

# Turkey... from the Accession Dream to the European Union, to the Policy of the “Neo-Ottomanism”



## Studies

Al-Furat Center for Studies- Translation Department

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This study evokes the features, aspects, and objectives of the “Neo-Ottomanism”, which has been said and written a lot about it, and it has almost been studied thoroughly, taking into account that this tendency, policy, or ideology has only been declared verbally by its engineer; Ahmad Davodoglu. It has never been within the documentary context and the political content as strategic platforms for the (AKP) party’s tendency, but it has now become at the core of the ruling party’s orientations under the leadership of Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

The concept of the “Ottomanism” has been attempted to be briefed before plunging into some secrets of Justice and Development Party’s emergence, which had emerged in a specific period of time and for specific aims i.e. according to the need and the interests of the hegemonic powers, noting the assigned role to this party based on those interests. Its transitional period had been set as well, in terms of its relationship with the World Order and its transition to the “Neo-Ottomanism” as a policy holds an insurgency upon those powers that have made it (Justice and Development Party).

The concept and policy of the” Neo-Ottomanism” based on many dimensions: cultural and historical, economic, military and strategically and geopolitical dimension. These dimensions have been defined to understand the strategy of the “Neo-Ottomanism” theoretically, and the ability to be activated was practically being studied, and the core of this project and its objectives have become clear. It shows the adaptation of those in charge of this project, moving into two directions: one of them is a pluralist Islamic and the other is Turanian Islamic.

The policy of "neo-Ottomanism" relied on several means of spread and expansion, and the Islamic religion stands at the head of the list, whereby religion is politicized and systematically and institutionally adapted to serve the purposes and goals of the "Neo-Ottomanism" in a process of exploitation that is unparalleled. Whereas, the civil, religious, and relief organizations of the Turkish administration play a

hidden role, and they constitute the veil that various activities and events of the religious movements are being done behind it, in which the AKP Party relies on to pass its project. In this context, the Turkish Drama can be seen as one of those means, in addition to Turkey's exploitation of the need for projects and investments to develop their economic capabilities for economically under-developed countries.

The AKP uses many tools to implement this project, and Extremist Islamic Organizations are considered one of the most crucial tools, and Ankara's ties to most of these extremist movements have been documented, starting with al-Qaeda, in both of its branches in Asia and Africa, to the Islamic State and its affiliates. As well as the Muslim Brotherhood, which stands at the top of the pyramid. The Gray Wolves organization is also one of the most important tools, as it is highly organized and has branches, camps, and sympathizers, and it enjoys a distinct relationship with the AKP Party because it has a Turanian tendency, and calls for an integration of the Turkish Identity with the Islamic Religion.

In the final axis, the areas targeted by Erdogan and his party were identified, and they were distributed according to Geopolitical divisions, and it turns out that these areas are characterized with some kind of exclusiveness for the (AKP) party, it is either regions and Islamic countries, and Turkey, or areas where the Turks and Muslims live.

The study concluded with identifying the forces and parties affected by this project and identifying the deterring forces to him, and the recommendations focused on supporting these deterrent forces, being the only powers that took on its responsibility to expose this policy, and then confront it.

## **Introduction**

In the twentieth century, Turkey unusually acquiesce to the idea of solitariness within the geopolitical region, named "the Turkish Republic", which was all of what is left of the Ottoman Empire legacy, after that the latter expanded across the globe in all directions, even if this expansion was at the time of the "Turks' Islamization", under the pretext of "conquest", as history mentions that their ancestors; (the Huns, the Hephthalites, the Mongols, the Tatars, and others) expanded before this Islamization, with no aim or purpose.

Therefore, one would think that it was only an expansion for the sake of expansion, and history is full of horrific stories about their spread and migrations; what they had left of the demolition and destruction of several civilizations; and the murder and displacement of the peoples who were exposed to the flow of their armies' legions.

The Ghaznavids and the Seljuk, and the Mongols followed the same steps, after their conversion to Islam, with the difference of the "Conquest pretext", until they established kingdoms in Afghanistan, India, on the borders of China, and in the Caucasus. Meanwhile, the Ottomans succeeded in reaching Western Anatolia and their incursion into the Balkans and they reached the outskirts of Europe, at the walls of Vienna, as well as in West Asia and North Africa.

Ataturk and his successors had been content with the borders of the Turkish Republic while keeping a covenant called the "Milli Pact", which seemed that it had calmed the warlords a little bit, and nothing has been achieved from the latter Pact, except cutting off Sanjak of Alexandretta and the occupation of Northern Cyprus.

As if the genes that control Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan by going back to the track and forcing him to return to the history of his ancestors, the new Ottoman wakes up from the Ataturk's slumber to proceed with the march where Mustafa Kemal had stopped. Therefore, he will go on in the expansion project for the sake of expansion only, which brings nothing but authoritarianism over the peoples' necks, and stealing of nations' resources, and eliminating and erasing cultures.

However, whether the Turkish president knows or does not, the project is a march against the flow and a tweet outside the swarm of hegemonic powers that created him and his party, which is a clear and announced coup against these powers, thus, the consequences are expected to be dire.

Iran works to achieve the Shiite Crescent Project, while Turkey activated the Sunni belt Project, by extending its arms, through the Muslim Brotherhood Organization and other Islamic Movements, in each of the countries that it considers as a legacy of the Ottoman State in the Middle East, North Africa, and Eastern Europe. Besides that, the (AKP) party adds to the Turkish Republics in Central Asia, using tools and means to be discussed throughout this study;

Besides a general identification of the targeted areas in the "New Ottoman" project and policy.

### **Firstly; Justice and Development Party and its Rule in the “Neo-Ottomanism”**

"Ottomanism" was meant the abandoning of the nations (Muslims and non-Muslims) their cultural characteristics, and the decomposition of the political system i.e. to assimilate all the nations under the slogan of the Ottomanism's umbrella. While Islam was the other additional link that brought the Turks together with the Arabs, Kurds and other Islamic peoples who were suffering under the weight of Ottoman rule for centuries.

Necmettin Erbakan developed a road map for the new Ottoman in the name of "Mullah Gurush", meaning the nationalist thought; in 1969, the first Turkish party with an official Islamic character had been formed since the fall of the Ottoman Empire in 1924. They all have dreams of restoring the "Ottoman Heritage".

The AKP party was reproduced by the triad of the global hegemony (America, Britain, Israel), in order to support the interests of these powers in the region and to be used by confronting the Iranian Shiite nationalism, the Arabic radical Islamism, and the Arab secular nationalism and then adapt them all in favor of the hegemonic order. The beginning was from the coup of September 12, 1980, by adopting the composition of the new Turkish Islam to serve the global hegemonic, and making it a modified version of capitalist nationalism, to stand up against the patriotic powers and to eradicate them. Besides, the hegemonic powers need an Islamism Movement to break the back of the Soviet Union and stand up against the "Iranian Revolution". Hence, the roots of the (AKP) party extend to the coup of September 12, 1980, because the hegemonic powers no longer needed - at that time - racism and fascism, as much as they needed those who claiming a moderate Islam that biased towards financial capital( fascism/the Green Turkic).

Erdogan demanded from the hegemonic powers to reduce the military's burden on running the state, not weave coups against it, and double his share of the gains from the exploitation of the Middle East in exchange for serving his party for them. He had what he



wanted, as he was allowed to subjugate the army and to control foreign affairs, in return, the AKP would play this role.

In a crucial point, Mr. Abdullah Ocalan points out that the aspects of engagement of this part between the hegemony powers and Turkey are an agreed-upon struggle (such as the Davos forum play, for example) while the contradictions that will arise from doubling the share will be real. It confirms that the complete harmony between the AKP and the hegemonic order is inevitable, unless it perks and revolts against the hegemonic order by getting closer to Iran and making an alliance with radical Islam, or even with a moderate Islam tendency. He is going to face a destiny that is not too much different from the destiny of his predecessors and Republican and People's Party (RPP) preceding him.

The Welfare Party was called the Virtue Party after it was banned in 1998, and it was soon banned in 2001 as well. The dissidents from the Islamic Movement the Felicity Party (Turkish: Saadet Partisi) in particular were established, the (AKP) party led by Abdullah Gul and Recep Tayyip Erdogan, which was able to attract different social groups through a new financial policy during the economic crisis that Turkey lived in 2002. It was able, in early elections in November 2002, to gain 34% of the votes, and the percentage of 336 seats for his representatives out of 550 deputies. This was the first time that a political party can take over the functions of government without having to form a coalition since 1987.

The party adopted the Liberalism in Economy as its aim in domestic politics; at the beginning, the accession into the European Union was a priority in foreign policy. The main shift was that the Justice and Development is an Islamic party that does not see in the Muslim identity and joining the European Union two contradictory matters; it no longer poses a threat to secularism and the republic. It has become the party, which insists on the fact that Turkey should take its place in the European Union.

