awareness about climate change and to remind the leaders and elders to do more to ameliorate the climate crisis. These children believe that they have to take centre stage in this fight because they would be the ones who would suffer more and longer if the environment deteriorates. They fear for what would become of the earth.

But not everyone appears to notice about the strikes or about the reasons behind them. Aside from scepticism about the crisis, there is also the increasing politicization of climate change. Identity and climate change are more intertwined than is covertly expressed. Understanding the course of action on climate change thus necessitates a study of the values

Disagreements on difficult issues like climate change may not be easily allayed and the best outcome may not be winning the debate.

and motivations of those campaigning about it. Disagreements on difficult issues like climate change may not be easily allayed and the best outcome may not be winning the debate (for this could be hardly attained, especially where uncertainty reigns) but instituting processes that more people can agree upon to guide all through an outcome that could be welcomed by the majority. This is a challenge, but not impossible to achieve. Studying people's values is a vital effort towards compromise to bear fruit. Some people favour radical solutions for fear that postponing action may lead to devastating and

irreversible impacts. On the other hand, taking immediate action might actually harm the even earth more due to lack of studies concerning the actions taken. The best course of action in our midst is continued dialogue and deliberation in order to at least arrive at a middle ground.

After all we are beginning to experience that certain agents hitherto considered detrimental might metamorphose into means towards the goal we all seek. One such agent is capitalism.

Capitalism, which at first seemed an enemy of the climate, has changed face, this time being fronted as the planet's best friend. In 2010, coal supplied nearly half of America's power and was estimated to grow even further. Renewable energy was not counted as a reliable option. Yet, just a few years down the road, and in a remarkable turnaround, this year, for the very first time, renewable energy supplied more power to America's grid than coal. Wind and solar has become the cheapest forms of power in at least two-thirds of the world, Battery prices have fallen 84 % in less than a decade according to a report by Bloomberg. Why? It is because renewable energy is now more profitable in most of the world. From Europe to China, solar and wind plants are getting ahead of unsubsidized fossil-fuel plants. It appears that it is profit, not good-will, that is driving progress that had seemed to be out of range just a decade ago.

In the developing world, coal still dominates. China, despite its investments in renewable energy is still the biggest coal consumer. Indonesia is projected to nearly double its coal usage in the next 25 years. This divide highlights a dilemma that is yet to be effectively resolved. Developed countries can afford to transform their energy sources, but for developing countries their choice is rather limited. The developing world may still see it as their right to harness nature more to spur economic growth and bridge their development gaps. These developed countries, they might say,

are already developed, have the capacity to manoeuvre, and are largely to blame for the crisis anyway. Why and how can we (developing countries) be expected to forego the same opportunities to harness nature for the benefit of our people?

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A solution to this conundrum was devised in form of carbon offsets. The idea is that the developed world, with her wealth resources should subsidize developing countries' efforts to sustain the environment. The objective of carbon offset is to provide extra income to motivate continued sustainability. The developing world provides her untapped resources such as forests with a promise to keep it intact. For this sacrifice, monetary and other resources are extended by the developed countries. This

system appears rational, and a win-win solution. Take for instance the arrangement announced at the Climate Action Summit in New York. The Central African Forest Initiative (CAFI) announced not long ago that Gabon would be paid US\$150 million in international funds to preserve its forests. Norway, the leading country, will extend the funds over a period of ten years to reduce greenhouse emissions. Gabon boasts that up to 80% of its land mass covered with forests. It is envisaged that the fund will help the country maintain 98% of the forests.

Yet, this system has its own limitations. It is difficult to have an accurate valuation of the forestry resources and the sacrifice that is endured by the fund recipient countries. Secondly, there is debate on whether it is enough for the industrialised countries to continue their emissions as long as they offset the greenhouse gasses somewhere else on the planet.



