

# Eurasian Politics and Society



# Eurasian Politics and Society:

## *Issues and Challenges*

Edited by

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and Erman Akıllı

Cambridge  
Scholars  
Publishing



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This book first published 2017

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

Lady Stephenson Library, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2PA, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

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ISBN (10): 1-4438-5511-1

ISBN (13): 978-1-4438-5511-2

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## CHAPTER ONE

# TURKISH EURASIANISM: ROOTS AND DISCOURSES

ÖZGÜR TÜFEKÇİ

### **Introduction**

Turkey has always been a fertile environment and an ideological crucible for debate about ‘secularism’ and ‘Islam’, ‘Pan-Turkism’ and ‘Pan-/Neo-Ottomanism’, etc. These debates and confrontations can be traced back to the Ottoman Empire. In spite of the fact that the newly established Turkish Republic’s main official direction was toward the West, these debates still exist today. For instance, while the Democratic Party (1946–1960) to Justice Party (1961–1980) line and the National Salvation Party (1972–1980) to Welfare Party (1983–1998) line had pro-Ottomanist and pro-Islamist approaches respectively, the centre-left Republican People’s Party (CHP), by and large, embraced a Western-oriented approach after the establishment of the Republic of Turkey until the early 2000s, even if it seems that the CHP (the main opposition party) has recently lost its enthusiasm toward the Western world and has radiated mixed signals on whether it will continue to support Turkey’s Westernist foreign policy discourse.

As a consequence of these debates and confrontations, it should be mentioned that Russian Eurasianism has had some reflections on Turkish society. In particular, the conditions of the post-Cold War era and the recent activism in Turkish foreign policy have put the Eurasianism debates back on the agenda. Various perceptions of this view can be observed in contemporary Turkish politics. In this context, this chapter provides a detailed analysis of the discourses of Turkish Eurasianism. Specifically, the first part of this section focuses on four of the main ideologies which have been dominant in Turkey in shaping the discourses of Turkish

Eurasianism since the late 1980s: Neo-Ottomanism, Islamism, Pan-Turkism and Pan-Turanianism. It is significant to analyse these ideologies as they are four of the main determinants of Turkish domestic and foreign policy directions. Besides, these ideologies have played a vital role during the attempts of Aleksandr Dugin's Neo-Eurasianism to penetrate into Turkey, as his initial Eurasianist thinking was anti-Turkish and it was these ideologies which moulded and added perspectives to the discourses of Turkish Eurasianism. In this sense, the latter part of the section will present an overview of the discourses of Eurasianism in contemporary Turkish politics.

## **Roots of Diversity of Eurasianism in Turkey**

### ***Neo-Ottomanism: Endless Passion***

The Ottoman Empire (1299–1922) was one of the largest and longest-lasting empires in history. Soon after its establishment, it emerged as the major power in the Eastern Mediterranean. The Empire reached its height under Suleiman the Magnificent (1520–1566). During this era, 15 million people were living in the Empire: from Algeria in the west to Azerbaijan in the east; from Ukraine in the north to Yemen in the south. However, the Ottomans gradually started to lose their strength with the Karlowitz Treaty (1699).<sup>1</sup> This event marked the beginning of the long decline of the Ottoman Empire. It took more than two hundred years to replace the Ottoman Empire with the Republic of Turkey.

During these two hundred years, Ottoman politicians and intellectuals relentlessly endeavoured to save the Empire by coming up with potential solutions. Many argued that one of the reasons why the Empire was in decline was the failure to adopt the technical developments of the West. Therefore, adopting new military technologies, and reforming Ottoman diplomacy and the education and judicial systems, would get the Empire back in the race. As a result, during the reigns of Selim III (1761–1808) and Mahmut II (1785–1839), many legal, military and educational reforms were implemented in order to catch up with Western powers. Nevertheless,

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<sup>1</sup> The Karlowitz Treaty was signed on 26 January 1699 in order to conclude the Austro-Ottoman War (1683–1697), in which the Ottoman side had been defeated at the Battle of Zenta.

these reforms did not halt the decline of the Empire and they ‘destroyed the traditional order, but never replaced it with a new and workable one’.<sup>2</sup>

Another reason for the decline was the idea of nationalism that the French revolution spread. As the Ottoman Empire was a multicultural empire, all communities needed to live in harmony. To sustain this, the Ottoman Empire developed a unique system called *millet*. The main feature of this system was the division of communities ‘according to their religion and a system based on the relationship between members within such communities, as well as other religious groups and with the state’.<sup>3</sup> In this sense, local religious leaders were responsible for the civil behaviour of their own communities.<sup>4</sup> The *millet* system had given a great deal of power to communities, such as the power to set their own laws and collect and distribute their own taxes. While this system was one of the reasons for almost five centuries of Ottoman reign, it also paved the way for its decline.