The doors of Europe were closed in the face of Turkey, as Ankara failed to achieve the required criteria for joining. In conjunction with the party leaders' statements that they were fed up and tired of demanding to join the EU, until the party turned against all the

principles it had previously adopted, and its president revealed the true Islamic Brotherhood's face. He started with the Kurdish issue, ending all the truce tracks and all attempts at reconciliation and finding real democratic solutions to solve this issue. He also started suppressing many media freedoms; especially after the failed coup in September 2016, along with many social freedoms, then attacked the parliamentary system and turned it into a presidential system, eliminating all of its rivals both friends and opponents, and invoking the past with all its ramifications. He began to adopt all Islamic, Ottoman, and Turanian compounds as compensation for the failure of joining the European Union, and moving towards achieving regional and international gains at the expense of the Arabs, Greeks, Kurds, and Europeans, within the new Ottoman policy of Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

### **Secondly; the Strategy of the “Neo Ottomanism”**

Some studies indicate the emergence of the term "neo-Ottomans" by Greeks, due to Turkey's invasion of Cyprus' territories, to denote the brutality of the Turkish occupation and their barbarism likewise their ancestors (the early Ottomans). It seems that the Turkish officials accepted the name and circulated it, and they did not deny it later. Ahmet Davutoglu adopted it by saying: “They say about us that we are the very Ottomans... Yes, we are the new Ottomans.”

The ideology or policy of the "Neo-Ottoman" is based on several dimensions, including the historical-cultural dimension, the economic dimension, the military dimension, and the geopolitical and strategic dimension.

The historical-cultural dimension stems from the attempt of the Turkish Islamic tendency to bridge the gap created by Atatürk through the cognitive, cultural, and political rupture with the modern Anatolian history represented by the history of the Ottoman Empire on one hand, and by the Turanian world on the other. The history of the Ottoman Empire had gone through a period of underdevelopment and political and military setbacks. It will not be long for the reader of the events to discover the contradictions that will be caused by visions and opinions of both parties in the Ottoman history; especially with regard to the attempts of the "neo-Ottoman"

to restore the "glories of the Ottoman state" at the time, in leading and managing the affairs of most Islamic countries.

As for the Turanism side, the dissolution of the Soviet Union led to the emergence of the "Turkish Republics" in Central Asia that reflected the concept of the "Turkish Umbrella", and the "Turkish world", which provided Turkey with a new space of influence in the face of the diminished size of the opportunity to join the European Union. Throughout the sense of belonging to a "bigger Turkish world", especially after Turkey became the focus of attention of the leaders of these new republics, and became a pole of attraction for them. After Ankara arranged matters for its accession to the global order in several directions, including getting its membership in the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe in 1992, and presenting its issues on The United Nations to decide on the issue of its membership in the World Organization and other local and regional measures.

In the economic dimension, the Islamic movement adopted economic policies that differed from the stalled economic activities of the ruling political parties in Turkey. Except of the Turgut Ozal period, who sought to implement clear economic reforms in light of the fundamental change that began with the September 1980 coup, when the Turkish State took the lead to open the country's doors to the global economic system? Whereas the ruling Islamist party relied on building an Islamic -Capitalist political economy (green capital) in its economic philosophy, through which it seeks to compete with the dominant global system.

As for the military dimension, Turkey has pursued a policy of modernizing and strengthening its military program in all periods and has spent billions of dollars. In addition to the aid provided by the West to Ankara to counter the expansion of the Soviet Union, until its army became the second most powerful army in NATO after the United States of America. After Ankara had despaired of its orientation towards the West, its military policy witnessed profound transformations, starting with refusing open cooperation with its allies



in NATO. It refused to engage in the military operation against Iraq, it went to buy Russian weapons in contradiction to the spirit of NATO, it has bought the S-400 missile system, and it is currently heading towards purchasing Russian warplanes as well. Thus, it aspires to build its own defense system as a precaution against the possibility of confronting its allies, due to its new policy. In addition to its ambition to become a major regional military power in its geopolitical perimeter.

The geopolitical and strategic dimension in the idea of "neo-Ottomanism" is based on the theory of "strategic depth" that assumes that the geopolitical location of Turkey makes it ready to move freely in all directions and in both regional and international levels, especially the regional neighborhoods have a double significance to preserve its security and achieve its interests. Therefore, the "neo-Ottomans" had to end the Turkish estrangement with the Middle East region and its issues that had been going on for decades, and to get out of the isolation's status within the Anatolian Plateau, and to stop acting as a peripheral state in the Western world system and NATO.

The geographical location of Turkey also defines its strategic significance, in several areas (political, economic, military ... and others). Ankara has sought to take advantage of its strategic position between Asia and Europe in passing its foreign policies - regional and international - in a way, which preserves for itself a significant role in international politics. . At the regional level, it pursued a policy of "zero problems" with the neighborhood to achieve political, military, and economic interests by relying on historical relations with neighboring countries and the countries of the region from Asia to Africa, reaching some of Balkan Countries. While pursuing a policy of "ending dependency" to the West and creating an active and effective role for Ankara in international forums.

But, the theoretical propositions differ from its application, to what extent can the new Ottomans realize these ambitions; especially after Recep Tayyip Erdogan became the sole ruler and removed all his partners out of his way, headed by Ahmet Davutoglu, the architect of the term of the "new Ottoman" policy with its aforementioned dimensions? Can Erdogan get out from serving the global hegemonic system and from serving the interests of the triad (America - Europe - Israel), in which they produced him and his party?

Davutoglu affirmed on several occasions the adoption of the term "Neo-Ottomans", while Erdogan hesitated at first, but he soon used the term and started to repeat it whenever he had the opportunity. However, the concept of "neo-Ottomanism" differs from Erdogan to Davutoglu, as In this context, Erdogan seeks to restore the defunct Ottoman caliphate by 2024 i.e. a hundred years after its collapse, by regaining a foothold in the former Ottoman states, and by considering the Muslim Brotherhood organization as a "Future Caliphate". Based on the Turkish experience in the Middle East since the Seljuks until his reign, he uses the Islamic and Ottoman umbrella in addition to the Turanian umbrella. He derives a lot of racism from Ataturk and mixes it with the economic, political, military and strategic the premises that express the spirit of "Neo-Ottomanism" for Davutoglu, and it relies on the experience of Ottoman expansion as an inspiring basis for it, whether on the level of influence or direct occupation.

In essence, this project represents the recapture and spread in the areas that Ankara considers some of it as the heritage of the Ottoman Empire, while others are part of the new Turkish world after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

### **Thirdly; the Expanding and Spreading Means of the “Neo-Ottomanism”**

#### **1- Islamic Religion:**

Religion is the decisive tool in Turkish foreign policy after the (AKP) party came to power, and what confirms this is Turkey's endeavor to attract Muslims across the world through building mosques, trying to restore the Ottoman heritage, and showing itself as the leader of the Islamic world. The mosque-building program is an essential part of Turkey's strategy in this direction, especially since the Presidency of Turkish Religious Affairs (Diyanet) has significantly expanded its offices at the global level during Erdogan's rule. The Turkish president managed to expand his sphere of influence throughout this institution amongst the Turkish diaspora throughout Europe and America. "Diyanet" takes care of the salaries of the Imams (preachers) who are being deployed from Turkey and takes control of the sermons that they must deliver the sermons are the same as those delivered on Friday in Turkish Mosques and are issued from the Diyanet headquarters in Ankara.

(Diyanet) is active in 145 Countries, and it also supervises mosques' expenses and supervises education projects and humanitarian aid outside Turkey, and Diyanet's budget for 2018 amounted to 10.4 billion Turkish Liras, which is an increase of about 45% over 2017.

The Turkish president is busy now mobilizing support for the idea of a Muslim Country obtaining a permanent seat in the Security Council. At the same time fighting the issue of "Islam phobia" is another project that he and his government bring up in every occasion, which leads Erdogan to believe that "if the matter was in the hands of the people, they would elect him as a leader, and it seems that he really believes this."

## **2- The Civilians and Religious Organizations**

The "Union of NGOs in the Islamic World"(UNIW) was the appropriate veil to build and support relations between Ankara and the Muslim Brotherhood. In theory, it seems that the Union is not involved in any political activity, which helped to work freely, and it has spread in the Arab countries without any obstacles. Thus, it was not weird for the Muslim Brotherhood to establish dozens of associations in a single Arab country for the sake of domination and control, and then they submit voluntarily its keys to Erdogan Union.

On December 31, 2005, Erdogan issued a decision to establish the Union of NGOs in the Islamic World, based in Istanbul, to be a veil for the Brotherhood activities and events inside Turkey. It will also be a bridge to connect with Brotherhood organizations in the Arab region under the veil of "Civil Associations". The new organization includes several institutions and endowments in Turkey and a number of Arab and Islamic countries, their numbers reach 354 organizations in 60 countries according to the organization's data itself, and inside Turkey; the Union includes a number of associations that guarantee the provision of funding resources for Erdogan's agenda and the idea of "Ottomanism".

There is also the State's Education Association (Ma'arif Foundation), which played an active role in spreading the Turkish model of religious education abroad, by providing educational scholarships, building schools and students' dormitories, and training teachers. Turkey is also working to attract students from other countries to receive religious education in Imam Hatip International Schools in

cities such as Istanbul, Caesarea (Kayseri), and Konya, and more than a thousand students from 76 countries learned in these schools within 2014-2015.

