

Ioannis Th. Mazis and Markos I. Troulis¹

“Turkey’s political influence in Libya and the weaponization of the Muslim Brotherhood”

Abstract

Turkey’s cooperation with the organization of Muslim Brothers has its own strong foundations, representing at the same time the frontline of the Turkish geostrategy towards the leadership of the Ummah and the Muslim World. This is a decade-long proven reality, while it is not visible which part is leading and which is following the other’s strategic behavior. In any case and except for any “metaphysical ideas” of the current Turkish elite, a certain strategic image is produced for Erdoğan and it is related with the profound Islamist-oriented strategy, aiming to Turkey’s upgrade into a regional hegemon absolutely antagonist at a world-wide level. On this line of thought, the current study aims to describe Turkey’s engagement in Libya under the cloak of Ankara’s relation with the Muslim Brotherhood between 2020 and 2021. Comparatively to Turkey’s ambiguous strategy in the case of Gaza escalation of May 2021, general conclusions are reached with regard to the consequences of Neottoman policies in Maghreb and the Greater Middle East for regional stability and peace.

Keywords

Muslim Brothers, Turkey, Neottomanism, Maghreb, Turkish-Libyan Memorandum, Egypt Energy Security, Geopolitics

Brief timeline

- **2 January 2020:** The Turkish Parliament ratifies the decision for a military intervention in Libya. The ratification expires in one year.
- **5 January 2020:** Turkish operational projection of power in Libya starts.
- **19 January 2020:** A 55-point road map is agreed in the Berlin Peace Conference for peace establishment.

¹ Ioannis Th. Mazis is a Professor of Economic Geography and Geopolitical Theory and Head of the Laboratory for Geo-cultural Analyses of the Greater Middle East and Turkey at the Faculty of Turkish Studies and Modern Asian Studies, University of Athens. Markos I. Troulis is an Adjunct Lecturer, also, at the Faculty of Turkish Studies and Modern Asian Studies, University of Athens.

- **22 April 2020:** The spokesperson of the Libyan National Army (LNA) Ahmed al-Mismari announces the arrest of “the most dangerous Egyptian terrorist in Libya” named Mohammad Mohammad al-Sayyid, also known as Mohamed al-Sanbakhti or Abu Khaled Munir.
- **20 June 2020:** The Egyptian Parliament empowers the Government and the Armed Forces of Egypt to assist General Khalifa Haftar into Libyan soil.
- **30 June 2020:** According to French intelligence, the Government of Tripoli under Fayez Sarraj plans to establish a “National Guard” with the support of Muslim Brotherhood.
- **9 August 2020:** After a demand of Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, dozens of Muslim Brotherhood’s media start a campaign against the Greek-Egyptian agreement for a delineation of Exclusive Economic Zone. Their main argument is that the agreement infringes Libya’s sovereign rights in sea, as these rose after the agreement between Turkey and the Government of Tripoli.
- **10 September 2020:** MED–7 Summit takes place and Ajaccio Declaration is signed. After the discussions among the leaders of the seven Mediterranean states, a press conference follows and the French President Emmanuel Macron states: “Turkey has signed unacceptable agreements with the Government of National Accord in Libya, infringing Greece’s legal rights [...] We have to recognize that Turkey is not a partner in this region anymore [...] We have to abstain from an escalation, but Turkey should clarify its intentions in some sectors. As Europeans, we have to be stable and strong against Erdoğan”.
- **9 December 2020:** Turkey publishes its “discontent” against the Libyan part of the Muslim Brotherhood, due to the latter’s support to the UN proposal for the spokesperson of Libyan Parliament Aguila Saleh’s appointment as the Chairman of the new Presidential Council, as well as the appointment of Fathi Bashagha as the Head of Government.
- **21 December 2020:** The Egyptian-based World Center Al-Azhar Fatwa bans the admission in the Muslim Brotherhood noting that Allah and the Sharia Law “do not permit any divisions and confrontations”.
- **11 January 2021:** Emrullah İşler, brother of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, is accused that promotes family business interests via covered military operations in Libya, in line with Erdoğan’s relevant directives.

- **10 March 2021:** The fragmented Libyan Parliament ratifies the formation of a transitional Government of National Unity.
- **11 March 2021:** The transitional Prime Minister of Libya Abdulhamid Dabaiba declares his support to the EEZ agreement between Turkey and the Government of Tripoli.
- **16 March 2021:** Formal appointment of the transitional Government of National Unity. The hard-liners of the Muslim Brotherhood do not participate. The transitional Government has to lead Libya to National Elections in the 24th of December 2021.
- **18 March 2021:** Turkey's efforts for a rapprochement with Egypt. Ankara asks for de-escalation of Muslim Brotherhood's critique against President Sisi.
- **22 March 2021:** The US Secretary Antony J. Blinken welcomes the formation of a transitional Government of National Unity in Libya after a phone call with the transitional Prime Minister Abdulhamid Dabaiba.
- **23 March 2021:** The transitional President of Libya Mohamed Al Menfi visits Paris. The French President Emmanuel Macron asks for the Turkish and Russian militants' abandonment from the Libyan soil "the sooner the better".
- **26 March 2021:** Recep Tayyip Erdoğan invites Mohammad Younes Menfi to visit Turkey via a relevant announcement.
- **29 March 2021:** Re-operation of the French Embassy in Libya's capital, Tripoli.
- **16 April 2021:** UN Security Council resolution for an immediate withdrawal from Libya of all the foreign and merchant militias.
- **20 April 2021:** The Libya Quartet (UN, EU, Arab League and African Union) notes substantial progress towards a political solution.
- **4 May 2021:** Libya's Minister of Foreign Affairs Najla Mangouch refers to the need for all foreign militias to abandon Libyan soil in the occasion of a joint press conference with Turkey's Minister of Foreign Affairs Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu. Her statement is linked directly to Turkish-related militias operating in Libya.
- **5 May 2021:** The Libyan Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibah gives an interview asking for an immediate withdrawal of all foreign militias from Libyan soil.
- **12 May 2021:** Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Minister of Defence Hulusi Akar and Minister of Foreign Affairs Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu accuse Israel for its right to self-defence and support openly Hamas.

Introduction

Turkey's projection of power in Maghreb and beyond is fully identified with the theoretical and political legacy of Ahmet Davutoğlu, whose thought still leads Turkish geostrategic behaviour. The Davutoglian description and analysis in "Stratejik Derinlik: Türkiye'nin Uluslararası Konumu"² has followed another book of Turkish former Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs entitled "Alternative paradigms: The impact of Islamic and Western weltanschauungs on political theory".³ In that book, it is clarified that "behind such analyses [i.e. those referring to the political notions and structures of the two contradictory paradigms] there is a starting point for Dar al-Islam to be equalized with the modern international system".⁴

On the basis of Davutoğlu's axiom, a whole policy recommendation is structured, explaining Turkish modern geostrategic choice of Muslim Brotherhood instrumentalization and cultural elements of national power mobilization. Consequently, Turkey's geostrategic visions and prioritizations give special emphasis on the Muslim Brotherhood, developed to such a level that – in close cooperation with Ankara – determines policy fermentations instead of just being a means of Turkish power projection. Such a multifactorial analysis is not a surprise, since the epistemological bases of the Davutoglian doctrine are found in Mackinder and Mahan and subsequently in the fields of:⁵

- Geography, since – according to Davutoğlu and consequently to Turkish political elite – Turkey is located at the geographical epicentre of Afro-Eurasia and on this basis, it may implement its strategy for the 21st century.
- History, since ottoman tradition – according to the Neo-Ottomans – could represent a "battering ram" and a comparative advantage for Turkey's entrance in multiple geographical zones of the complex of the Greater Middle East, in addition to Caspian and Central Asia.
- Culture, since on the basis of the ottoman legacy, Turkey is seen as a cultural centre with strong relevant linkages in the fields of language and religion with the new-born states of the greater region and beyond.

² Davutoğlu, A. (2010) *Stratejik Derinlik: Türkiye'nin Uluslararası Konumu*. İstanbul, Küre Yayınları.

³ Davutoğlu, A. (1993) *Alternative paradigms: The impact of Islamic and Western weltanschauungs on political theory*. Lanham: University Press of America.

⁴ Davutoğlu, A. (1993) op. cit..

⁵ Mazis, I. Th. (2008) *The geopolitics of the Greater Middle East and Turkey* [in Greek]. Athens: Livanis. Pp. 94-95.

- Energy, as this offers the capabilities for a geopolitical rise and an increase of Turkish influence to the aim of a central positioning on the East-West energy corridor. In addition, it would contribute to Turkey's strategic independence via the acquirement of significant elements of power.
- Geopolitics, generally speaking, as Turkey is located at the crossroads of three geographical zones.