The effects of nationalist ideas easily permeated throughout the Empire with the help of the *millet* system. The first effect of the French Revolution on the Ottoman Empire was the 1821 Greek rebellion. Also, Balkan nationalism, which was fostered in the churches, led to further fragmentation. Among other ‘national’ churches a Bulgarian exarchate (1864) emerged, distinct from the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate.<sup>5</sup>

Under these conditions, Ottoman intelligentsia produced several ideologies to save the Empire and to help shape its political orientation. Ottomanism was one of those ideologies. It first appeared during the First Constitutional Era of the Ottoman Empire in the first half of the 1800s. According to the Ottoman elite, the Empire needed a panacea in order to counter the nationalist feelings awakening within its own borders. Through Ottomanism, they aimed to give an overall identity to the communities which formed the Ottoman Empire.<sup>6</sup> Ottomanism was an ‘attempt by the

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<sup>2</sup> Yelda Demirağ, ‘Pan-ideologies in the Ottoman Empire against the West: From Pan-Ottomanism to Pan-Turkism’, *The Turkish Yearbook of International Relations*, XXXVI (2006).

<sup>3</sup> Christoph Marcinkowski, *The Islamic World and the West* (London: Transaction Publishers, 2009): 114.

<sup>4</sup> Serif Mardin, ‘Turkey: Islam and Westernization’, in C. Caldarola (ed.), *Religion and Societies: Asia and the Middle East* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter & Co., 1982).

<sup>5</sup> Mardin, ‘Turkey: Islam and Westernization’, 175.

<sup>6</sup> Demirağ, ‘Pan-ideologies in the Ottoman Empire’, 145.

Ottoman government to use one single citizenship as a common political identity in order to achieve equality and unity among all Ottoman subjects and transcend differences of faith, ethnicity, and language'.<sup>7</sup>

In other words, the motive was to create an 'Ottoman nation' and make all communities perceive themselves as Ottoman, in one sense forming a melting-pot. In this way, the Empire would sustain Greek, Serbian, Bulgarian, Armenian and Albanian separatists' loyalties.<sup>8</sup> However, these expectations did not materialise and the ideology of Ottomanism was replaced by the rising Turkish nationalist ideas of the beginning of the 1900s.

After a long time, the first neo-Ottomanist traces were seen during the Turgut Özal era. By and large, Özal's Ottomanism referred to a multicultural state<sup>9</sup> which embraced 'the relative tolerance of Ottoman Islam as sources of pluralism and openness for domestic social and political life'.<sup>10</sup> As a matter of fact, in some way Özal's Neo-Ottomanism was a counteraction to Kemalist foreign policy understanding. Although by that time Kemalist discourse had abandoned the Ottoman legacy, Özal initiated a new era of taking the Ottoman Empire as a positive example. In Taşpınar's words:

Özal's approach was to have Turkey rediscover its imperial legacy and seek a new national consensus where the multiple identities of Turkey can coexist. It reminds Turks that they once had a great multinational empire that ruled the Middle East, North Africa, the Balkans and parts of Central Europe. Such emphasis on the Ottoman legacy is not part of a plan to Islamize Turkey and Turkish foreign policy. Rather, it is an attempt to

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<sup>7</sup> Kemal H. Karpat, 'Historical Continuity and Identity Change or How to be Modern Muslim, Ottoman, and Turk', in K. H. Karpat (ed.), *Ottoman Past and Today's Turkey* (Leiden: Brill, 2000): 6.

<sup>8</sup> Yılmaz Çolak, 'Ottomanism vs. Kemalism: Collective Memory and Cultural Pluralism in 1990s Turkey', *Middle Eastern Studies*, 42:4 (2006): 587–602.

<sup>9</sup> Sedat Laçiner, 'Özalism (Neo-Ottomanism): An Alternative in Turkish Foreign Policy?' *Journal of Administrative Sciences* (2003): 161–202; Sedat Laçiner, 'Turgut Özal Period in Turkish Foreign Policy: Özalism', *USAK Yearbook of International Politics and Law*, 2 (2009); Sabri Sayarı, 'Turkish Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War Era: The Challenges of Multi-Regionalism', *Journal of International Affairs*, 54 (2000): 169–82.