### **3- The Relief Organizations**

The Turkish Red Crescent (TRC) allocates aid to support the "Muslim Brotherhood" group in Somalia, Yemen, Sudan, Libya, and others. This organization carries out the aid campaigns through its funding clients in all its branches in order to set up a stable link between the Extremist Groups and the Turkish Regime and to offer all material aid: money and luggage to jihadist camps in order to continue their terrorist acts. Arousing suspicion around them because they usually wear jackets that have the logo of an organization that is supposed to be neutral even in times of war. Inquiries and investigations revealed the use of the Turkish Red Crescent in weapons smuggling operations and intelligence work under the name and symbol of the organization, as well as in hiding illegal shipments and delivering them to the Extremists in Syria.

### **4- The Turkish Drama Guiding towards Reviving the Ottoman Heritage:**

The Government of Justice and Development used Turkish drama series, which dealt with the Ottoman Era, in forging facts in order to improve the image of the Ottomans in eyes of the world. The process of preparing and producing these series was under the supervision of the (AKP) party. Likewise, the famous series; Resurrection: Ertugrul, which was shown in four seasons, and the series of the capital of Abd al-Hamid, then the Muhammad al-Fatih series, as well as the series of "Al-Kut and Amara". the rest of the drama that embodies and mimic the establishment of the Ottoman Empire and the periods of rule, and through which Turkey works to highlight the " Epics "of the history of the Ottoman Empire for Muslims both inside and outside Turkey, as well as for the originated Turkish world after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

On the other hand, the recent drama work "Kingdoms of Fire" - which is a joint Arab Drama series - came in response to the method of promoting the new foreign policy through Drama. The work revealed the truth of the Ottomans and their crimes in the region and revealed their ambitions to control the region within the policy that Erdogan is currently implementing.

## **5- Exploiting the Bad Economic Situation of some Countries:**

Ankara intended to win some poor countries to its side through investment operations and economic aid in them, especially the countries that were under Ottoman control: Sudan, Somalia, and Djibouti.

### **Fourthly; the Expanding and Spreading Tools of the “Neo-Ottomanism”**

#### **1- Islamic Extremist Organizations:**

##### **a- Al-Qaeda:**

The support of both Turkey and Qatar for the Al-Qaeda Group (Al-Nusra Front) in Syria is a matter that can no longer be concealed. The Nordic Monitor Website revealed a secret document in December 2019 confirming the involvement of both Ankara and Doha in supporting this organization. Important documents to the British Court revealed part of the Qatari funding for Al-Nusra Front in Syria; affiliated to Al-Qaeda. Qatar provided the ransom payment process in huge sums for some detainees held by the organization. This exposed the funding of this organization, In addition to the clear relationship between Ankara and the Al-Nusra Front, except for what is hidden about their support with money and weapons. Owing to the fact that the leader of the organization, Abu Muhammad al-Julani received publicly his treatment in Antakya hospitals after he was injured in the head because of an explosion in Idlib city.

Information derived from judicial documents stating that the Turkish Intelligence Agency (MIT) sent hundreds of thousands of dollars to the Somali Youth Movement by one of the former detainees in Guantanamo Prison, Ibrahim Sen, who had been arrested in Pakistan for his connection with Al-Qaeda. Furthermore, who had been proved to be working for Turkish Intelligence, and he used to supervise the transfer of terrorists to Syria and vice versa; In addition to other reports indicating that Qatar; Turkey's first ally funds of extremist organizations in Somalia, in which making this country live the tragedy of terrorism to this very day.

To complete the Turkish role, Erdogan assigned the Turkish Religious Affairs Presidency (Diyanet) to fieldwork. Through religious

counselors, to play a suspicious role in Syria and consolidate Turkey's ideological role after its direct military intervention in some of Syria's territories.

### **b- Islamic State Organization:**

Regarding Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), dozens of media reports revealed that thousands of fighters who joined ISIS had crossed the border with Turkey; as well as providing logistical services and using Turkish Hospitals to treat ISIS fighters, arranging the process of their recruitment and training, and funding them with money and weapons.

In interviews conducted by Al-Furat Center for Studies with a number of ISIS detainees held by the Syrian Democratic Forces(SDF), all of them confirmed that the entry of ISIS elements was through facilities were provided by smuggling networks linked to the Turkish Intelligence agency(MIT). "The 40,000 ISIS jihadists come from more than 110 countries around the world. They entered Syria via the Turkish border. Turkey did not close its borders", Brett McGurk said, the former US envoy to the international coalition against ISIS, he confirmed these facts through statements he made when Turkey began its aggression on the Eastern Euphrates.

Records of wiretapping between Ibrahim Sen, the aforementioned, and his partners showed how they planned to use Ambulances to transport supplies to extremist militants, to circumvent the prevention of pickup trucks of crossing into Syria, in addition to dozens of reports on the oil-trade relations between ISIS and Erdogan's son-in-law and his son.

### **c- The Muslim Brotherhood:**

The Union of NGOs in the Islamic World was the appropriate veil to support relations between Ankara and the Brotherhood's groups. Some studies indicate that Erdogan's personal relationship with this organization goes back to the 1970s, while other studies indicate that the relationship between the Brotherhood's Organization and Ankara goes back to the early 1960s of the last century. When Necmettin Erbakan published the statement with regard of building the group's brunch in Turkey that was called "Milli Görüş", in the Turkish word meaning "patriotic vision," and Erbakan was influenced by the Brotherhood organization and its leader in Egypt, "Sayyid Qutb".



Whereas, the relationship began clearly to appear in 2006, with Erdogan's control of the security institutions of the Turkish state. As Turkey began to host the group's meetings, and to receive its cadres who escape from Arab countries after their involvement in bloody crimes or hostile activities, therefore, Ankara turned into an international center for this organization, and its passage towards Europe countries, throughout using of Mosques and activities, as happened with the Turkish Islamic Union in Germany, "DITIB".

It is no longer hidden that the Muslim Brotherhood has taken the Syrian revolution, and the Syrian coalition has become the political wing of the "revolution", an obvious brotherhood body, and affiliated to Ankara according to agendas going back at least to 2006. This means that what had happened was not an arbitrary, but rather a Turkish - Muslim Brotherhood plan that has been well prepared. This vision is reflected through the militarization of the revolution first, and then blind submission of the coalition and its armed factions to the orders of the Turkish Intelligence (MIT). As what had happened in the unjustified withdrawals from several fronts with the Regime forces, and in the military intervention in Afrin and east of the Euphrates, and finally to go behind Erdogan's illusions, and they went to Libya after they left behind the cause that they have deluded some of the Syrian people that they represent.

## **2- The Grey Wolves:**

Turkish nationalist organization that has been formed in the late 1960s; its ideas based on Turanian principles that embrace the idea of the supremacy of the Turkish race and people. It calls for the restoration of their glories and history, and aims to unify the Turkic peoples in one state that stretches from the Balkans to Central Asia. Being inspired by the history of the Ottoman Empire, which gathered under its power many states in Asia, Europe, and Africa. The organization also calls for the integration of the Turkish identity with the Islamic religion in one combination.

The organization has a large number of camps (1,700 branches), with about 200,000 officially registered members; In addition to a million sympathizers, the movement has been able to supply its camps with Turkish fighters and students since the 1980s and has trained them intellectually and militarily to use them as the main force participating in political violence. This organization is being described as a "death squad", in which it conducts assassinations

operations against figures who disagree the relationship between the organization and the ruling (AKP) party has been out in the open since the referendum of 2017. Which moved Turkey from the parliamentary system to the presidential system, and although the links between the organization and AKP are not new, similar to gangs like Osmanli Ojak, Alberin Ojak and others from Movements that serve intellectually the hard line of the “neo-Ottomans”. It is classified as a terrorist organization by the United States, Russia, and European countries.

However, it constitutes an attempt to achieve the goal of the Turkish President, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, to declare himself "the Sultan" for an alleged new Ottoman Caliphate that he dreams to build.

Afrin and the Syrian arena in general witness the presence of the Islamists supported by Ankara. In addition to militias of Turkish nationalists, on top of which is the "gray wolves" that have already lost a number of their senior leaders in the organization due to their participation in the Syrian conflict. Ankara used the Gray Wolves militia alongside ISIS, Al-Nusra militia, and armed gangs to control northern Syria at the expense of the blood of innocent citizens. The Turkish Newspaper “Intizar” stated in its report in February 2016.

The Gray Wolves organization supports the Turkish movements in Central Asia, including the East Turkestan Independence Movement in the Republic of China. It has set up training camps for Uyghur youth (Chinese of Turkish origin), most of them are positioned in the Xinjiang region in western China, and China has considered it one of the main terrorist organizations, as well as its movements in the Crimea, Russia, Azerbaijan, and other Turkic Republics. In Europe, Germany monitored the movements of an organization adopting extremist nationalist Turkish positions, and a supporter of the ruling Turkish AKP Party, the group "Osmanen Germania", which adopts Turkish nationalist and extremist right-wing positions.