Starting from the afore-mentioned Neo-ottoman narrative of international relations, it is worth to be mentioned that this has strong historical roots. It has been said quite recently and this is affirmed in Turkish foreign policy diachrony that “Özal, since 1991, believed in and contributed to the movement of Neo-ottomanists, also known as ‘İkinci Cumhuriyetçiler’ (‘Second Democrats’). Describing this tendency of modern Turkish ideological-political reality, the term ‘neo-ottomanism’ was introduced by Cengiz Çandar, a known Turkish writer and academic. This was analysed as a spiritual movement, supporting Turkey's strategic aim to implement an active and independent foreign policy in the region, according to the Ottoman historical legacy. The Neo-ottomans envision Turkey as the leader of Muslim and Turkic world”.⁶ In accordance, Davutoğlu believes that “in order Turkey to become an Islamic regional power, it ought to be very careful and adjust its foreign policy to the ‘strategic parameters’ posed by the Great Powers”.⁷

For this reason, in Ankara's Libyan policies the organization of the Muslim Brotherhood is prioritized and in this way, Turkey (a) improves its diplomatic positioning vis-à-vis the Great Powers manipulating Islamic fundamentalism in the light of a leading position in the Muslim world and increased influence in the relevant geopolitical boundaries; (b) minimizes the strategic costs of Turkish policies in the sense of legal consequences and the human or material losses; (c) strategically legitimizes Turkish interventionism broadening Ankara's footstep on Libyan's territory; (d) in retrospect, strategically delegitimizes any existent or potential counter-alliances in Maghreb system and beyond.

⁶ Mazis, I. Th. (2013) *Geopolitics: Academic Dissertations*, XLVI. Theoretical Perception of Geopolitics in Davutoğlu's Work: A Critical Presentation. P. 253. [Published first in: *Civitas Gentium* 3:1 (2013), pp. 9-50], see: http://scholar.uoa.gr/sites/default/files/yianmazis/files/xlvi._theoretical_perception_of_geopolitics_in_davutoglus_work_a_critical_presentation.pdf

⁷ Mazis, I. Th. (2008) op. cit., p. 66.

Under these terms, Turkish-Russian strategic alignment is also explained. Ahmet Davutoğlu has described that even if the interests of Ankara and Moscow are competitive, especially in Central Asia and the Caucasus, “Turkey is obliged to cooperate strategically with Russia”,⁸ because the range of the gap of power between these two powers does not allow Turkey to project power and claim anything at the expense of Russian interests. Hence, Russian-Turkish antagonisms in Libya do not represent a coincidence, in spite of their overall temporary geostrategic alignment.

In the current paper, Turkish intervening policies in Libya are described and analysed during the last crucial months; i.e. from 2020 to 2021. A special emphasis is given to the role of the Muslim Brothers as a fundamentalist Islamist platform and a weapon of Turkey’s projection of power, supplementing the power gamble in North Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean as a destabilizing factor. For this reason, in conclusion, the consequences of Turkey’s behavior are summarized as well as its subsistent efforts to increase its political influence in Libya via the Muslim Brotherhood, the geostrategic pressure towards the secular regime of Egypt and the existence of a counter-weight for the secular regimes of the African continent and the Middle East. Interesting conclusions can be reached, also, about Greece, the European Union and the western world, in general, especially if Libyan national policy is kept in mind regarding energy issues and the delineation of sea zones in Central and Eastern Mediterranean. Last but not least, it is deduced that on the basis of the davutoglian doctrine and consequently, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan’s policy implementation, Turkey’s core geostrategic enemy is Israel.

Turkey’s involvement in Gaza

This remark was proved again in the case of Ankara’s stance during the spring 2021 escalation in Gaza. Israel’s demonization and extreme Anti-Semitism represent a cornerstone for Turkey’s strategy vis-à-vis the Muslim World, towards a mobilization of Muslim populations’ sentiment. For this reason, Turkey’s involvement in Gaza spring 2021 escalation is directly linked to the absolute support to Hamas, the propagandistic manipulation of war episodes and the overall inclusion of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict among the main aspects of Turkey’s strategic behavior. In short, considering the latter, Ankara is inclined to view its approach to Palestinians as a prerequisite for its hegemonic status in the Muslim World.

⁸ Mazis, I. Th. (2008) op. cit., p. 67.

Therefore, strategic cost is profound for Turkey and this entraps it into specific strategic choices in favour of Hamas. For this reason, it is deduced that Ankara is ready to put into doubt its diplomatic assets, in order to converge with Hamas, as well as with the Muslim Brotherhood. In parallel, revisionist Turkey considers that the weaponization of Hamas offers diplomatic assets in its competitions towards status quo powers of the region. Turkey's tactic is extended to "legitimacy" for accomplishing strategic aims vis-à-vis the Muslim World, including both Sunnis and Shiites via the Muslim Brotherhood and the Palestinian Issue. Regarding this, Al Dawa owns a distinctive role, coordinated with Turkey's NATO membership, while Davutoğlu has referred broadly in his books to the complementarity – and not disjunctive substance – of Turkey's relations with the East and the West, as well as with the Sunni and Shiite blocks.⁹

The spring 2021 conflict started when, in 13 April, Islamists moved against Israeli citizens in the day of Israel's independence, and it came to an end with the 20 May cease fire.¹⁰ In 10 May, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has a call with Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh and the President of Palestinian National Authority Mahmoud Abbas expressing his support to Palestinians and noting the need for protection of the "honour of Jerusalem".¹¹ In the aftermath, Turkey advised (!) the United Nations to "halt Israeli assaults",¹² while the public in Turkey was pushed to express its Anti-Semitic sentiments during pro-Islamist demonstrations in Constantinople with slogans such as "Turkish soldiers in Gaza" and "Down Israel, down the US".¹³ Indications of Turkish policies in favour of extremism were, also, seen when in September 2020 Turkish citizenship was offered to 12 high officials of Hamas, a process condemned

⁹ Mazis, I. Th. (2008) op. cit., p. 67.

¹⁰ The Jerusalem Post (2021) "Israel announces ceasefire after 11 days of fierce battle with Hamas in Gaza". Accessed at: <https://www.jpost.com/middle-east/no-rocket-sirens-since-1-am-as-israel-hamas-ceasefire-said-to-be-close-668607> [20/5/2021].

¹¹ Anadolu Agency (2021) "Turkey's Erdogan speaks over phone with Palestinian president, Hamas chief". Accessed at: <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/turkey-s-erdogan-speaks-over-phone-with-palestinian-president-hamas-chief/2235820> [20/5/2021].

¹² Reuters (2021) "Turkey's Erdogan says U.N. must act to halt Gaza conflict". Accessed at: <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/turkeys-erdogan-says-un-must-act-halt-gaza-conflict-2021-05-14/> [20/5/2021].

¹³ Al Arabiya News (2021) "Thousands protest in Turkey against Israel over surge in violence". Accessed at: <https://english.alarabiya.net/News/middle-east/2021/05/11/Thousands-protest-in-Turkey-against-Israel-over-surge-in-violence> [20/5/2021].

by the European Parliament¹⁴ and following Turkish policies of the last decade, which have been identified with extreme Anti-Semitism and the support of extreme Islamists or even terrorist organizations.

Turkey's support to Hamas has multiple dimensions, extended from the Anti-Semite rhetoric of Turkish elite up to the demand for Turkish troops deployment in Gaza for Hamas support. Before the beginning of the terrorist attacks against Israel in spring 2021, already since 2018, the Turkish President addressed Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu noting that "Hamas is not a terrorist organization [but] a resistance movement".¹⁵ Of course, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan neglected to remind that this kind of "resistance" refers to Israeli civilian targets, while infant Palestinians are used as "shields" in military targets towards a fake "sensitization" of international community.



Meeting between Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and senior political leader of Hamas Ismail Haniyeh, 8 September 2020¹⁶

During the spring 2021 escalation, about 2,500 rockets were launched by Hamas against civilian population in Israel, activating the Israeli anti-rocket shield "Iron Dome", while several attacks of Islamist Arab-speaking elements took place

¹⁴ European Parliament (2020) "Turkish citizenship granted to members of the Hamas terrorist organisation". Accessed at: https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2020-004733_EN.html [20/5/2021].

¹⁵ The Globalist (2021) "The Erdogan/Hamas axis?" Accessed at: <https://www.theglobalist.com/turkey-recep-tayyip-erdogan-akp-hamas-terrorism-united-states-nato/> [21/5/2021].

¹⁶ Financial Times (2020) "Erdogan and Hamas: 'He's presenting himself as leader of Muslim world'". Accessed at: <https://www.ft.com/content/7447e141-3d3f-4d98-953d-179e15909a7e> [19/5/2021].

against Jewish community.¹⁷ The consequent Israeli response to Hamas attacks was manipulated by Turkey and extreme Islamist rhetoric was expressed by its President Erdoğan. The Turkish Islamist President and contributor of the Muslim Brotherhood and the terrorist organization of Hamas addressed Russia’s President Vladimir Putin stating that “Israel must be taught a ‘lesson’”, asking at the same time from the UN Security Council to “rapidly intervene to protect Palestinians”.¹⁸ On the same line of thought, he asked for UN peace troops deployment for the “protection of the Palestinians”,¹⁹ a roadmap that Turkey and Russia, according to Erdoğan, should converge and “should convey determined and clear messages to Israel on halting its attacks”, since “if there was an opportunity to especially bring in Turkish forces into the region, Erdoğan would definitely go for it”.²⁰



¹⁷ Forbes (2021) “Under the Iron Dome: The problem with Israel’s rocket shield”. Accessed at: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/davidhambling/2021/05/12/under-the-iron-dome-the-problem-with-israels-rocket-shield/?sh=59eb6c8459b8> [21/5/2021].

¹⁸ Aljazeera (2021) “Israel must be taught a ‘lesson’, Erdogan tells Putin”. Accessed at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/5/12/israel-must-be-taught-a-lesson-erdogan-tells-putin> [14/5/2021].