At the same summit the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres identified priority areas to curb greenhouse gas emissions and increase global action on adaptation and resilience. These included mobilizing resources from public and private sources to foster decarbonisation, accelerating the shift away from fossil fuels towards renewable energy, transforming industries such as oil and gas, advancing mitigation at urban and local levels, advancing global efforts to manage impacts of climate change, to generate momentum for the Paris Agreement, to mobilize people especially the youths worldwide to take action on climate change, and to advance commitments made to protect vulnerable people. The summit was to later witness a litany of promises and pledges from world leaders except most noticeably, US President Donald Trump.

Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdogan informed delegates that the country had planted 4 billion trees in the past 17 years and is set to plant 11 million trees in a day on November 11. He further revealed that Turkey had reduced plastic bag consumption by 75 %, and initiated a zero-waste campaign that has so far been taken on by 18,750 public institutions. The president acknowledged, “Turkey is well aware that fighting climate change requires taking local action,” but “Climate change is a global issue whose solutions require regional, international cooperation”. Brazilian president Jair Bolsonaro was not convinced that global action, embodied by fervent commentary around the world is the way to go and chastised leaders who blamed him over the country’s management of the Amazon forest fires. “It is a fallacy

to say that the Amazon is a heritage of humankind, and it is a misconception, as scientists claim, to say that our forest is the lungs of the world”. For the Brazilian president, the forest is a matter of Brazil, not the whole world.

This debate indicates the larger involvement of political Identity in climate change. Over the recent past, the majority of environmental activists identify themselves as progressive liberals. On the other hand, conservatives especially Republicans in the United States have also generally galvanized themselves as sceptics, fighting to protect their interests against the environmentalists whom they see as imposing their identity beliefs on others and radicalism. Climate change in thus becomes entangled in the divisive partisan politics. This could partly explain Trump’s unilateral withdrawal from the Paris Agreement and the United States’ absence on the climate change action front. Trump decided not to take part at the UN Climate Action Summit as other world leaders made pledges and action plans to solve the climate change crisis.

At an individual level, apart from the broader identity that one attaches him/herself, there are two main motivations that guide their practical considerations on the environment. These are endogenous motivations and exogenous motivations.

Endogenous motivations

Some people are motivated to act on climate change because of reasons that

*Countries
in Western
Europe have
shown that
it is possible
to protect the
environment
without
sacrificing
the economic
gains
entirely.*

can best be described as endogenous. They are inspired to act because of reasons such as personal interest in the field, fear for what the future could be and love for their family among others. These are often independent motivations forged not from the outside but from within the person's interests.

Many of them studied courses related to energy and the environment and realized that in order to do justice to their education they had to work in the sector. Some did this because they hold the knowledge they acquired in high esteem while others found it easier to join the climate field. Nonetheless, here education is seen as the main motivating factor. In our research conducted to study the motivations of climate actors, respondents from both Portugal and Turkey often mentioned education as a reason for their involvement in the issue of climate change when asked to give a background of their participation.¹ In other cases, however, people choose to go beyond what they were taught in school and become motivated by other factors. Some value the principle of deliberation on the climate issues, and are even ready to drop convictions they had acquired from education. This deliberation has lately centered about whom to blame for the environmental crisis. A sizeable number of people think that humans are responsible for climate change, while the 'Anthropocene', contrasted by others, believe that the role of humans is very limited or negligible in the broader sense. The proponents of the theory of the Anthropocene say that recent actions of human have worsened the environment and fear that if things continue the future will be bleak.

Exogenous motivations

The source of motivation in this category is external to the actor or their immediate others like children and relatives. It does not mean however that the strength of motivation is questioned, far from it. An externally generated motivation can still be the key reason for action surpassing all others in value attached.

Developments in the European Union and its policies have been a major guiding principle for climate change actions. Many respondents looked at other countries in Europe such as Germany as inspiration. There is a general belief that these countries have achieved tremendously in respect to streamlining action necessary to ensure a low carbon economy. Countries in Western Europe have shown that it is possible to protect the environment without sacrificing the economic gains entirely.

This is crucial because in most countries wealth accumulation is still very important as a factor that very few countries can be willing to sacrifice. Thus, when the actors see how Western Europe manages to sustain the balance between ecology and economics, they may feel attracted and tempted to emulate the same. Or perhaps they may be cajoled into emulation. Either way, climate and the question of what to do about it linger to the fore of the agenda.