## **Fifthly; the Targeted Areas in the Policy of the “New-Ottomanism”**

### **1- The Middle East:**

#### **a- Syria:**

Turkey entered into the line of the Syrian crisis, and the Turkish government decided to withdraw the employees of its embassy

and announce its position, which was represented by "supporting the Syrian people", and standing by the "rebel". It was one of the most instigators, alongside with Qatar, in fuelling the situations, until the situation had turned to the present chaos. Therefore, it has supported and assisted most of the armed factions, and it was the main gate for extremists to enter Syria and vice versa, and its relations with most of the fighting factions, especially the most extremist groups, have been documented; ISIS, al-Nusra, the Nour al-Din al-Zanki Movement, and others.

Erdogan considered the outbreak of the Syrian Crisis a valuable opportunity to support Islamic groups that would allow him to reach an advanced regional position, by taking advantage of the expected "success" of extremist Islamists in the region. He began providing unlimited support to armed factions in secret as well as in public, and attracted "political opposition" figures through giving them high salaries, in cooperation with Qatar, opening private offices for them, and bringing them together under the name of the "Opposition Coalition". This group have been dependent on the policies of the ruling Justice and Development Party and is still implementing only the wishes of its government.

The Brotherhood's influence on the political body of the opposition is quite clear. They constitute the most important weight in this body, and they are the group that Ankara mainly relies on, while the military structure deployed in conflict areas, and having Turkish protection and Qatari support, is made up of extremist Islamic factions that do not differ from ISIS and Al-Nusra in terms of field practices.

Turkey occupied a number of cities in northern Syria under the pretext of fighting the Kurds, but in fact, it is exploiting this reason to achieve its undeclared goal, by expanding in all areas covered by the "Milli Charter."

#### **b- Iraq:**

Under the pretext of protecting the Sunnis in Iraq, the Turkish president is trying to fuel sectarian quotas in the ethnic political geography, which complicates the situation of this country by supporting Sunni military militias with money, weapons, and training. Besides, moving his agents within the Brotherhood through its political wing, the "Islamic Party" to prepare the ground for the foothold of the alleged Ottoman Caliph.

Erdogan tried, before and during the battle of Mosul (16th of October, 2016 - 20th of July, 2017), by various ways, to participate in the process of liberating the second largest city in Iraq in terms of population after Baghdad, the capital, from the grip of the terrorist organization ISIS, which it occupied in 2014. As it is considered one of the most important areas of the "Milli Charter", in which Ankara claims that Mosul is an "Ottoman heritage" that it had forcibly abandoned after World War I under the Lausanne Treaty, therefore, Erdogan calls for the amendment of the Treaty that defined the current Turkish borders. Amid this political chaos, the role of the Iraqi Islamic Party, which is the political arm of the Brotherhood, emerged. According to its Secretary-General, Iyad al-Samarrai, he criticized the Iraqi position rejecting the Turkish intervention, claiming that Ankara wanted to help Iraq to restore security in Nineveh Governorate and its center, Mosul.

Turkey considers Mosul and Kirkuk to be Turkish territories, and it has the right to protect them. Ibrahim Kalan, the spokesperson for the Turkish presidency, stated, "Yes, there are Kurds and Arabs as well, but the basic identity of Kirkuk is that it is a Turkmen city." The Turkish politician added, "five thousand national volunteers at least are ready and waiting Join the fight for the presence, unity, and peace in the cities inhabited by Turkmen, especially Kirkuk, so the inclusion of Kirkuk in the constitutional and the independence referendum had angered Turkey.

### **c- Kurdistan:**

The dissolution of the Soviet Union resulted in radical geopolitical transformations in the Middle East, including the rise of the Kurdish issue to an international-global level, due to its connection with the role that Turkey assigned to itself in the geostrategic sphere extending from the Balkans to Anatolia, and from there to the Caucasus and Central Asia. The Kurdish issue was considered an obstacle that might put an end to what looks like the restoration of the Ottoman imperial sphere. The possibility of activating this role increased during the Syrian crisis when the Kurds were able to find a foothold in the international arena after they proved their high efficiency in confronting the Islamic State (ISIS). They now need to translate this role politically and diplomatically, and it will not be impossible when the political and international community realizes the danger of the new Ottoman expansion to their geostrategic interests.

As for the New Ottoman policy practiced by the (AKP) party in Kurdish geography. It was initially represented in an attempt to gain the support of the Kurdish population based on several tracks, including Erdogan's claim that the Kurdish issue is his cause, in conjunction with the expansion of the scope of the "anti-terrorism law", where even Kurdish children and women had been arrested. He contributed to the formation of a group of Kurdish Capitalism complicit with his agendas and established its centers in the important cities in southern and northern Kurdistan. He also founded civil society organizations pretending to be Kurdish and supplemented them with media that completely practiced psychological warfare against the Kurdish people, while opening the door for sports and artistic activities. In addition to the widespread politicization of the religion and the attempt to form, a "Kurdish Hamas" (named after the Palestinian Hamas organization, which was founded by the Mossad to weaken the Palestine Liberation Organization). In order to activate it and promote it to the top, with the establishment of religious secondary schools, the intensification of Quranic teaching courses and the building mosques to harness them all in favor of cultural elimination, and continuing in denying the Kurdish existence and obscuring the Kurdish struggle for freedom.

The Turkish economic centers have remarkably spread in southern Kurdistan and leaked into all sectors, from their contribution to the oil companies to invest in real estate companies, to general trade in all its details (food, service, health, etc.). Which constitutes an unparalleled Turkish economic penetration and makes Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) captive to the Turkish desires and doomed by its own will.

On the military level, the Turks established, before and after the AKP, several military bases in the Kurdistan region, which were spread in very sensitive locations, and it became difficult to demand their departure on the Iraqi and Kurdish levels. In western Kurdistan (Rojava), the Turkish forces, through its army and affiliated armed factions, seized the area between Jarablus and al-Bab first, then Afrin, and finally the area between Ras al-Ain / Serêkaniyê and Tal Abyad / Girê Spi, which are the heart centers of the "Milli Charter" Charter.



When realizing these facts, the issue of the huge Turkish fear of the Kurdish issue can be differently understood, as it has never been taken into account. The Kurdish role threatens the core of the idea of "Neo-Ottomanism", along with other challenges that Turkey faces, too. What increased the Turkish nationalism with an offensive spirit is the emergence of new Turkic states in Central Asia and the Caucasus after the collapse of the Soviet Union. As they contributed to create the appropriate climate, politically and intellectually, to move the Turkish umbrella project and Ankara played the leadership role for this vast world, which added a strict nationalistic character on the Turkish position with regard of the Kurdish issue.

#### **d- Egypt:**

Erdogan participated in planning to seize Egypt as part of the Muslim Brotherhood organization project called the "Great Caliphate"; he accompanied Turkish businessmen to Egypt in the hope of political and economic control over Egypt after the fall of Hosni Mubarak. However, his ambitions and hopes had faded away one year later when, the revolution of 30 June 2013 took place, the Egyptian army sided with the demands of the masses, and the Brotherhood's rule was ended.

Turkey withdrew its ambassador from Cairo after the overthrow of Muhammad Morsi and the Islamic Government and reduced diplomatic representation. The Turkish position seemed to destroy the bridges of the relationship with the official Egyptian leadership even in the long run. Erdogan stated, "Ankara will never respect those who came to power throughout a coup".

The Egyptian-Turkish relations witnessed a major upheaval with the outbreak of the Egyptian protests in January 2011, as Turkey supported them since the first days; Erdogan addressed a letter to Hosni Mubarak asking him to listen to the demands of his people. Ankara confirmed this through the Turkish President visit, Abdullah Gul as the first president to visit Egypt a month after Mubarak stepped down, and that was followed by the famous visit of Erdogan accompanied with him 208 of Turkish businessmen, with a warm welcome by the Brotherhood's supporters, and 20 trade deals were signed. It seemed that made the Brotherhood's tendency enthusiastic, which was looking forward to seizing the power in Egypt, the election resulted in the victory of their candidate, Mohamed Morsi, and both of them found support in each other.



Morsi's coming to power opened the way wide to form a new map in the Middle East. Both Ankara and Egypt would have represented an unprecedented regional weight for at least a hundred years, and two months had been passed since his assumption of power, Morsi was invited to attend the fourth conference of the (AKP) party in September 2012, and he was welcomed there. This period also witnessed a strong position of the Turkish-Egyptian on the Israeli war on Gaza in November 2012, which raised Israeli concerns about this approach.

Turkish dreams collapsed under the shock of the military coup carried out by Abdel-Fattah Al-Sisi, the Egyptian Defense Minister, on 3 July 2013. It is no secret that this coup was conducted by the rival camp to Erdogan in the Middle East, beginning from Israel to UAE and Saudi Arabia as well as Iran, which was upset by Morsi's position about the Syrian crisis, and it did not find in him the ally it was hoped.

The Turkish position was sharp and solid towards the military coup in Egypt. Turkey provided TV channels to the Egyptian opposition, which resorted to it, and hosted conferences and political events for them, and they started attacking the military coup and its policy. However, the opposition's weakness and its impotence to manage the battle against the Egyptian Regime were reflected in the level of Turkish rigidity represented by its request about Morsi's return to power. Gradually backing down to the demand of dropping his death sentence.