<sup>10</sup> Nora Fisher, 'Neo-Ottomanism, Historical Legacies and Turkish Foreign Policy', EDAM Discussion Paper Series 2009/03: 10.

balance and broaden the horizons of Kemalism and its over-obsession with Turkey's Western identity and trajectory.<sup>11</sup>

This Neo-Ottomanist approach was dominant during the Özal era in order to open up a new foreign policy understanding for Turkey. As it is not possible to implement a policy counter to society's sensitivities, Özal did not pursue such an ideology and put it into practice against the mainstream ideology of the Republic of Turkey, 'Kemalism'. That is why, since Neo-Ottomanism and Kemalism have commonalities even though they are differentiated in some contexts, Özal wisely emphasised those commonalities which were appreciated by the majority of Turkish society – such as relations with the Western world. Yet, in contrast to Kemalism's isolationist foreign policy, Neo-Ottomanism, or in Laçiner's word 'Özalism', concentrates on an active foreign policy based on not only former Ottoman territories, but also other territories in the world. Although Neo-Ottomanism was subject to much discussion and criticism, nevertheless, for this emphasis on the relations with the West, it was welcomed in general. Moreover, it paved the way for Turkey's *bridge* role. Özal's vision was of using the economy to remember the historical and cultural ties employed in Turkey through common market proposals.<sup>12</sup> Turkey's relations with Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan in the Caucasus and Central Asia and later with Bosnia, Macedonia, Kosovo and Albania in the Balkans were reconstituted through this vision. Indeed this was a mutually constituted relationship as the relations were not held solely through Turkey's initiation; those countries were seeking assistance from Turkey as well.<sup>13</sup> Despite the expansion, Turgut Özal's foreign policy did not deviate from the traditional Kemalist approach since his conduct was loyal to the Western orientation.<sup>14</sup> In this sense, it is safe to say that Neo-Ottomanism got its strength from relations with the West as well. That is why Özal attached great importance to relations with the European Union and the USA.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Ömer Taşpınar, 'Turkey's Middle East Policies: Between Neo-Ottomanism and Kemalism', *Carnegie Papers*, Carnegie Endowment (2008): 1–29 (14).

<sup>12</sup> Sedat Laçiner, *From Kemalism to Özalism, the Ideological Evolution of Turkish Foreign Policy*, Unpublished PhD thesis (London: King's College University of London, 2001): 308.

<sup>13</sup> Laçiner, *From Kemalism to Özalism*, 308–9.

<sup>14</sup> Laçiner, *From Kemalism to Özalism*, 332.

<sup>15</sup> For further discussion about Neo-Ottomanism and Kemalism see: Faruk Loğoğlu, 'Neo-Ottomanism: a Stratagem?', accessed 1 July 2011 at

On the one hand, in line with Özal's neo-Ottomanism approach, although it is not officially proclaimed, there is an inclination among some experts in Turkey to call the AKP's foreign policy a 'neo-Ottoman strategy'.<sup>16</sup> On the other hand, there are some experts who criticise this nomenclature as well. For instance, Soner Çağaptay objects to the naming of this strategy as 'Neo-Ottomanism', as, according to him, a closer look reveals that during the AKP era, Turkey was asserting itself exclusively in the Muslim Middle East, while ignoring other areas of the Ottoman realm.<sup>17</sup> In spite of these criticisms, what is plain is that the AKP's foreign policy has been built on the current Minister of Foreign Affairs Ahmet Davutoğlu's thoughts, which are called 'strategic depth'. Further, the relations between his way of thinking and Eurasianism will be scrutinised in the following sub-sections.

When it comes to Neo-Ottomanism's comparison to Eurasianism, to some extent Neo-Ottomanism – similarly to Eurasianism – reflects Westernist and Pan-Islamist approaches at the same time. Taşpınar accentuates this point further:

Neo-Ottomanism embraces a grand, geostrategic vision of Turkey as an effective and engaged regional actor, trying to solve regional and global problems. Since the concept of neo-Ottomanism may evoke an imperial agenda, one important point needs clarification: Turkey, in this neo-Ottoman paradigm, does not pursue a neo-imperialist policy aimed at resurrecting the Ottoman Empire. Instead of imperial nostalgia, neo-Ottomanism is essentially about projecting Turkey's 'soft power' – a bridge between East and West, a Muslim nation, a secular state, a democratic political system, and a capitalistic economic force. Like French Gaullism, it seeks Turkish 'grandeur' and influence in foreign policy.<sup>18</sup>

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[www.hurriyetdailynews.com/h.php?news=neo-ottomanism-a-strategem-2008-09-27](http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/h.php?news=neo-ottomanism-a-strategem-2008-09-27); Nora Fisher, 'Neo-Ottomanism, Historical Legacies and Turkish Foreign Policy', EDAM Discussion Paper Series 2009/03; Çolak, 'Ottomanism vs. Kemalism'.