¹⁹ Reuters (2021) “Erdogan, Putin discuss Israel clashes in call -Turkish presidency”. Accessed at: <https://www.reuters.com/world/erdogan-putin-discuss-israel-clashes-call-turkish-presidency-2021-05-12/> [14/5/2021].

²⁰ Gehrke, J. (2021) “Turkey: Erdogan wants to deploy anti-Israel ‘international protection force’ to Gaza”. *Washington Examiner*. Accessed at: <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/policy/defense-national-security/erdogan-wants-to-deploy-anti-israel-protection-force-gaza> [14/5/2021].

Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh and Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan at the Turkish Parliament,
3 January 2012²¹

Turkey's Minister of Defense Hulusi Akar stated about Israel's response to Hamas attacks that "these attacks are crimes against humanity. These mean damaging peace and are a shame that will go down in history".²² Finally, the Minister of Foreign Affairs Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu referred to the issue in the broader framework of Islamist convergence noting indicatively that "we always condemn (attacks) like this, but the Ummah is expecting us to take a step. Such attacks have to stop now. Of course, we need to protect the rights of Palestinians within the framework of international law. We should never veer from the two-state vision."²³ The afore-mentioned remarks by Turkish officials indicate that the Greater Middle East is considered a "geographical complex", since Turkish strategic behavior is undividedly aggressive and revisionist and includes any war theatre, especially when this is related to a possible attrition of a major competitor, as this has been defined by Ankara, namely Israel.

²¹ Al-Monitor (2020) "Intel: Washington condemns Erdogan's meeting with Hamas leadership". Accessed at: <https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2020/08/turkey-hamas-erdogan-meeting-haniyeh-arouri-condemn.html> [19/5/2021].

²² Anadolu Agency (2021) "Turkey determined to ensure peace in Syria: Defence minister". Accessed at: <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/turkey-determined-to-ensure-peace-in-syria-defense-minister/2239538> [14/5/2021].

²³ Anadolu Agency (2021) "Turkey, Saudi Arabia set to have further dialogue: Turkish foreign minister". Accessed at: <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/turkey-saudi-arabia-set-to-have-further-dialogue-turkish-foreign-minister/2237811> [14/5/2021].



Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's propaganda against Israel at the General Assembly of the United Nations, 24 September 2019²⁴

Equally worrying for regional stability and security is Turkey's recent decision for an UAVs base establishment in Lefkonikos of occupied Cyprus, while Turkish President's statement after the relevant announcement is indicative: *"Now there are two airports in Cyprus as an airport; one is Ercan, which all my citizens know in Turkey, and the other, which was there before of course, but we are changing it now, with a new name, and mostly as the area where our UAV's are located. I wonder why we're moving them so much, why? We need to be strong against any attack that may occur in the area. And to be strong, you must be present in the air, on land, in the sea with everything you have. So, are we present? Yes, we are"*.²⁵

The Turkish base in Lefkonikos is about to host Bayraktar-TB2 type UAVs, similar to those used against the Kurds in Northern Iraq and Halifa Haftar's troops in Libya. Hence, Turkey will be able to cover operationally all its claims against the EEZs of Cyprus and Israel. It is about a very important problem, equally to that of

²⁴ Nordic Monitor (2021) "Erdoğan unlikely to benefit from 'Israeli aggression' this time". Accessed at: <https://nordicmonitor.com/2021/05/erdogan-unlikely-to-benefit-from-israeli-aggression-this-time/> [19/5/2021].

²⁵ Çetiner, Y. (2021) "Turkey Constructing a New Drone Base in Northern Cyprus". *Overt Defense*. Accessed at: <https://www.overtdefense.com/2021/06/01/turkey-constructing-a-new-drone-base-in-northern-cyprus/> [29/6/2021].

Russian anti-aircraft missile system S-400 purchase, since – among others – Bayraktar TB2 UAVs do not have their previous 100-mile range anymore, but they could operate continuously for 27 hours and for this reason, to become a clear threat for the whole Middle Eastern and North African region.²⁶ Besides, the zone between the 35th and the 36th parallels, including Cyprus (Episkopi, Akrotiri, Larnaca and Lefkonikos) and Crete (Souda) in the East as well as Malta and Gibraltar in the West, embodies regions of major geostrategic significance for the Anglo-Saxon naval powers, too. From these regions, these powers could check South Mediterranean in total and destabilized Maghreb. This geostrategic axis represents the most efficient exit of the Persian Gulf and the Caspian Region and their oil reserves towards the Atlantic via Gibraltar.

Taking all these into consideration, Turkish policies towards Gaza represent just one part of Ankara's whole geostrategic endeavour, prioritizing re-distribution of power, with primacy considering the seabed resources, as an intermediate aim. A possible Turkish success in this energy gamble could subvert rapidly energy security of consuming states in the West, but it could also undermine the autonomy of the producing states in the East. For this reason, East Med pipeline implementation should be defined as a core priority for the regional actors supporting status quo and international law in the Eastern Mediterranean; i.e. Israel, Greece, Cyprus and Egypt.²⁷

Turkey's involvement in Libya

The aftermath of the so-called “Arab Spring” was identified with the increase of “geostrategic windows of opportunity”, as perceived by Ankara, for a Neo-ottoman expansion. Libya is not an exception and as we have noted in the recent past: “President Erdoğan fights in many fronts and dreams for a political arrangement and more or less succeeds. The more fronts he fights in, the more chances he has to gain something. He is determined to remain in these fronts and to have casualties. Contrary to Western democracies, President Erdoğan does not have any kind of limits referring to casualties and thus, he has sent about 300 [according to December 2019 records]

²⁶ Rubin, M. (2021) “Turkey's new drone base is a problem”. *American Enterprise Institute*. Accessed at: <https://www.aei.org/op-eds/turkeys-new-drone-base-is-a-problem/> [29/6/2021].

²⁷ Βλ.: Mazis, I. Th. and Sgouros, G. A. (2020) *Geopolitical analysis in the energy complex of the Eastern Mediterranean* [in Greek]. Athens: Leimon.

Islamist mercenaries. For him, their lives do not matter. Hence, he shows his determination towards the West, that Turkey could stay in Libya whatever they do”.²⁸

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan’s aim is to limit Turkey’s costs and maximize its gains on the Libyan war theatre, while the mobilization of the Muslim Brotherhood contributes to the delimitation of the negative strategic image of Turkey, as this is coordinated with Ottoman legacy. Similarly, Turkish engagement in Libya was confronted as an indication of colonial practices by Halifa Haftar,²⁹ since “Turkey is related directly, referring to strategic narrative, with the hegemonic presence of Ottomans and the following colonial powers, a fact mobilizing masses against it. In the case of Libya, Neo-ottomanism legitimates and de-legitimates simultaneously Turkey’s strategy and for this reason, Ankara has used hybrid strategic engagement with high symbolisms and a relevant dynamic, but also with the basic means of mercenaries, Islamic solidarity and common religious references”.³⁰ Turkey has implemented similar practices of extremism cultivation and population groups’ radicalization, to balance internal security dilemmas, with Kurds to be the upmost. It is indicative that Ankara used even Islamist fundamentalists in order to face – armed or not – Kurdish women and undermine Kurdish population’s morale through murders and rapes.³¹

Certainly, in order to gain diplomatic assets and strategic legitimization, Turkey is self-presented as an anti-colonial power and cultivates a relevant strategy on this line of thought. Hence, after a resolution of the Turkish Parliament for Turkish forces deployment in Libya in January 2020,³² “Turkey sent 2,000 troops into Libya in three phases (24 December 2019 300 troops, 29 December 2019 350 troops και 5 January 2020 1,350 troops), just a few days before the Berlin Peace Conference, in

²⁸ Mazis, I. Th. (2019) “Geostrategic gamble – Libya – Eastern Mediterranean – Greek-Turkish Relations”. *Interview at ERT*. Accessed at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mGgX6k211PU> [17/6/2020].