Egypt declared the Muslim Brotherhood a terrorist organization in late 2013, and the new Egyptian regime had begun to launch violent political, media, and diplomatic campaigns against Turkey, and devoted much of Egypt's resources and efforts to expose and obstruct Turkish policy. The Egyptian institutions moved in conjunction with Israel and the UAE in an attempt to destroy the Turkish influence, and Egypt concluded the Maritime boundary delimitation agreements with Cyprus and Greece. Turkey missed to get the access to oil fields in the Middle East, and contributed effectively to monitoring and following up the attempted military coup in Turkey on 15 September 2016.

#### **e- Palestine:**

Hamas's relations with Turkey, Qatar, and Iran come from the ideology to which Hamas belongs, which is the ideology of the Muslim Brotherhood. Hamas considered itself part of this organization in accordance with Article 2 of its Charter. Hamas leaders in Turkey saw them as a safe haven after they fled Syria following the outbreak of the civil war there. They were able to direct Hamas military cells in the

West Bank and Jordan and transfer hundreds of thousands of dollars to Hamas's armed activities. While the Turkish authorities supervise Hamas military training in the country, Hamas activists in Turkey recruit Palestinians who live in Turkey, Jordan, Syria, and other Arab countries, and they are being sent to a specific office in Istanbul, which in turn sorts them out to training camps outside the city.

Turkey tried to reach an influential role in the Middle East, through Hamas, and this angered Israel, as Turkey opened the doors to the leaders of Hamas and provided support for them. Therefore, the Palestinian issue would be a card in its hand that it could use at any time, and this has emerged on many occasions, despite the close ties between Ankara and Tel Aviv. At a time when the Arab countries, including Saudi Arabia, distanced themselves from this movement and moved towards improving their relations with Israel.

Turkey's openness to Hamas, which was Damascus-based, and its access into the Palestinian reconciliation file as a mediator between the Palestinian Authority and Hamas, or to ease the tension between them was aimed at reviving its role in the Middle East, which was entrusted only to Egypt and the Arab League. Turkey's success in performing this role was, especially after Erdogan confronted Shimon Peres at the Davos Conference in 2009, and sent the "Mavi Marmara" ship in 2010 in an attempt to "break the siege of Gaza." It was attracting popular Arab and Islamic sympathy, which was a political embarrassment for the Arab Regimes, which felt the rise of the stars of both Turkey and Iran, which they had the support for Hamas in common, at a time when the official Arab system sided with the Palestinian Authority, and this matter caused the emergence of sensitivities that the diplomatic channels were not able to remove them until the "Arab Spring" crisis has erupted.

## **2- Arabian Peninsula:**

### **a- The Omani Sultanate:**

The neo-Ottomans did not show enthusiasm towards Oman at the beginning, but they have significantly moved since 2011, and decided to reap what Ecevit Government had previously planted, based on the memorandum of military cooperation, then deepening relations with Muscat, and penetrating it militarily and economically, with the aim of finally joining it to the Turkish axis.

### **b- Bahrain:**

Erdogan's government tried to get closer to Bahrain via the Muslim Brotherhood, the Islah Association, which provided funds in favor of Turkey and its projects, and was one of the donor partners of the "Yemeni-Turkish Friendship and Cooperation Association", which is also funded by the Awqaf (Religious Endowments) of the Erdogan government.

### **c- Qatar:**

Turkey turned to Qatar to be supplied with gas following the crisis of shooting down the Russian plane on Turkish territory after Moscow imposed trade sanctions on Turkey, and Qatar played an important role in alleviating the impact of these sanctions on Turkey, especially in the field of energy. In light of the intensification of the geostrategic conflict in the Middle East region between Moscow and Washington on the one hand, and Saudi Arabia and Iran on the other hand. Turkey found in Qatar its only remaining strategic ally in a region witnessing a strong polarization policy, and the military cooperation deal between the two countries in 2015 came to confirm the depth of relations between them. Qatar sided with Turkey against the July 2016 coup attempt, Turkey responded with swift and unlimited support to its ally Qatar after being besieged during the Gulf crisis since June 2017 and represented by the extension of an air and sea bridge to transport goods and equipment to the Qatari market, and the volume of trade exchanges reached to record levels, and the summit meetings between the Turkish President and the Emir of Qatar have reached nearly 15 ones and has resulted in the signing of an estimated 40 different deals in different fields.

What made the rapprochement possible and strong between these two countries was the adoption of the Muslim Brotherhood Organization by Qatar, and the provision of protection and shelter for it, and this group has been able through social media, and through many of its advocates such as Yusef al-Qaradawi and others, to reach a wide segment in the Arab world. This activity coincided with the emergence of the ruling Justice and Development Party's tendencies in Turkey. The features of this cohesion became clear with the beginning of the "Arab Spring" crises, as many intersections were revealed that brought these two countries together in their dealings and support to the powers of terrorism in the Arab world, and they are now exposed. Moreover, the strategic, economic, and political interests brought the

two countries together, in which they became more isolated than the crisis states themselves, and this was enough to increase the rapprochement that Turkey took advantage of it, for the service of its expansionist policy. It was able to deploy thousands of Turkish soldiers on Qatari territory according to the terms of a secret military deal that was recently disclosed. It has been found that one of its most important articles states that it is not permissible for any Turkish soldier stays in Qatar to be prosecuted or to be tried if he commits any legal violations based on this agreement. As it turns out also, this deal does not permit resorting to a third party, whether it is a state or an international organization, to settle disputes or disagreements that might arise between these two countries.

#### **d- Yemen:**

The Turks are currently seeking to establish a similar entity to Iran's entity, led by the Muslim Brotherhood Movement in Yemen. Turkish work on this project has begun since the Islamic Justice and Development Party came to power in Turkey, and the pace of Turkish moves on Yemeni soil increased after the crises of the Arab Spring, which reached several Arab countries. Among them is Yemen.

The Turks worked in strict confidentiality with the Muslim Brotherhood Movement on various axes during the rule of the Saleh regime, the most prominent of which was the commercial axis. Turkey supported the Muslim Brotherhood in Yemen, through its ruling party, with money, advice, and technical services for banking. Sheikh Hamid al-Ahmar (one of the leaders of the Yemeni Brotherhood) managed to build a large business empire with the help of the Turks. After the revolutions in the Arab world erupted, Turkey found an open door to play a major role in supporting the activities of the Muslim Brotherhood movement in Yemen. The Turkish Justice and Development Party has trained more than 800 members of the Islah Party cadres with an Iranian orientation in many fields, most notably development. Labor, planning, and modern technologies in communications, military planning, and the management of health and educational institutions and various other fields.

After Saleh Regime departed from power, the Turkish moves towards Yemen appeared openly, and the Turkish ambassador was not embarrassed to meet the leaders of the Yemeni Brotherhood and to

coordinate moves that would lead to the establishment of a political ally of Turkey. This has already happened, as Turkey was able to gather the wings of the entire Muslim Brotherhood movement in Yemen under the banner of Justice and Development, in parallel with a similar project in Egypt, where Turkey would have the greatest influence over the waterways in the south and north of the Red Sea, where Egypt and Yemen are overlooked.

The contradiction in Turkey's dealings with the Yemeni parties was really quite surprising, as the Turkish Relief Organization worked in Sana'a and the Houthi-controlled areas, which formed direct support from the Erdogan government to the Houthi militia. While Abd Rabbu Mansour Hadi, President of the Republic of Yemen, visited Turkey in 16-18 February 2016, in response to an invitation addressed to him by Erdogan, and the Yemeni Foreign Minister participated in the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Islamic Summit on Jerusalem on 18 May in Istanbul. Meanwhile, the Russian agency "Sputnik" reported that more than 400 militants who are Al-Qaeda-affiliated and from various nationalities, had been transported from Idlib to the Turkish territories, and from there to Somalia and then Yemen, indicating that these militants arrived in small groups whose members number between 8 -15.

Turkey seeks to restore its Ottoman hegemony over Yemen through the Pro-Islah Brotherhood Party, and Qatari material, media, and moral support, and other parties in the region because of being fully aware of the importance of its strategic position and extending its influence over the countries of the region.

The features of Iranian, Turkish, and Qatari coordination in Yemen have become tangible in light of the recent developments in the Yemeni file. The signals that Ankara sent indicate a shift in its position towards the war in Yemen and its adoption of the Qatari vision that seeks to align its support for the Houthis and its links to the Muslim Brotherhood in Yemen.

### **3- North of Africa:**

#### **a- Libya:**

Turkey opposed initially any military operation against Libya during the 2011 uprising and believed that the military intervention by "NATO" in Libya or any other country would have completely opposite results. However, Ankara's positions changed after the defeat of Gaddafi. It



had an opportunity to reach the Libyan economy and spread its influence via its Islamic groups; therefore, it appears that Ankara wanted to be more able to direct the path of developments from the interior, on the one hand, and to achieve balance with the French ambition to play the leading role during this process, on the other hand.

The Turkish intervention in Libya became clear after 2014 when the Islamist elements represented by the Government of National Accord refused to acknowledge defeat in the elections, which led to the formation of a rival government in Tobruk supported by the National Army led by the senior officer Khalifa Haftar.

Ankara's support for the National Accord government is one of the many foreign policy decisions that Ankara has made to confront Egypt and its Gulf allies, leading some analysts to describe the Libyan conflict as a regional proxy war.