End Notes

- 1 "Değişen Değerler ve öncelikler: Portekiz ve Türkiye'deki Sanayicilerde Ekolojik Akıl Yürütme Ve Karar Verme," Unpublished TUBITAK Project, ARDEB, SOBAG. 115K370.





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Islamophobia, Xenophobia, Multiculturalism, and Germany

August 10, 2018

by Zülfiye Zeynep Baker



Kenyan Muslims

March 10, 2017



South Sudan

March 6, 2017



Baltic Muslims

May 22, 2017

by Yavuz Karimoğlu



Ghanaian Muslims

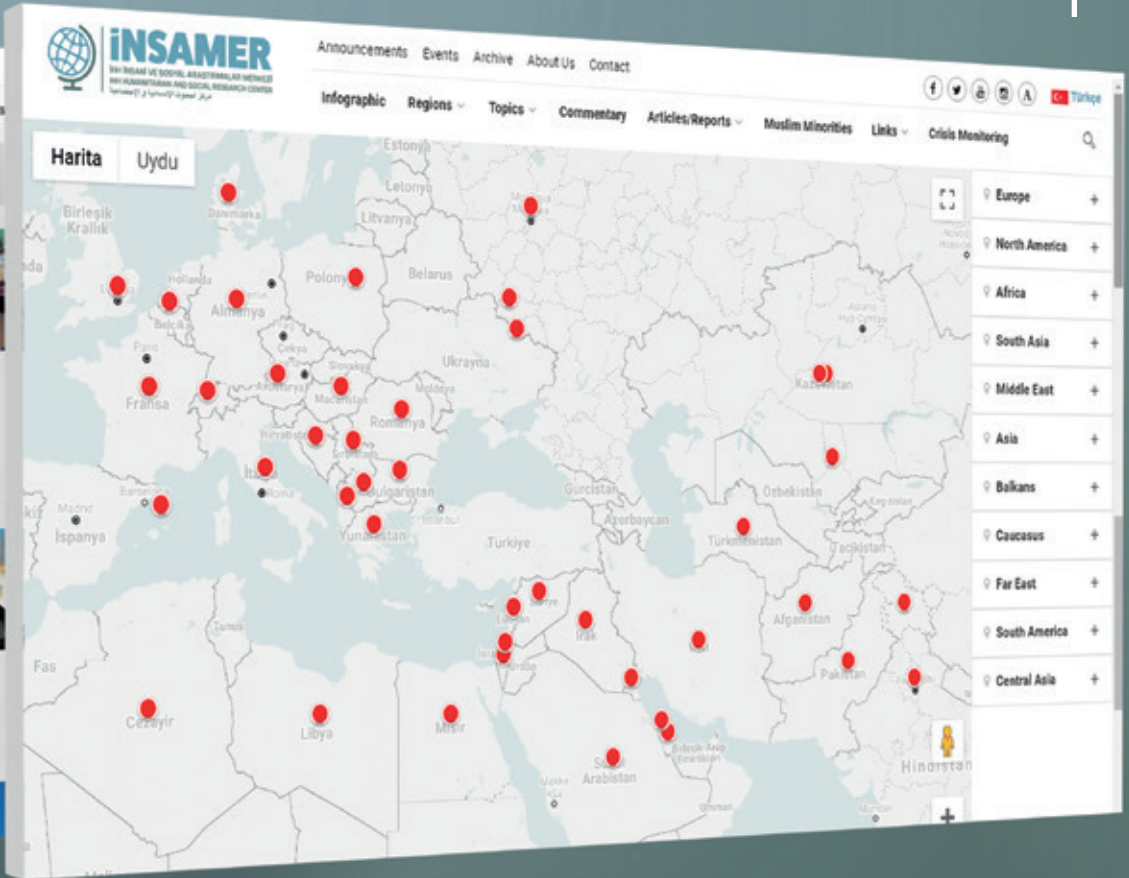
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Macedonia

November 3, 2016





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