<sup>16</sup> Taşpınar, 'Turkey's Middle East Policies: Between Neo-Ottomanism and Kemalism', 14.

<sup>17</sup> Soner Çağaptay, 'The AKP's Foreign Policy: The Misnomer of "Neo-Ottomanism"', accessed 30 November 2011 at [www.washingtoninstitute.org/templateC06.php?CID=1270](http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/templateC06.php?CID=1270).

<sup>18</sup> Taşpınar, 'Turkey's Middle East Policies', 3.

On the other hand, Eurasianism is identified with the East and its underdeveloped institutions are despised by opponents,<sup>19</sup> although Neo-Ottomanism is praised in some circles in Turkey because it pursues aims related to the East. To clarify, the West is associated with democracy and development in the minds of many people in Turkey, while the East is associated with backwardness and underdevelopment. In addition, the division between Eurasianism and Neo-Ottomanism stems from the perception of those ideologies within Turkish society. Hence, whereas Neo-Ottomanism is accepted as a rightful quest, Eurasianism is considered a shift from traditional Turkish foreign policy.<sup>20</sup> As a matter of fact some believe that while a Neo-Ottomanist Turkey can bring democracy and prosperity to the Ottoman Empire's former territories and can play a leadership role, in any kind of Eurasianist dream Turkey would stay in the shadow of Russia.

### *Islamism 'Pan' and 'Neo'*

Although Pan-Islamism in the sense of a union of all Muslims is in fact as old as Islam itself, as an ideology it came out in the late 1800s.<sup>21</sup> One of the champions of it was Jamaledin Afghani (Sayyid Jamal al-Din Muhammad, b. Safdar al-Afghani, 1838–1897), who sought to unite all Muslims under an Islamic state to withstand Western encroachments. According to Afghani, Muslim societies were weak due to corrupted rulers and various divided sects. And this weakness was the main reason why Western civilisation had become superior. That was why Muslim solidarity was essential in order to challenge Western imperialism and maintain the freedom of Muslims, in Afghani's way of thinking.<sup>22</sup> In this

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<sup>19</sup> Abdulhamid Bilici, 'Ergenekoncu Hayale Rus Darbesi' (Russian Sabotage the Ergenekonist Fantasy), accessed 13 Spetember 2016 at [www.timeturk.com/tr/makale/abdulhamid-bilici/ergenekoncu-hayale-rus-darbesi.html](http://www.timeturk.com/tr/makale/abdulhamid-bilici/ergenekoncu-hayale-rus-darbesi.html); Ihsan Dağı, 'Competing Strategies for Turkey: Eurasianism or Europeanism?' *CACI Analyst*, accessed 20 May 2009 at [www.cacianalyst.org/?q=node/177](http://www.cacianalyst.org/?q=node/177).

<sup>20</sup> Suat Kınıklioğlu, 'Neo-Ottoman Turkey', Project Syndicate, accessed 4 April 2011 at [www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/kiniklioglu2/English](http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/kiniklioglu2/English); Suat Kınıklioğlu, 'The return of Ottomanism', accessed 4 April 2011 at [www.suatkiniklioglu.org/en/my-today-s-zaman-column/the-return-of-ottomanism.html](http://www.suatkiniklioglu.org/en/my-today-s-zaman-column/the-return-of-ottomanism.html).

<sup>21</sup> Azmi Özcan, *Pan-Islamism: Indian Muslims, the Ottomans and Britain (1877–1924)* (Leiden: Brill, 1997): 23.

<sup>22</sup> For further information on Afghani's Pan-Islamist approach see: Shaukat Ali, *Pan Movements in the Third World: Pan-Arabism, Pan-Africanism, Pan-Islamism*

form, Pan-Islamism is a counter-hegemonic vision like Asian and African nationalism, but it is different from Pan-Arabism, Pan-Turkism, etc., as it excludes ethnicity as an essential condition toward founding an Islamic state.