According to the United Nations' team of experts, Turkish companies delivered weapons to the Libya Dawn Coalition (an extremist militia group), and the same committee accused Qatar of sending weapons and money to "militants." Ankara has continued to coordinate with Doha in supporting extremist groups in Tripoli and Misrata with weapons, despite the arms embargo imposed by the United Nations, and many arms shipments coming from Turkey have been seized without any accountability by the international community.

What was a secret yesterday is now disclosed, Erdogan is now sending weapons and extremists from ISIS, Al-Nusra, and the Syrian armed factions in front of everyone's eyes. He has the approval of the country's parliament to intervene militarily in Libya after his fear of the collapse of the Brotherhood government in Libya i.e. the collapse of his Ottoman dreams.

This trend is clearly visible in the course of Turkish relations with Libya, as Ankara has intervened with great courage in Libya, far from its borders, since the outbreak of Libya's crisis, which has entered its tenth year, without facing any clear objection from the international community.

The most prominent headline in Turkish policy towards the Libyan crisis was contradiction and inconsistency, with the beginning of the protests on 15 February 2011 against the rule of Muammar Gaddafi,



Ankara had reservations about foreign military interventions in Libya, and opposed the imposition of sanctions and plans for military intervention led by France and then NATO. Turkey was more likely closer to adopt the approach of contributing to the humanitarian relief efforts while maintaining open channels with both parties of the conflict to play the role of mediator.

With the fall of the Gaddafi regime in October 2011, Ankara tended to provide all kinds of support to terrorist organizations represented in the "Justice and Construction Party", the political arm of the Muslim Brotherhood organization, and the militias of the city of Misurata in western Libya. Ankara also provided support for the "Libya Dawn" coalition in confronting "Dignity Operation" launched by the Libyan army in May 2014 under the leadership of "Khalifa Haftar", which caused tension in its relations with the Libyan east. As the commander of the Libyan army in the east, "Khalifa Haftar", accused Turkey of supporting "terrorism" in Libya, and the eastern Libyan government issued a decision to stop dealing with all Turkish companies in Libya, in response to their policies in supporting of the "Libya Dawn" coalition.

Turkey seeks to expand its influence and expansion in North Africa, starting from Morocco to Egypt and then Sudan, in order to force this region to accept this formation, which has been proven one of the elements of the imbalance in the region. Likewise, the Ottoman, in order to get an influence at any cost to this region throughout its Brotherhood partners. Among the other financial reasons that push Turkey in this direction is to seek to preserve its investments there, to ensure a good share of its subsidiaries, and to prevent the exit of Libyan funds from Turkey, which is estimated at 21 billion dollars, most of which belong to Muammar Gaddafi's era. In addition to the funds of Islamic groups in various forms, which have turned Turkey into kind of deposit banks for them.

The Libyan Armed Forces General Command calls on the UN Security Council and the United Nations to condemn Turkey and open an investigation into these practices. In particular, with regard to arms shipments that were seized in late 2018 and early 2019, which constitute a violation of the international resolution that had been imposed on Libya regarding the arms embargo on Libya since 2011. A number of civil society activists, politicians, human rights advocates, media's reporters, and those interested in public affairs have begun to issue statements regarding the blatant Turkish interventions. They are

likely going to move towards the international community to hold Ankara accountable for its crimes in Libya, which may allow other files to be opened from the record of Turkish violations in other places.

#### **b- Algeria:**

Algeria was not far from the Turkish targets, as the Erdogan government built close relations with the Movement for the Society of Peace (MSP), which is close to the Muslim Brotherhood, its leaders stood very clearly with Erdogan and justified all his practiced policies, and they see the (AKP) party in Turkey as their best role model.

The movement represents one of the largest parties with a Muslim Brotherhood background currently in Algeria, and it is still trying to promote the model of the ruling party in Turkey, the ideas of the Brotherhood, and the project of the new Ottomans in the Maghreb region (Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, and Mauritania). After the later movement calls on Turkey repeatedly i.e. for more than two years, to invade Algeria economically, Erdogan had responded in February 2018, and he had paid a visit to Algeria, and inaugurated the Algerian-Turkish Businessmen Forum, calling on investors in his country to work strongly in Algeria.

The Turks found an opportunity in the popular protests against Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika's declaration of his intention to run for a new presidential term. They instructed the Brotherhood to take to the streets; many reports have indicated the Turkish fingers that are playing behind the scenes to instigate the Algerian street and helping the Brotherhood to get access to the power.

Turkey entered Algeria's crisis with provocative statements that incite the people against their army, and it calls for chaos in an attempt to achieve its objectives via the Brotherhood movement, which is not something strange for Turkey and Qatar. They have got a long experience in fuelling conflict in the Arabic states by exploiting the chaos due to the Arab Spring revolutions and the devastation and fighting that followed, in which Libya, Syria, and Iraq are still paying its price to this day.

#### **d- Tunisia:**

The (AKP) party sought throughout its suspicious relations with the Ennahda movement, also known as Renaissance Party, since it came to power after the success of the Tunisian revolution (December 2010 -

January 2011). In order to extend its roots in the African country, to be a strategic base from which to launch and extend its influence and to spread its expansion project in North Africa.

The AKP's relationship with Ennahda is intellectually much older than political and diplomatic relations, but it emerged in the public since Recep Erdogan, the Turkish Prime Minister at the time, announced his support for the Tunisian revolution after its success. Ankara was one of the first countries supporting the movement that saw it as an opportunity for the Brotherhood movement to come to power after three decades of its ban. The Turkish foreign minister was the first to visit Tunisia in February, i.e. about a month after the fall of the Zine El Abidine Ben Ali regime. The Turkish financial and media support continued for the Ennahda movement, which does not hide its relationship with the (AKP) party, to the point that pictures of Rajab spread everywhere inside its headquarters.

The (AKP) government managed to penetrate the Arab world in North Africa via Tunisian Gate, especially through the Islamic Ennahda movement, which has a Brotherhood-oriented approach, which is described as "Turkey's agent in the country", as it continued to maintain strong strategic, economic and military relations with Tunisia. Many voices have raised that warned of the risks of this penetration, amid the concerns of the various political and popular circles about the Turkish penetration, and the transformation of Tunisia into a background base for it. It has expanded since Erdogan's visit to Tunisia on 27 December 2017 in the context of an African tour that included, in addition to Tunisia, both Sudan and Chad, in which it revealed about Turkish military ambitions all over the region.

Turkey opened a military training base in Somalia, and built a berth for the maintenance of warships in Sudan, in addition to allowing the Qatari authorities to deploy a new batch of their soldiers in Qatar within the framework of an expansionary joint defense agreement between the two countries. This means that the Turkish plan conceals ambitions that go beyond Tunisia to include the entire region.

#### **e- Morocco:**

What distinguishes the Muslim Brotherhood movement in Morocco is the similarity of the name of its Brotherhood party with the name of the (AKP) party. Furthermore, they share the same slogan, which is the slogan of the lamp that the Moroccan Justice and Development

adopted in 1998 as its electoral symbol, and it is the same slogan that the party later adopted Turkish justice and development.

Many common grounds bind the Moroccan "Justice and Development Party" and its Turkish counterpart. Rather, the relationship between them is closely related, because of the compatibility of the Brotherhood's ideas and tendencies of the two parties, Not to mention that both parties follow the same compromising model that claims adherence to the rules of the democracy game, and the preservation of the constitution. Both parties share the fact that both of them came out from the womb of the Muslim Brotherhood movement, but they claim that they do not belong to this organization, while the speeches of both parties, their policies, and their practices reflect a clear extension of the Brotherhood ideology. Most importantly, the Muslim Brotherhood's "Justice and Development" party in Morocco called for the resurrection of the Ottoman Caliphate, similar to what Erdogan, the leader of the Turkish "Justice and Development", fancies.

It is the idea that makes the party receive all the support and endorsement from Ankara, which see it as its best agent in the Kingdom of Morocco, to implement its colonial project in North Africa, and to restore its influence over this region, which has been suffering from the ravages of the Ottoman occupation for centuries.

Abdelilah Benkirane embraced Erdogan from the very first moment, did not miss an opportunity to praise the (AKP) party in Turkey, and showed clear support for Erdogan's policies. He was among the first to attend, as head of the Moroccan government, at the ceremony of Erdogan's inauguration as President of the Turkish Republic after the amendment of the Turkish constitution and transferring governance from a parliamentary system to a presidential one.

## **5- Africa:**

### **a- Somalia:**

Turkey took advantage of the tragic conditions in Somalia, in which Erdogan showed great interest in it since 2011, and ordered the construction of the largest Turkish diplomatic compound in Mogadishu, in addition to building a military training center and a military school, and his partners obtained operating rights for the airport and port facilities.

Turkish governmental and private institutions rushed to war-torn Somalia to offer assistance. The government established the largest hospital complex in Somalia in cooperation with the Turkish International Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA). Turkish Humanitarian Relief Foundation built the largest orphanage in Africa in Mogadishu, at a time when Turkish Air Lines has become the only transportation that flies regularly to the Somali capital for more than 20 years, and Turkey has spent more than billion dollars for relief in Somalia. The "Diyanet Foundation", along with other nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), run religious schools, while one of the Somali hospitals named after Erdogan, and the Turkish Relief Agency took over waste-collection.