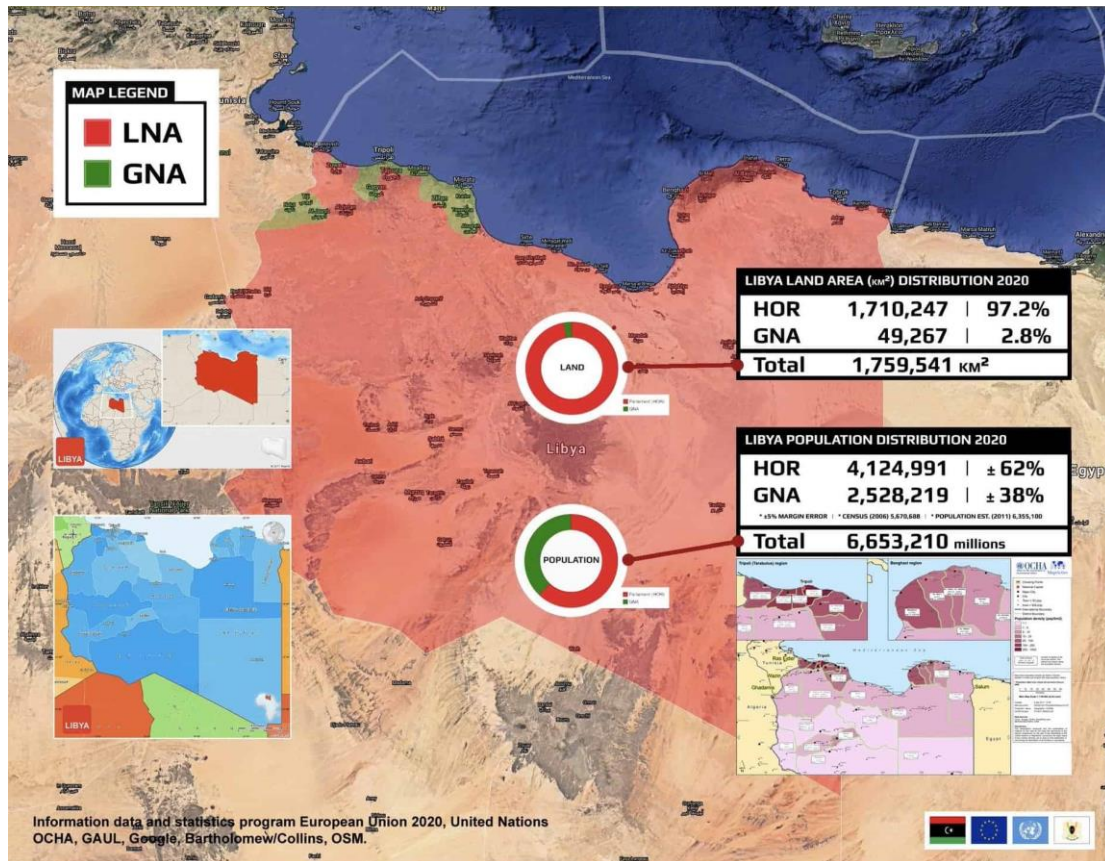
²⁹ Naar, I. (2020) “Haftar accuses Erdogan of attempting to revive Ottoman legacy in Libya, region”. *Al Arabiya*. Accessed at: <https://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/north-africa/2020/01/04/Haftar-accuses-Erdogan-of-attempting-to-revive-Ottoman-legacy-in-Libya-region> [29/3/2021].

³⁰ Mazis, I. Th. and Troulis, M. I. (2020) *Turkish strategy in Libya: Cultural and social causal factors – Cartography of the Libyan crisis* [in Greek]. Athens: Leimon. P. 112.

³¹ Frantzman, S. J. (2021) “Turkey is radicalizing extremists to attack Kurdish women”. *The Jerusalem Post*. Accessed at: <https://www.jpost.com/middle-east/turkey-is-radicalizing-extremists-to-attack-kurdish-women-671544> [30/6/2021].

³² Beaumont, P. (2020) “Turkish MPs pass bill to send troops to support Libyan government”. *The Guardian*. Accessed at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jan/02/turkish-parliament-to-vote-on-sending-troops-to-libya> [29/3/2021].

which certain decisions were made for disarmament as well as military and paramilitary non-engagement”.³³ The established military division was named after Omar al-Mukhtar, the Libyan considered a “symbol” of anti-colonial struggle against middle-war Italy.³⁴



Balance of power in Libya, in 2020, with reference to the two combating fronts; i.e. LNA and the GNA³⁵

As it is proved by the brief timeline in the beginning of the current paper, January 2021 was extremely important regarding Libyan Civil War and the competition among the major intervening powers. In specific, it was a month that – with Turkey’s presence and Greece’s absence – Berlin Peace Conference took place and a 55-point roadmap was published in favour of peace, but at the same time it was a month that Turkey increased its military presence in Libya against any agreements

³³ Mazis, I. Th. and Troulis, M. I. (2020) op. cit., p. 114.

³⁴ McKernan, B. and Akoush, H. (2020) “2,000 Syria fighters deployed to Libya to support government”. *The Guardian*. Accessed at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jan/15/exclusive-2000-syrian-troops-deployed-to-libya-to-support-regime> [29/3/2021].

³⁵ Antonopoulos, P. (2020) “NATO head announces support for Libya’s Muslim Brotherhood who aim to steal Greece’s maritime space”. *Greek City Times*. Accessed at: <https://greekcitytimes.com/2020/05/15/nato-head-announces-support-for-libyas-muslim-brotherhood-who-aim-to-steal-greeces-maritime-space/> [29/3/2021].

with regard to military equipment transfer, neglecting the relevant press release of France, Egypt, Cyprus, Greece and the United Arab Emirates, according to which Turkey was asked “to fully respect the U.N. arms embargo, and to stop the influx of foreign fighters from Syria to Libya”.³⁶ A similar stance was kept by Saudi Arabia, having worried about the broadened role of Muslim Brothers in the geopolitical system of Maghreb.

Especially the role of France could be decisive for Turkey’s dispossession from Libya. It is characteristic that, during the recent NATO Summit, it was affirmed that all the mercenary troops should abandon Libyan soil, while President Macron announced that in July 2021, military operations against mercenary troops – clearly linked to Turkey – could start. However, it is certain that Egypt, the US and Israel’s alignment is necessary to this aim. Besides, as President of France declared to President of the US Joe Biden, during that Summit: “a withdrawal doesn’t totally depend on the two of us”.³⁷

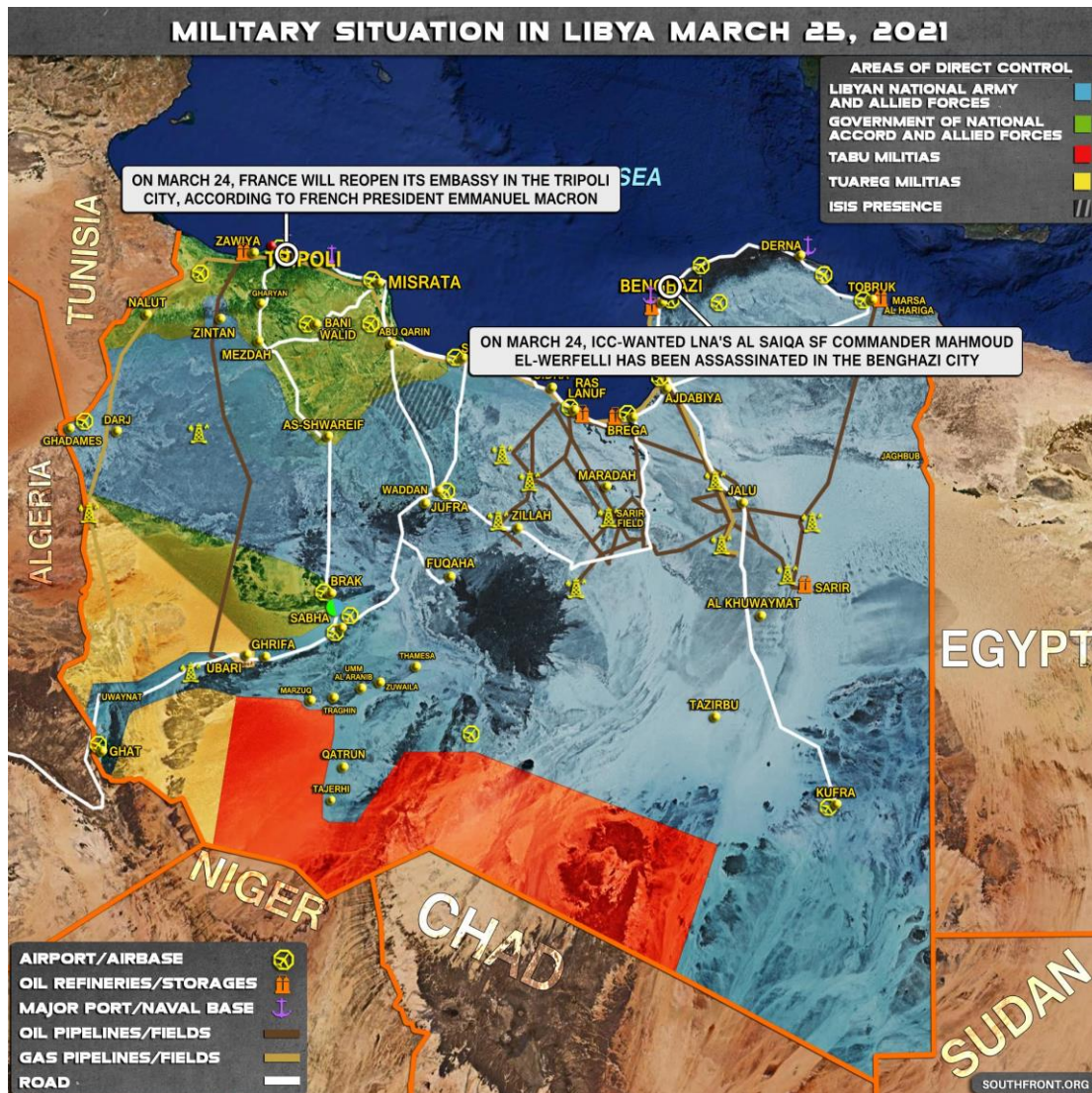
With regard to Saudi Arabia, its anxiety is increased due to Turkey’s partnership with Iran on a series of crucial issues, as it is also clarified by Muslim Brotherhood’s substance itself, which coordinates Sunnis and Shiites to a certain aim. Due to the range of Turkey’s interventionism in the region, this is often defined as “a bigger menace than Iran” even by the Head of Mossad Yossi Cohen.³⁸ This geostrategic behaviour cultivates the prerequisites for anti-hegemonic coalitions from the part of status quo powers and drives the system towards destabilization. In parallel, Iran is given a “strategic shelter” by Turkey taking the opportunity for a broader role in the Greater Middle East. For instance, in the case of Libya, the beginning of the so-called “Arab Spring” was seen by Iran – as it was clarified by the state-controlled Institute of Contemporary Studies of Tehran in the Persian Gulf and North Africa – as a window of opportunity for “re-affirming Tehran’s relation with

³⁶ Sahinkaya, E. (2020) “Why is Turkey involved in the Libyan conflict?” *VOA news*. Accessed at: <https://www.voanews.com/extremism-watch/why-turkey-involved-libyan-conflict> [29/3/2021].

³⁷ Politico (2021) “Macron pitches Biden on plan to get foreign fighters out of Libya”. Accessed at: <https://www.politico.eu/article/emmanuel-macron-joe-biden-withdrawal-fighters-libya/> [29/6/2021].

³⁸ Boyes, R. (2020) “Mossad thinks Turkey is a bigger menace than Iran”. *The Times*. Accessed at: <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/loose-cannon-turkey-is-rattling-its-neighbours-72032kp0z> [30/6/2021].

the Muslim Brotherhood” and “increasing Iranian influence in the African continent”.³⁹



The operational situation in Libya on the 25th of March 2021⁴⁰

For a country beset by a civil war, the most effective way of intervention and political influence increase is identified undoubtedly with weaponry of high technological value and with any kind of contribution in the battlefields. Turkey’s first strategic choice is related with military aid towards the aim of predominance in the Libyan political scene and refers to military and paramilitary groups, coordinating and being active and either implementing covert operations, such as SADAT A.S. International Defense Consulting, or acting as mafia organizations such as Ottoman

³⁹ Rodríguez, A. (2020) “What is Iran's position in the conflict of Libya?” *Atalayar*. Accessed at: <https://atalayar.com/en/content/what-irans-position-conflict-libya> [29/6/2021].

⁴⁰ South Front (2021) “Military situation in Libya on March 25, 2021”. Accessed at: <https://southfront.org/military-situation-in-libya-on-march-25-2021-map-update/> [31/3/2021].

Germania, or mobilized in favour of new members entry for the governing Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi – AKP).⁴¹

The second strategy is linked to programs of military training for units of any origin, implemented by SADAT A.S. International Defense Consulting. The Chief of SADAT A.S. Adnan Tanrıverdi has noted characteristically that: “Turkey has close social, economic and political relations with more than 35 Saharan and Sub-Saharan countries in Africa. [Turkey] carries out [military] activities with some of those countries in accordance with military training cooperation agreements [...] Almost all the young African states need special training programs for high-level officers in their internal [police] and external [military] security forces. Turkey provides its capabilities to most of those countries free of charge in the context of military aid packages”.⁴²

Turkey’s third strategy refers to modern military equipment, with international media reporting indicatively that “Turkey provides the weapons, Qatar the funds”,⁴³ while excessive examples concern Turkish UAVs of Bayraktar TB2 type, constructed by Baykar, family business of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan.⁴⁴ Military diplomacy is very important for every peer regional hegemon, since it reflects the two pillars of power; on the one hand, defence industry being absolutely profitable business for the hosting country and on the other, it is a comparatively advantageous field for the producing country to assert political influence, due to the great importance of military equipment programs. As it was summarized in the book “Turkish strategy in Libya: Cultural and social causal factors – Cartography of the Libyan crisis”:

“Turkey’s involvement in the Libyan Civil War via para-military groups, which are inclined to be defined as Islamist organization due to their relevant rhetoric, represents undoubtedly an integral part of Turkey’s overall strategy, identified with its predominance in North Africa and the

⁴¹ Cubukcu, S. (2018) “The rise of paramilitary groups in Turkey”. *Small Wars Journal*. Accessed at: <https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/rise-paramilitary-groups-turkey> [29/3/2021].

⁴² Nordic Monitor (2020) “Turkey’s paramilitary contractor SADAT eyes training African troops via defense deals”. Accessed at: <https://www.nordicmonitor.com/2020/05/turkeys-paramilitary-contractor-sadat-aims-at-training-african-troops-with-the-help-of-defense-cooperation-agreements/> [4/4/2021].

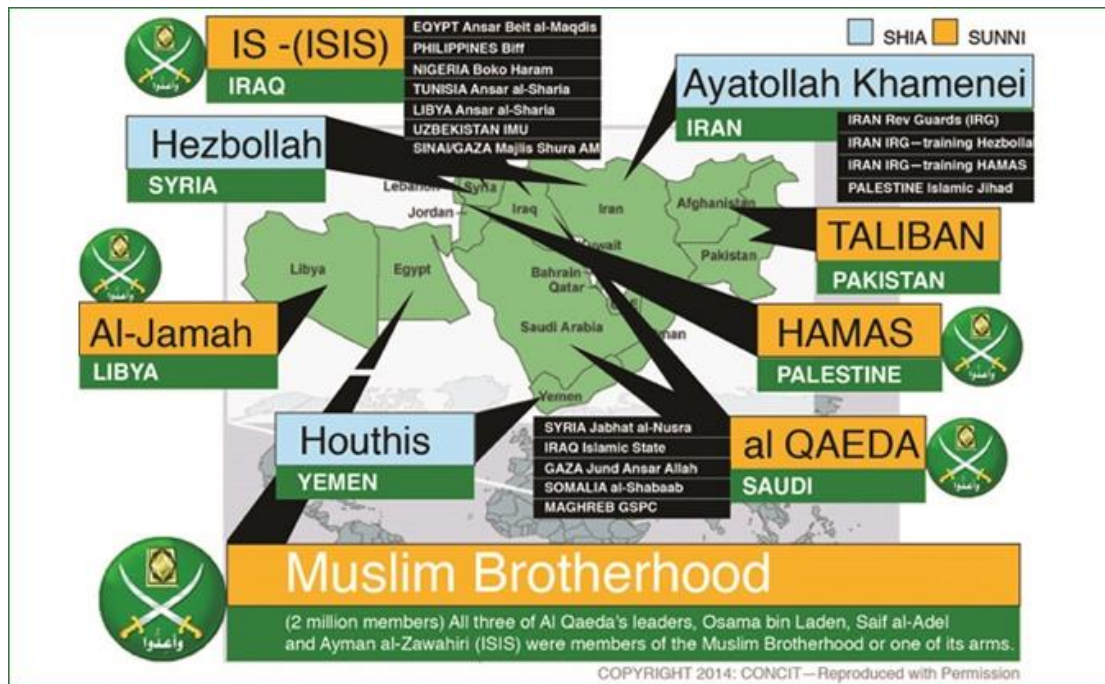
⁴³ The Arab Weekly (2020) “*In Libya, Turkish mercenaries continue to flow from Syria*”. Accessed at: <https://theArabweekly.com/libya-turkish-mercenaries-continue-flow-syria> [4/4/2021].

⁴⁴ Tastekin, F. (2019) “Turkish drones in Libya are a strategic and family affair”. *Al-Monitor*. Accessed at: <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2019/09/turkey-gulf-libya-is-becoming-a-scene-of-proxy-war.html> [4/4/2021].

Eastern Mediterranean. A core aim is the minimization of costs in human casualties as well as in economic terms, in order to expand its influence in the Greater Maghreb region and to escalate Egypt's security dilemma, under the relevant rhetoric cover. If Turkey succeeds in its strategic aims, it will have cultivated all the necessary preconditions for Sisi's Egyptian government undermining and this will affect directly Muslim Brotherhood's total footprint in the Greater Middle East. Turkey has intervened in Libyan affairs using paramilitary organizations and merchant troops, whose alignment is gained with great amounts of money and the mobilization of populations' religious sentiment, since other actors – such as Germany – could not intervene operationally due to historical and practical reasons. Ankara's proxy war has been funded basically by Qatar, a fact indicative of the broader geostrategic gamble referring to the presence of the Muslim Brotherhood in the region,⁴⁵ while this broader and higher stake is, also, seen via Israel's strategic partnership with the United Arab Emirates. Turkish mobilization of Islamist networks and paramilitary organizations represents a choice of cost minimization and anti-hegemonic coalitions deterrence or, at least, their suspension until a specific balance of power to be formed in the field".⁴⁶

⁴⁵ The Guardian (2020) "Idlib to Tripoli: Turkey moves to dominate eastern Mediterranean". Accessed at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/may/26/from-idlib-to-tripoli-turkeys-grab-for-influence-in-libya> [4/4/2021].

⁴⁶ Mazis, I. Th. and Troulis, M. I. (2020) op. cit., p. 120.