Despite all of this, new evidence has emerged about Turkey's relationship with extremist organizations in Somalia. Information obtained from court documents revealed that the Turkish intelligence agency (MIT) had sent hundreds of thousands of dollars via an agent who was a former prisoner in "Guantanamo" prison, to the Somali Youth movement. This youth movement was founded in 2004, and its terrorist operations have killed tens of thousands.

It has also expanded its cross-border terrorist activities to target Kenya, in particular; in addition to a number of neighboring countries. The Nordic Monitor website, affiliated to the North Network for Research and Monitoring, specializing in tracking extremist movements, stated that the US government discovered the process of transferring funds from Turkish intelligence (MIT) to "Al-Shabab," and informed Ankara about the matter and demanded an investigation to uncover the terrorist network that works to finance the extremist movement. However, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's government of halted the investigations that were launched after the notification sent by the office of the Deputy Secretary for the Terrorism and Financial Intelligence Treasury, David Cohen, at that time.

#### **b- Sudan:**

In light of the ambition to restore Ottoman glories, Turkey sought to find a foothold on the coasts of the Red Sea in 2017, during a visit by a Turkish delegation led by the country's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan to Sudan. When the two parties announced a development agreement, according to which Sudan allocated to the Turks, to work to revive the old road of the African pilgrims, and the establishment of a

sea berth to operate civilian and military ships as part of a package of investment deals pledged by Ankara to Khartoum.

Ankara's move towards Sudan was not normal political relations in Turkish foreign policy in recent years, but rather a policy that was characterized by clear efforts to introduce itself as a major regional power by expanding its territories and getting clear areas of influence outside its borders, especially in vital areas that have historically fallen under Ottoman Empire control.

What is crucial to Turkey is that such a move would send a strong message to Cairo about the consequences of its bias towards Cyprus, Greece, and Israel in the struggle over the divisiveness of influence and areas of gas exploration in the Mediterranean, which is a struggle that concerns Turkey mainly at the present time.

### **c- Nigeria:**

The "Boko Haram" group is a Nigerian Islamic group that means, in the dialect of the Hausa tribes, "Western Education is forbidden". This group is active in northern Nigeria and seeks to implement Islamic law. It is a banned Islamic movement and designated and labeled terrorists.

Turkey practices a two-sided policy with Nigeria, as it supports secretly the "Boko Haram group" and it builds economic relations with Nigeria based on five-decade diplomatic relations with Abuja, on the other hand.

Nigeria announced that it is investigating a report saying that Turkey supplies the "Boko Haram terrorist group" and stated, "Providing the "group" with advanced weapons represents a serious problem for the country's national security, confirming that the matter is drawing attention at the strategic level.

According to some media reports, Turkey has become a major motive to the Islamic extremism in Africa, according to many field-based data. For example: when Islamic extremists had seized northern Mali in 2014 and Al-Qaeda members had freedom of movement all over Mali, the Turkish ambassador in Chad expressed indirect support, as he said: "Al-Qaeda is completely different from the terrorism that is spread everywhere, in fact, the French intervention is a terrorism and not what Muslims do."



## **5- Central-Asia's Countries and the Caucasus:**

The end of the Cold War had a major role in Turkey's foreign relations; especially after obstructing its admission to the European Union, Turkey has sought to expand and increase its influence in Central Asia. In order to play the role of a regional power centered on the Caucasus and Central Asia, by reviving the Turanism's notion and feelings of solidarity amongst Turkic peoples, strengthening this role by opening schools and universities, receiving students of these republics in Turkish universities. This was part of Turgut Ozal's plan to support Turkish identity and culture in the republics of Asia.

The geographical location of these countries is one of the most important factors that push Turkey to move towards them, and the importance of the location for the superpowers (America, Russia, and China). In addition to the economic motive, all Central Asian countries have access to the Caspian Sea, which is very rich in oil and gas, as it represents the second-largest oil reserves in the world. These factors pushed Turkey to strengthen its relations with these countries by reviving the Turanian notion, and by stirring up feelings of solidarity amongst Turkic peoples. These feelings had previously been strongly fueled during the period of the weakness of the Ottoman Empire in an attempt to exploit the void that resulted in the fall of the caesarean regime in Russia, at the time.

Turkey was one of the first countries to recognize the independence of Central Asian countries, the Turks do not hide their belonging to the peoples of Central Asia, and they acknowledge that they have a common history and deep cultural and ethnic ties with these republics, and Turkish officials consider that Turkey is the big brother of these republics!

Schools and scholarships were the best way for Turkey to pass on the notion of the Turanism umbrella., Ankara established 29 schools in Kazakhstan, 18 schools in Uzbekistan, 13 schools in Turkmenistan, 12 schools in Kyrgyzstan, and 5 schools in Tajikistan between 1991-1999. The total number of students who studied in these schools reached more than 16 thousand students, and at a later stage, they established many universities and were able to attract a large number of students.

The network of Turkish educational institutions, with a higher educational level, and job opportunities for graduates subsequently played a prominent role in influencing Central Asian countries;

especially since it opened its doors to the youth of these countries, and gave them real opportunities to ascend the social stairs by joining the political and business elites. Turkey is also implementing a large scholarship program named “Turkish Scholarships” for students in Central Asia and other countries in the region. In addition to the presence of Turkish universities in these countries, such as the Turkish-Kazakh "Sheikh Ahmed Yasawi International University" in the city of Turkestan-Kazakhstan, and the Turkish-Kyrgyz "Manas" University in the Kyrgyz capital, Bishkek.

At the same time, Turkey has tried to consolidate its influence in Central Asia via religion, in general; via two separate means: the first one is the Directorate of Religious Affairs in Ankara, and the second one is (NGOs). There is Turkish religious activity in Central Asia, concentrated largely in southern Kyrgyzstan, which are the regions that produced the majority of foreign fighters, from which about 4 thousand fighters traveled via Turkey to Syria and Iraq to join ISIS.

## **Afghanistan**

The pretext of the Turkish presence in Afghanistan was to participate with peacekeeping forces, but it used this presence to communicate with the terrorist groups, mainly Taliban and Al-Qaeda. In addition to the most important benefit, which lies in obtaining the bounties of this country that had been destroyed by the War, and the most important material, Saffron, or what is being called the red gold.

Turkey is seeking to find a foothold in the Afghan arena via the pretext of combating terrorism, to cover up its record of supporting and financing extremist groups, to establish wider links with political Islam groups. Ankara launched the "Istanbul Conference for Afghanistan" initiative in 2011, or what it says, “consolidating regional cooperation with Kabul”, an initiative that had been discussed a lot about its objectives and outcomes, especially amid Western accusations that Turkey was employing extremist groups for the sake of its expansionist agenda in Asia, the same way as its role in Syria.

## **6-Balkans' States:**

Strategic experts warn that Turkey works rapidly to deepen its influence in the Balkans, especially with its success in normalizing the relationship with Russia through limited concessions in Syria, and Europe's reluctance to play effective roles in protecting the small entities that have joined it.

The great influence of Turkey in the Balkans has increased since Erdogan's (AKP) Party came to power in 2002. This was especially prevailing in Kosovo, where Turkish companies invest hundreds of millions of euros in building the state's airport, highways, and electricity network; In addition to building hundreds of Turkish Islamic mosques in the Islamic countries in the Balkans, in order to attract the Balkan's Muslims to Turkish policies and to revive the glories of the Ottoman.

## **7- Europe:**

### **a- Germany:**

The Brotherhood's "Justice and Development" Party in Turkey and its president, Erdogan, clearly relies on the mosques belonging to Turkey in Germany to influence Muslims there and broadcast a radical Islamic political discourse calling for chaos, extremism, and hatred of others. Therefore, you find out that many studies warn, "The terrorist Brotherhood organization and its allies of Turkish groups close to the Recep Tayyip Erdogan regime pose a great risk to Europe, and they threaten the cohesion and stability of its societies.

An estimated three million people of Turkish origin live in Germany, and it has nearly two thousand mosques out of the total number of three thousand mosques in Europe built with a Turkish architectural character, including nine hundred mosques funded by the Turkish Islamic Union for Religious Affairs (DITIB). This causes widespread criticism inside Germany in terms of its association with the Turkish (AKP) Party, the Turkish state's apparatus, and the Erdogan regime, and the (DITIB) is accused of spying on opponents of the Turkish president.

### **b- Cyprus:**

The Turkish government, led by Recep Tayyip Erdogan, continues the exploration of gas reserves off the coast of Cyprus, within the economic maritime zone that extends nearly 200 km to the island, which led the European Union to impose a package of sanctions on Turkey. This is an important development for a country was considering granting it membership in the European Union for not long time ago.

The Cyprus crisis involves a specific and thorny problem, which is the situation of Varosha, the deserted southern region of the Cypriot city of

Famagusta, whose residents fled after the Greek coup and the Turkish invasion in 1974; Ankara seeks to reopen the city by force and turn it into a tourist center for the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. In light of this development of Turkish behavior, and in conjunction with the Syrian crisis, and the Cyprus gas crisis, Ankara appears using Varosha as a bargaining chip in regional affairs.