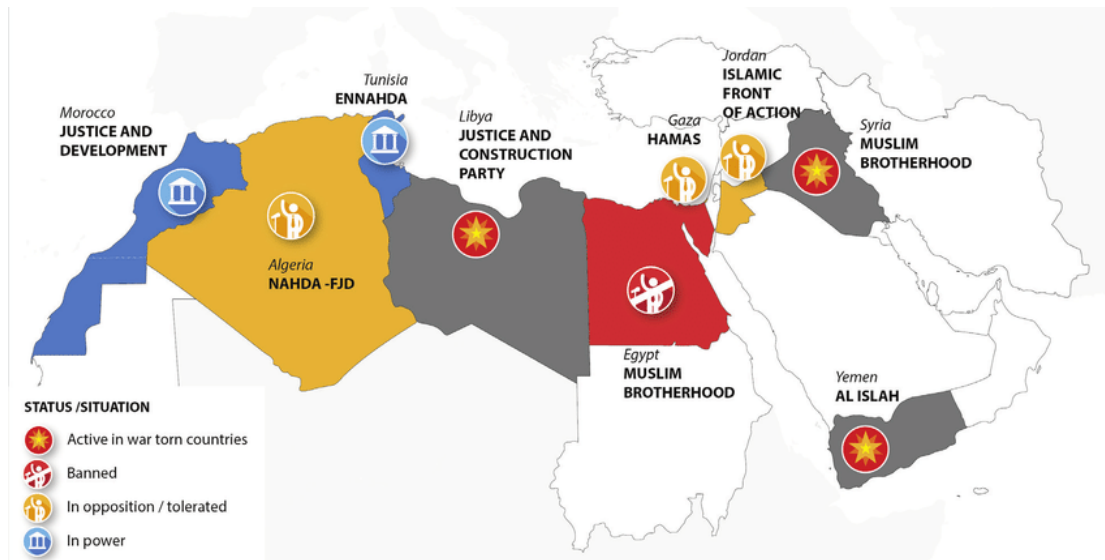


Muslim Brotherhood’s activities in the geographical complex of the Greater Middle East⁴⁷

Turkey’s relations with the Muslim Brotherhood

Turkey’s linkages to the Muslim Brothers still remain strong, having allowed Ankara to project influence in geographical zones that until recently this had been unthinkable. In parallel, the Muslim Brotherhood offers a cloak of faith and reason for Muslim populations of the Greater Middle East towards specific political and strategic directions. In Egypt, there is undoubtedly a clear dynamic and its access to governance is profoundly cut due to the presence of General Sisi. In Morocco and Tunisia, the Muslim Brothers participate in political system, while in Algeria and Jordan it is recognized in political opposite. In Iraq and Yemen it is engaged in conflicts for the next day. Libya represents an example, belonging to the last group of cases, since the Muslim Brotherhood has a clear say towards the elections of the 24th of December 2021, while its so-called “moderate” part participates in the Transitional Government.

⁴⁷ Organiser (2018) “The Venomous Brotherhood”. Accessed at: <https://www.organiser.org/Encyc/2018/9/10/Muslim-Brotherhood.html> [28/3/2021].



The Muslim Brotherhood network in the Greater Middle East in 2017⁴⁸

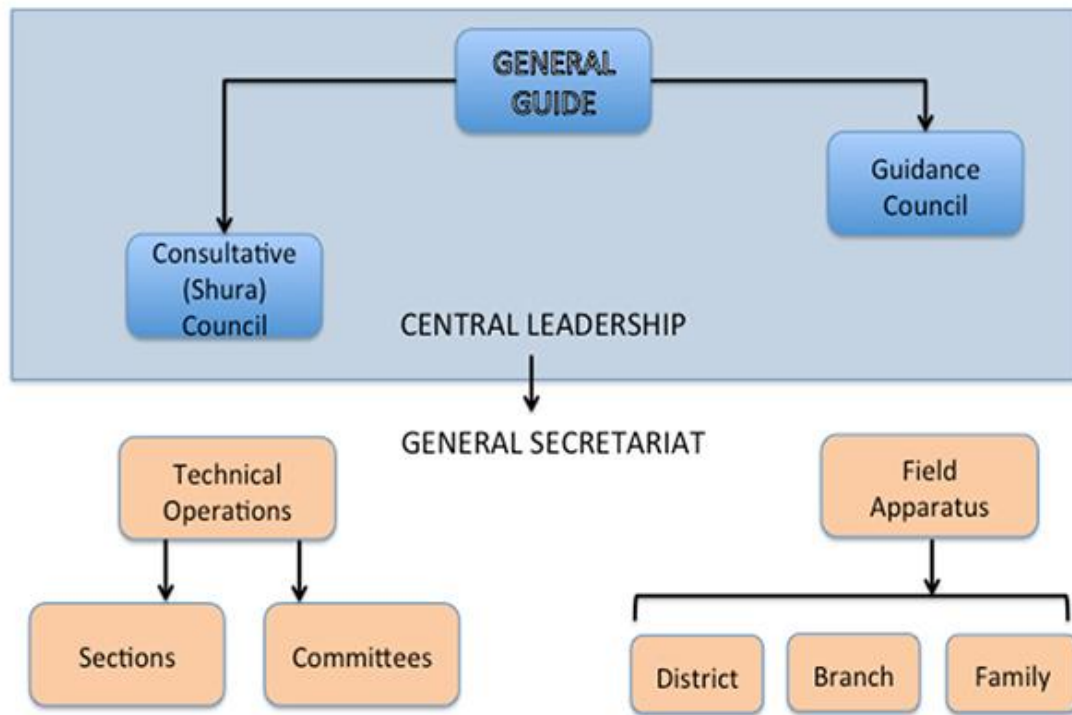
The coordinated strategy of Turkey and the Muslim Brotherhood reached its peak during the so-called “Arab Spring”. A central axis of this strategy was the increase of Turkish soft power in the Greater Middle East via the upgrade of the “Republic of Turkey” to a “model” of Muslim country, which has high living standards and it participates in the international system equally to the Great Powers. For this reason, the used strategic means refer mainly to the media sector, as the strategic image of Turkey was prioritized to be promoted within the societies of the complex of the Greater Middle East. According to Edip Asaf Bekaroğlu:

“During the ‘Arab Spring’, these older ties between the MB and JDP have been intensified. Turkish media too focused on the MB during the demonstrations. In the earlier stages of uprisings in Egypt, Star and Zaman emphasize how MB hesitated to declare explicit support of the protests until the fourth day (“the Friday of Anger”) because of not provoking the regime, and yet how MB’s participation grow the size of demonstrations”.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Meddeb, H. et al. (2017) “Religion and politics: Religious diversity, political fragmentation and geopolitical tensions in the MENA region”. *Middle East and North Africa Regional Architecture*, 7, pp. 1-38.

⁴⁹ Bekaroğlu, E. A. (2016) “Justice and Development Party and Muslim Brotherhood in the ‘Arab Spring’”: A failed post-Islamist interaction to transform the Middle East”. *International Journal of Social Studies*, 2 (1), p. 5.

The Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt: General Organisational Structure



The organizational structure of Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt⁵⁰

Bekaroğlu notes that the AKP has been attractive to Islamists of Egyptian origin due to its 20-year-long electoral success and its efficiency to rule Turkish bureaucracy.⁵¹ Furthermore, the contact of Muslim Brotherhood with “secular” and more “westernized” Turkey has provoked a change in its rhetoric and consequently, its mere coordination with modern socio-economic narratives, without missing the ipso facto political dimension of Islam, since “Islam is more than a religion – it is an ideology that must be represented in power”.⁵² Conversely, the Islam-oriented strategic behavior has become attractive to Turkish elite, offering the means to project power in Maghreb, where the powerful secular state mechanisms – having existed until quite recently – did not allow any interventions of such kind during the last decades.

Currently, Egypt has a stable secular bureaucracy, standing against Turkish strategic initiatives. At the same time, the dynamic of Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt

⁵⁰ Egypt Evidence (2015) “The history of the Muslim Brotherhood”. Accessed at: <https://www.egyptevidence.com/the-history-of-the-muslim-brotherhood/> [8/5/2021].

⁵¹ Bekaroğlu, E. A. (2016) op. cit., p. 10.

⁵² Ayyash, A. (2020) “The turkish future of Egypt’s Muslim Brotherhood”. Accessed at: <https://tcf.org/content/report/turkish-future-egypts-muslim-brotherhood/?agreed=1&agreed=1> [8/5/2021].

is manipulated by Ankara. An indication of this Turkish strategy was the arrest of Irshad Hoz in Egypt, an agent of Turkish MIT accused that he organized the transfer of weaponry and militias for Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood,⁵³ while many groups of the organization (15,000 to 30,000 Egyptians participating) are hosted by Ankara and act coveredly under Turkey.⁵⁴ This reality east of Libya as well as Brotherhood's broadened role in Tunisia (i.e. west of Libya), represents the crux of the matter when referring to Turkey's economic and strategic interests in Maghreb.

On the one side of the coin, this is about Turkey's soft power but, on the other side, Muslim Brotherhood has been defined a terrorist organization by pivotal states of the Arab World such the United Arab Emirates, although the members of the Egyptian sector consider Recep Tayyip Erdoğan their "political mentor" and a "close ally".⁵⁵ For them, the so-called "Turkish model" is still favoured and it could be cultivated within Muslim societies. It is worth to be mentioned that, in macro-historical terms, decolonization has took place quite recently and thus, they are considered to search for a leading power, such as Turkey, to support their Islam-oriented demand.

⁵³ Al Arabiya News (2013) "Turkey's relationship with the Muslim Brotherhood". Accessed at: <https://english.alarabiya.net/perspective/alarabiya-studies/2013/10/14/Turkey-s-relationship-with-the-Muslim-Brotherhood> [8/5/2021].

⁵⁴ Farooq, U. (2017) "Turkey nurtures Egypt's 'terrorist' Muslim Brothers". *Daily Beast*. Accessed at: <https://www.thedailybeast.com/turkey-nurtures-egypts-terrorist-muslim-brothers> [8/5/2021].

⁵⁵ McElroy, D. (2020) "Turkey provides base for '20,000 Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood' supporters". *The National News*. Accessed at: <https://www.thenationalnews.com/world/turkey-provides-base-for-20-000-egyptian-muslim-brotherhood-supporters-1.1065871> [8/5/2021].

Military crackdown on Muslim Brotherhood garners sympathy



Correlation of power and spheres of influence in the Greater Middle East in 2019⁵⁶

Under these terms, any Turkish effort to approach Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Egypt is proved vain, due to deep structural antagonisms. An indicative example refers to the 10 conditions of Egypt to Turkey for a possible re-establishment of bilateral relations. These Sisi's conditions to Neo-Ottoman Turkey are the following:

- 1) No maritime demarcation between the two sides without rules of the international law. It is necessary that Turkey undertakes to adhere to maritime international law. Ankara has so far refused to sign or recognise this law.
- 2) There would be no political communication until Cairo is sure about the compliance of the Turkish side to general observance. The communication would remain solely at the security level since political communication does not occur with states that sponsor terrorism, according to Egypt.
- 3) There would be no Egyptian-Turkish agreement in the East Mediterranean except after a Turkish comprehensive agreement with the European allies, and specifically with the Greek and Cypriot sides.

⁵⁶ Vision of Sid (2019) "Unfolding Muslim Brotherhood". Accessed at: <https://visionofsid.com/2019/04/01/unfolding-muslim-brotherhood/> [28/3/2021].

- 4) Turkey's departure from Libya politically, militarily and security wise; abandoning the Libyan file completely and pledging to withdraw the mercenaries it brought to the Libyan territories.
- 5) Putting forward a timetable for the withdrawal of Turkish troops from northern Syria and signing a binding agreement with the Iraqi government pledging never to intervene in Iraqi territories.
- 6) The negotiations would have to include the Saudi and UAE sides and Turkey would have to apologise for the offences perpetrated in recent years by Turkey against the Gulf States. Furthermore, Cairo would not conclude any understandings with Turkey unless Ankara pledges not to ever intervene in the affairs of the Arab states and to observe the contours of Arab national security.
- 7) Stopping all Muslim Brotherhood media outlets that attack Egypt in particular and the Gulf States in general. Turkey would also be banned from embracing any political activity by the Muslim Brotherhood on its territories.
- 8) Freeing the hand of Interpol to deal with all those who are wanted and happen to be present on Turkish soil and not objecting to European authorities, specifically, dealing with them (Cairo does not request their extradition and does not intend to). It is to be noted that Ankara has offered to hand them over to Egypt in batches so as to appease the Egyptian side.
- 9) The Egyptian security authorities would monitor the behaviour of the Turkish regime and check the extent of its compliance with these conditions in the coming period. And before engaging in any other communication, a report will be submitted by the Foreign Ministry to the Egyptian political leadership about this.
- 10) Turkey would not be invited to join the East Mediterranean Forum before Egypt, Greece and Cyprus have agreed to maritime demarcation in the Mediterranean and to the aforementioned conditions.⁵⁷

⁵⁷ Middle East Monitor (2021) "Egypt editor reveals 10 conditions that Turkey must meet". Accessed at: <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20210314-egypt-editor-reveals-10-conditions-that-turkey-must-meet/> [30/6/2021].

Thus, it is clarified – either by content or by wording – that the aforementioned conditions were posed to be rejected. As it has been already mentioned in the current study, actors such as Greece and Cyprus represent core targets of Neo-Ottoman revisionism and they could not be equally included in Turkey’s strategic planning, while Turkey’s close relation with the Muslim Brotherhood is undoubtedly a major problem for Turkish-Egyptian possible dialogue and exceptionally costly for Ankara, in case of a retreat on this. Besides, Muslim Brotherhood is proved an ipso fact strategic weapon referring both to soft power (influence on media, propaganda etc.) and to hard power, since Ankara’s linkages to the organization have offered the framework for militias recruitment and their deployment in Syria, Iraq, Libya and beyond. Hence, the broader dynamic of this relation directed or endeavoured to direct the correlations inside neighbouring and destabilized Libya. Turkey’s support to the Libyan sector of the Brotherhood has been profound, at a time that the Transitional Government in Tripoli demands the withdrawal of foreign merchant militias from Libyan soil and Turkey hardly coordinates with the decisions and petitions of the Great powers and the Quartet for Libya (i.e. United Nations, European Union, Arab League and African Union) as well as Libya itself of course.⁵⁸

Conclusion

The substance of Turkish-Egyptian antagonism with reference to Libya – and the Muslim Brotherhood as a factor of contention – indicates that it is geostrategically indigenous. On the one side of the coin, the so-called “Turkish model” defines Islamic fundamentalism at the epicentre, but also with important burdens derived from Ankara’s historical relation with the Greater Middle East. On the other side of the coin, in Egypt there is a substantial dynamic of the Muslim Brotherhood, but also the geopolitically competitive regime of Sisi. In practical terms, in the case of Turkish-Egyptian competition in Maghreb, a conflict of interests can be observed,⁵⁹ which has clear geostrategic implications and historical references. Nevertheless, the basic aspect is identified with balance of power and actors’ endeavours to re-distribute this power in their favour, with faith and religion to only represent ideological tools for

⁵⁸ See: France24 (2021) “Libya urges Turkey 'cooperation' over foreign troops pull-out”. Accessed at: <https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20210503-libya-urges-turkey-cooperation-over-foreign-troops-pullout> [8/5/2021].

⁵⁹ See: Nikolaou-Patragas, K. Th. (2017) *Muslim Brothers: The mater of Islamist violence* [in Greek]. Athens: Leimon.

strategic legitimacy and not causal factors themselves. Maximization of Turkish power has urged Ankara to express a narrative for covering its expansionist claims within the region and look for a leading role in the geographical zone of the Greater Middle East.

Generally, Turkey's intervening policies in Libya via the Muslim Brotherhood has proved that there is full convergence of interests and priorities in the reading of security challenges and opportunities in the Greater Middle East, especially in Maghreb. As it has been clarified, "the Muslim Brothers, being Erdoğan's weapon, proceed into a transcendence endeavoring to link the two big tendencies of Islam; i.e. Sunnis and Shiites. Their aim is to create a strong pillar under surveillance located in Qatar".⁶⁰ As a consequence, the organization of Muslim Brotherhood is defined as Turkey's strategic weapon, identified with its indigenous geostrategic aims, which are clearly broader and extend beyond Libyan borders. Turkey's increase of influence in Maghreb offers a pressure tool towards both Egypt and Greece, in terms of disputing the second's legal rights with regard to sea zones at Crete's south. In parallel, it contributes to Ankara's strategic image towards its effort to acquire a leading position in the Muslim world.

References

- Al Arabiya News (2013) "Turkey's relationship with the Muslim Brotherhood". Accessed at: <https://english.alarabiya.net/perspective/alarabiya-studies/2013/10/14/Turkey-s-relationship-with-the-Muslim-Brotherhood> [8/5/2021].
- Al Arabiya News (2021) "Thousands protest in Turkey against Israel over surge in violence". Accessed at: <https://english.alarabiya.net/News/middle-east/2021/05/11/Thousands-protest-in-Turkey-against-Israel-over-surge-in-violence> [20/5/2021].
- Aljazeera (2021) "Israel must be taught a 'lesson', Erdogan tells Putin". Accessed at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/5/12/israel-must-be-taught-a-lesson-erdogan-tells-putin> [14/5/2021].

⁶⁰ Mazis, I. Th. and Grivas, K. (2020) "Interview at 'Alert Channel'". Accessed at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=83hcW-f4jfE&ab_channel=Neocleous [13/5/2021].

- Al-Monitor (2020) “Intel: Washington condemns Erdogan’s meeting with Hamas leadership”. Accessed at: <https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2020/08/turkey-hamas-erdogan-meeting-haniyeh-arouri-condemn.html> [19/5/2021].
- Anadolu Agency (2021) “Turkey’s Erdogan speaks over phone with Palestinian president, Hamas chief”. Accessed at: <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/turkey-s-erdogan-speaks-over-phone-with-palestinian-president-hamas-chief/2235820> [20/5/2021].
- Anadolu Agency (2021) “Turkey determined to ensure peace in Syria: Defence minister”. Accessed at: <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/turkey-determined-to-ensure-peace-in-syria-defense-minister/2239538> [14/5/2021].
- Anadolu Agency (2021) “Turkey, Saudi Arabia set to have further dialogue: Turkish foreign minister”. Accessed at: <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/turkey-saudi-arabia-set-to-have-further-dialogue-turkish-foreign-minister/2237811> [14/5/2021].
- Antonopoulos, P. (2020) “NATO head announces support for Libya’s Muslim Brotherhood who aim to steal Greece’s maritime space”. Greek City Times. Accessed at: <https://greekcitytimes.com/2020/05/15/nato-head-announces-support-for-libyas-muslim-brotherhood-who-aim-to-steal-greeces-maritime-space/> [29/3/2021].
- Ayyash, A. (2020) “The turkish future of Egypt’s Muslim Brotherhood”. Accessed at: <https://tcf.org/content/report/turkish-future-egypts-muslim-brotherhood/?agreed=1&agreed=1> [8/5/2021].
- Beaumont, P. (2020) “Turkish MPs pass bill to send troops to support Libyan government”. *The Guardian*. Accessed at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jan/02/turkish-parliament-to-vote-on-sending-troops-to-libya> [29/3/2021].
- Bekaroğlu, E. A. (2016) “Justice and Development Party and Muslim Brotherhood in the “Arab Spring”: A failed post-Islamist interaction to transform the Middle East”. *International Journal of Social Studies*, 2 (1), pp. 1-16.
- Boyes, R. (2020) “Mossad thinks Turkey is a bigger menace than Iran”. *The Times*. Accessed at: <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/loose-cannon-turkey-is-rattling-its-neighbours-72032kp0z> [30/6/2021].