Gray wolves played an important role in making the conflict with Greek Cypriots extreme by engaging in violence on the island, in the aftermath of the Turkish invasion of northern Cyprus in 1974. With the support of Ankara, they participated in many terrorist operations against Cypriot citizens.

### **c- Austria:**

In June 2018, the Austrian Minister of Interior announced that his country was considering the case of expelling 60 imams and Islamic clerics associated with Turkey. He continued at a press conference in Vienna by saying: "These clerics may lose their right to reside in Austria and their families, and that seven Mosques will be closed". Following an investigation by the Religious Affairs Authority showed pictures of children representing the Battle of Gallipoli in one of the mosques funded by Turkey last April, and some of them wear military uniforms and salute while they stand in a line and waving Turkish flags in front of the presence of children.

### **8- Far East:**

Due to the Turkish origins of the Uighurs in the Chinese "Xinjiang" region, they have recently been active as a Turkish pressure card on China, and they have been mobilized against the central government in Beijing, in order to establish a state (East Turkestan).

Turkey supported the Islamic movements in "East Turkestan", as Ankara allowed their activists to hold their conferences in the country, such as the December conference in 1992, and it was called the "Patriotic Congress of East Turkestan Deputies", which was held in the Turkish city of Istanbul. It was attended by figures representing more than thirty separatist organizations that operate in Central Asian countries, the United States, Australia, Pakistan, Germany, Turkey, and Switzerland. Representatives of the "East Turkestan" organization from 17 countries, including the United States, Germany, France, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Central Asian countries, held another international conference in Turkey in 1993.

Turkey, with material support from Qatar, secured the arrival of thousands of Uyghur terrorists to Syria. It pushed the Turkish national "Gray Wolves" organization to coordinate with the Turkestan Party via the facade of the "Education and Social Cooperation of East Turkestan" association, which is an association licensed by the Interior Ministry. This association used to secure trips for Uyghur fighters from China to Turkish airports under the pretext of visiting their relatives to be transferred to the north of Syria. There is information circulating about the settlement of "Uyghurs" in northwestern Idlib, and media reports stated, "About 15 thousand of them have settled in Syrian villages near the borders with Turkey, and their number is increasing. ISIS was not the only one who succeeded in attracting numbers of Uyghur Muslims into its ranks, but there are numbers of them who pledged allegiance to the terrorist organization Al Qaeda and the Taliban as well.

### **The Conclusion:**

The West and the United States supported the idea of Turkey playing the role of moderate Islam, in order to confront extremist movements in the Middle East and Africa, and introducing it as an alternative and a new ally. The (AKP) party was entrusted with this role and had the support of the hegemonic powers, at high levels, especially after the September 11 attacks,

This party and its leaders crossed the red lines set for it by the hegemonic powers, began to be arrogant, stubborn, and rebellious, until it threatened the interests of these forces. Turkey, led by Erdogan, began moving in the Middle East as a regional and global power, which is precisely what Israel was warning it. It began to get closer to Iran, Russia, and the radical and moderate Islamic powers, and they disclosed their organic relationship with the Muslim Brotherhood, which is classified as a terrorist group in many countries, which undermined this role. Indeed, Turkey now constitutes a burden and a threat to the world order, after it moved its ambitions and intentions based on the "New Ottomanism" policy.

The "Neo-Ottomanism" project that Erdogan planned in his "royal palace", which is far from the reality of the twenty-first century, faces many challenges, whether from the theorists of the moderate Islam project from the world-hegemonic powers (America, Britain, and Israel) or from Regional states; especially the Arab ones (Egypt, Jordan and Saudi Arabia).

Those affected by the "New Ottoman" project are:

### **1-The hegemonic-world powers:**

The purpose of the world-dominated countries was strengthening moderate Islam to confront the extremist Islam that would have swept the world and the region; in addition, to curb Sunni and Shiite chauvinism, it had found in Turkey the most suitable country to play this role. However, what the days showed is that the "new Ottomanism" project led by Erdogan has become a threat to these countries, and now threatens their interests in several ways. In particular, after Erdogan aspired to build a green capital (Islamic capital) instead of being open to global capital on the one hand, and his unlimited support for extremist Islamic tendencies the other hand. Such as ISIS and the Al-Nusra Front (Al-Qaeda), and his tendency to build new alliances, whether at the regional or global level, in addition to his great ambition of Turkey playing the role of the superpower state, on. He began to take this path in that direction, in practice.

### **2- The Russian Federation:**

An important part of the "New- Ottomanism" project is concentrated in the north, in countries that broke away from the former Soviet Union, which are currently located south of the Russian Federation. Therefore, this project is completely besieging Russia from this side, at present time, and it poses a great threat to its security. It is noticeable that most of those who joined ISIS and Al-Nusra, they are from those countries, as they are areas where it is easy for Erdogan to exploit religion, and it is a suitable arena for the implementation of this project.

### **3- Israel:**

Now everyone knows the extent of normalization between Turkey and Israel, even though Erdogan has come out in public attacking Israel and promoting himself as the only defender of the Palestinian cause. However, this does not prevent the existence of Israeli red lines, as Tel Aviv has come to know it more than anyone else does. As the (AKP) Party has allied itself with the global Jewish Karmashaky tendency at the expense of Zionist nationalism, and has taken Turkish Islam as a pillar to itself, which is something the Israelis have not forgotten. Therefore, Tel Aviv, being one of the poles of the hegemonic powers, is aware of the seriousness and repercussions of Turkey's transformation into a regional or global power.



#### **4- European Union's States:**

Erdogan has crossed the Vienna Walls barrier or is about to do so, will Europe move to deter him as it deterred his ancient Ottoman ancestors in the late 17th century when they reached this wall?

This project constitutes a serious threat to the security and safety of European countries, which cannot prevent the danger emanating from it because of the presence of a significant number of citizens of Muslim countries, whether they are refugees or citizens of Muslim origin. Terrorist organizations can use many of them as Trojan horse in those countries, to carry out terrorist acts in the form of "Charlie Hebdo" and others, in addition to many of these countries' economic links with Turkey, which makes the European Union captive of this project, and surrender to Erdogan's threats until the present time.

#### **5- Arabic States (Egypt, Saudi Arabia, UAE, and Jordan):**

Turkey's engagement with the world in Arabic with a mentality of authoritarianism and guardianship, and working to revive terms such as "Neo-Ottomanism", would fuel conflicts and disputes in the region. The role played by the (AKP) government does not come for no reason, but rather, it comes from the hopes and dreams of the new Ottoman, Erdogan, in which he believes that it can be achieved, which is undoubtedly something that poses a grave threat to the Arab national security as a whole.

The courses of conflict in both Syria and Libya, the stability of the relationship between (AKP) party and the Muslim Brotherhood, and other extremist Islamic groups, and Ankara's penetration in many Arab countries will determine the nature of the relationship between Turkey and the Arabs. There is a need for a large, broad and urgent Arab move to contain the "Ottoman" movement because it uses all of Turkey's political, military and economic capabilities in order to weaken these countries and removing them from the circle of important regional states in the region and the Middle East, and keep them as failed states.

What is surprising is that all the powers affected by the "Neo-Ottomanism" did not actually move to confront the risk of this project, while the only deterrent power that effectively confronted the "neo-Ottomanism" were:

## **1- The Syrian Kurds:**

The Kurds established a democratic Autonomous-Administration, in which they participated all components of northern Syria under the principle of the "Democratic Nation", and they called for building a decentralized, multiplicity, and democratic Syria. They confronted the most powerful means of "Ottoman politics" represented by the Islamic State (ISIS), for a long time. They did not make room for Al-Nusra-Front (HTS) or the Muslim Brotherhood to settle in their areas before the emergence of ISIS. This affects the "new Ottomanism" politically, and they form an obstacle that prevents the Ottoman expansion geographically according to the "Milli Charter" map, because controlling northern Syrian will open the way for controlling the Levant, and this is what threatens Egypt, and then the entire region.

If the Kurds are being given the opportunity to build their desired entity, they will form a great power in the Middle East, in which the entire Ottoman project will be hit devastatingly.

## **2- The Libyan Army led by Khalifa Haftar:**

Khalifa Haftar stood in the face of terrorist groups produced and supported by the Government of Justice and Development in Libya and at the same time rejected any role for Turkey in Libya, even a mediation, because it was not a neutral country in the Libyan crisis, but rather, it was supportive of armed militias and extremists. Haftar's standing on the west side in front of the Turkish expansion also cuts the way to their circumvention to the Arabs, and with the SDF constitutes a deterrent power against the policy of pincers' jaw that Turkey is trying to apply upon the Arab world, the first jaw from northern Syria, and the other in Libya.

Turkey did not stop sending ships loaded with weapons sent to active militias in Libya, until the UN decision to ban arms supplies to Libya turned into a "farce". As the Turkish fingers in the Libyan crisis were no longer working in secret. The (AKP) Party is no longer content with weapons, therefore, it sends terrorists in full view of the international community, and there is a clear intention to ignore this role, despite many conferences have been held (such as the Berlin Conference), and the situation is still waiting for a solution, which is far from being reached in the foreseeable future.