- Çetiner, Y. (2021) “Turkey Constructing a New Drone Base in Northern Cyprus”. *Overt Defense*. Accessed at: <https://www.overtdefense.com/2021/06/01/turkey-constructing-a-new-drone-base-in-northern-cyprus/> [29/6/2021].
- Cubukcu, S. (2018) “The rise of paramilitary groups in Turkey”. *Small Wars Journal*. Accessed at: <https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/rise-paramilitary-groups-turkey> [29/3/2021].
- Davutoğlu, A. (1993) *Alternative paradigms: The impact of Islamic and Western weltanschauungs on political theory*. Lanham: University Press of America.
- Davutoğlu, A. (2010) *Stratejik Derinlik: Türkiye'nin Uluslararası Konumu*. İstanbul, Küre Yayınları.
- Egypt Evidence (2015) “The history of the Muslim Brotherhood”. Accessed at: <https://www.egyptevidence.com/the-history-of-the-muslim-brotherhood/> [8/5/2021].
- European Parliament (2020) “Turkish citizenship granted to members of the Hamas terrorist organisation”. Accessed at: https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-9-2020-004733_EN.html [20/5/2021].
- Farooq, U. (2017) “Turkey nurtures Egypt’s ‘terrorist’ Muslim Brothers”. *Daily Beast*. Accessed at: <https://www.thedailybeast.com/turkey-nurtures-egypts-terrorist-muslim-brothers> [8/5/2021].
- Financial Times (2020) “Erdogan and Hamas: ‘He’s presenting himself as leader of Muslim world’”. Accessed at: <https://www.ft.com/content/7447e141-3d3f-4d98-953d-179e15909a7e> [19/5/2021].
- Forbes (2021) “Under the Iron Dome: The problem with Israel’s rocket shield”. Accessed at: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/davidhambling/2021/05/12/under-the-iron-dome-the-problem-with-israels-rocket-shield/?sh=59eb6c8459b8> [21/5/2021].
- France24 (2021) “Libya urges Turkey 'cooperation' over foreign troops pull-out”. Accessed at: <https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20210503-libya-urges-turkey-cooperation-over-foreign-troops-pullout> [8/5/2021].
- Frantzman, S. J. (2021) “Turkey is radicalizing extremists to attack Kurdish women”. *The Jerusalem Post*. Accessed at: <https://www.jpost.com/middle-east/turkey-is-radicalizing-extremists-to-attack-kurdish-women-671544> [30/6/2021].

- Gehrke, J. (2021) “Turkey: Erdogan wants to deploy anti-Israel ‘international protection force’ to Gaza”. *Washington Examiner*. Accessed at: <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/policy/defense-national-security/erdogan-wants-to-deploy-anti-israel-protection-force-gaza> [14/5/2021].
- Mazis, I. Th. (2008) *The geopolitics of the Greater Middle East and Turkey* [in Greek]. Athens: Livanis.
- Mazis, I. Th. (2013) *Geopolitics: Academic Dissertations*, XLVI. Theoretical Perception of Geopolitics in Davutoğlu’s Work: A Critical Presentation. P. 253. [Published first in: *Civitas Gentium* 3:1 (2013), pp. 9-50], see: http://scholar.uoa.gr/sites/default/files/yianmazis/files/xlvi._theoretical_perception_of_geopolitics_in_davutoglus_work_a_critical_presentation.pdf
- Mazis, I. Th. (2019) “Geostrategic gamble – Libya – Eastern Mediterranean – Greek-Turkish Relations”. *Interview at ERT*. Accessed at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mGgX6k211PU> [17/6/2020].
- Mazis, I. Th. and Grivas, K. (2020) “Interview at ‘Alert Channel’”. Accessed at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=83hcW-f4jfE&ab_channel=Neocleous [13/5/2021].
- Mazis, I. Th. and Sgouros, G. A. (2020) *Geopolitical analysis in the energy complex of the Eastern Mediterranean* [in Greek]. Athens: Leimon.
- Mazis, I. Th. and Troulis, M. I. (2020) *Turkish strategy in Libya: Cultural and social causal factors – Cartography of the Libyan crisis* [in Greek]. Athens: Leimon.
- McElroy, D. (2020) “Turkey provides base for ‘20,000 Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood’ supporters”. *The National News*. Accessed at: <https://www.thenationalnews.com/world/turkey-provides-base-for-20-000-egyptian-muslim-brotherhood-supporters-1.1065871> [8/5/2021].
- McKernan, B. and Akoush, H. (2020) “2,000 Syria fighters deployed to Libya to support government”. *The Guardian*. Accessed at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jan/15/exclusive-2000-syrian-troops-deployed-to-libya-to-support-regime> [29/3/2021].
- Meddeb, H. et al. (2017) “Religion and politics: Religious diversity, political fragmentation and geopolitical tensions in the MENA region”. *Middle East and North Africa Regional Architecture*, 7, pp. 1-38.

- Naar, I. (2020) “Haftar accuses Erdogan of attempting to revive Ottoman legacy in Libya, region”. *Al Arabiya*. Accessed at: <https://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/north-africa/2020/01/04/Haftar-accuses-Erdogan-of-attempting-to-revive-Ottoman-legacy-in-Libya-region> [29/3/2021].
- Nikolaou-Patragas, K. Th. (2017) *Muslim Brothers: The mater of Islamist violence* [in Greek]. Athens: Leimon.
- Nordic Monitor (2020) “Turkey’s paramilitary contractor SADAT eyes training African troops via defense deals”. Accessed at: <https://www.nordicmonitor.com/2020/05/turkeys-paramilitary-contractor-sadat-aims-at-training-african-troops-with-the-help-of-defense-cooperation-agreements/> [4/4/2021].
- Nordic Monitor (2021) “Erdogan unlikely to benefit from ‘Israeli aggression’ this time”. Accessed at: <https://nordicmonitor.com/2021/05/erdogan-unlikely-to-benefit-from-israeli-aggression-this-time/> [19/5/2021].
- Organiser (2018) “*The Venomous Brotherhood*”. Accessed at: <https://www.organiser.org/Encyc/2018/9/10/Muslim-Brotherhood.html> [28/3/2021].
- Politico (2021) “Macron pitches Biden on plan to get foreign fighters out of Libya”. Accessed at: <https://www.politico.eu/article/emmanuel-macron-joe-biden-withdrawal-fighters-libya/> [29/6/2021].
- Reuters (2021) “Erdogan, Putin discuss Israel clashes in call -Turkish presidency”. Accessed at: <https://www.reuters.com/world/erdogan-putin-discuss-israel-clashes-call-turkish-presidency-2021-05-12/> [14/5/2021].
- Reuters (2021) “Turkey's Erdogan says U.N. must act to halt Gaza conflict”. Accessed at: <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/turkeys-erdogan-says-un-must-act-halt-gaza-conflict-2021-05-14/> [20/5/2021].
- Rodríguez, A. (2020) “What is Iran's position in the conflict of Libya?” *Atalayar*. Accessed at: <https://atalayar.com/en/content/what-irans-position-conflict-libya> [29/6/2021].
- Sahinkaya, E. (2020) “Why is Turkey involved in the Libyan conflict?” *VOA news*. Accessed at: <https://www.voanews.com/extremism-watch/why-turkey-involved-libyan-conflict> [29/3/2021].

- South Front (2021) “Military situation in Libya on March 25, 2021”. Accessed at: <https://southfront.org/military-situation-in-libya-on-march-25-2021-map-update/> [31/3/2021].
- Tastekin, F. (2019) “Turkish drones in Libya are a strategic and family affair”. *Al-Monitor*. Accessed at: <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2019/09/turkey-gulf-libya-is-becoming-a-scene-of-proxy-war.html> [4/4/2021].
- The Arab Weekly (2020) “*In Libya, Turkish mercenaries continue to flow from Syria*”. Accessed at: <https://thearabweekly.com/libya-turkish-mercenaries-continue-flow-syria> [4/4/2021].
- The Guardian (2020) “*Idlib to Tripoli: Turkey moves to dominate eastern Mediterranean*”. Accessed at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/may/26/from-idlib-to-tripoli-turkeys-grab-for-influence-in-libya> [4/4/2021].
- The Globalist (2021) “The Erdogan/Hamas axis?” Accessed at: <https://www.theglobalist.com/turkey-recep-tayyip-erdogan-akp-hamas-terrorism-united-states-nato/> [21/5/2021].
- The Jerusalem Post (2021) “Israel announces ceasefire after 11 days of fierce battle with Hamas in Gaza”. Accessed at: <https://www.jpost.com/middle-east/no-rocket-sirens-since-1-am-as-israel-hamas-ceasefire-said-to-be-close-668607> [20/5/2021].
- Vision of Sid (2019) “Unfolding Muslim Brotherhood”. Accessed at: <https://visionofsid.com/2019/04/01/unfolding-muslim-brotherhood/> [28/3/2021].