In the Ottoman Empire, Abdulhamid II was the first and the last sultan to adopt Pan-Islamism against Western intervention in Ottoman affairs, during his reign between 1876 and 1909. The first constitution of the Ottoman Empire was enacted after Abdulhamid's accession to the throne and clearly reflects a Pan-Islamic tendency. According to the constitution: 'The Ottoman Sultanate, as the exalted Caliphs of Islam, belongs to the eldest member of the house of Osman ... His Excellency the *Padişah* as Caliph, is the protector of the religion of Islam.'<sup>23</sup>

Abdulhamid's Pan-Islamist approach might be regarded as an effort to save the Ottoman Empire and its societal unity, while some experts argue that it was adopted to sustain unification of all Muslims all over the world.<sup>24</sup> As a matter of fact, both arguments can be taken as the core elements of Abdulhamid's Pan-Islamist approach, as he believed that 'It was Islam that kept the different groups of the Empire like the members of one family ... because the social structure and the politics of our Empire is based upon religion'.<sup>25</sup> Moreover, he was a fervent supporter of the unification of Muslims all around the world, and in Abdulhamid's own words:

as long as the union of Islam continues, England, France, Russia, and Holland can be counted on my fingertips, because in the Muslim lands now under their domination even one word of the Caliph would be enough for starting a *jehad* against them which would be a catastrophe for the Christians.<sup>26</sup>

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(Lahore: Publishers United Ltd., [pref. 1976]): 196; Ziaullah Khan, 'Sayyed Jamal-ud-Din Afghani's reflections on Western Imperialism – An Analysis', *Pakistan Journal of History and Culture* (July-December 1989): 54–67.

<sup>23</sup> Quoted in Özcan, *Pan-Islamism*, 40.

<sup>24</sup> For this debate see: Mümtazer Türköne, *İslamcılığın Doğuşu* (Ankara: Lotus Yayınevi, 2003); Serif Mardin, *'19. yy'da Düşünce Akımları ve Osmanlı Devleti: Tanzimattan Cumhuriyete* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1985); Niyazi Berkes, *Türkiye'de Çağdaşlaşma* (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2002); Demirağ, 'Pan-ideologies in the Ottoman Empire'.

<sup>25</sup> Quoted in Özcan, *Pan-Islamism*, 47.

<sup>26</sup> Quoted in Özcan, *Pan-Islamism*, 50.

In addition to this debate, it was a fact that the European colonial advance (such as the occupation of Tunisia and Egypt) during the late 1800s and the emergence of pan-nationalist thought (such as Pan-Slavism and Pan-Germanism) posed a threat toward the territorial unity of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>27</sup> The Empire was a multinational state and the idea of nationalism was one of the powerful motives behind the nationalist uprisings against the Ottoman Empire – such as the 1821 Greek uprising, 1876 Bulgarian uprising, etc. Further, since the European colonial advancement and the decline of the Ottoman Empire occurred at the same time, the Empire lost a majority of its territories. It might be said that in this climate, adopting Pan-Islamism as an official ideology and applying it in the Empire's political life to prevent further separation was more a rational choice than a matter of pursuing the unification of all Muslims for idealistic purposes. However, Abdulhamid preferred to adopt both perspectives together in order to save the Ottoman Empire and the Muslim world from what Landau called 'the foreign attacks'.<sup>28</sup>

On the other hand, although Pan-Islamism is a counter-hegemonic ideology, Pan-Islamists had accepted that the West had technical superiority and that during the revival of the Muslim world that technological advancement could be adopted. The main discourse was that Western technology would have to be adopted but imitation of the West was out of question. In this context, many intellectuals made explicit statements. One of them was Mehmet Akif Ersoy (1873–1936), a well-known figure at the time. He expressed his approach on this matter as follows: 'By imitating the religion, by imitating the customary practices, the clothes, by imitating the way people greet each other, in short by imitating every single thing, a real social community cannot emerge and live.'<sup>29</sup>

Despite all its efforts, the Ottoman Empire collapsed without managing to unite Muslim people under an Islamic state. Owing to Kemalist secularist understanding, thoughts of Islamism and Ottomanism were kept in the background until the Turgut Özal era. With Özal's arrival, pro-Ottomanist and pro-Islamist approaches gained momentum and started to be influential in Turkey again.

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<sup>27</sup> Abdul Rauf, 'Pan-Islamism and the North West Frontier Province of British India (1897–1918)', *Perceptions* (Winter 2007): 21–42.

<sup>28</sup> Jacob M. Landau, *The Politics of Pan-Islam, Ideology and Organization* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994): 9.

<sup>29</sup> Quoted in Demirağ, 'Pan-ideologies in the Ottoman Empire', 148.

Özal's Neo-Ottomanist approach was a synthesis of Turkism, Nationalism and Islamism. In this context, Özal's main contribution was his attempt to integrate a Turkish-Islamic Synthesis into the official state discourse.<sup>30</sup> The Turkish-Islamic Synthesis was a strategy produced by a group of intellectuals called *Aydınlar Ocağı* (Intellectuals' Hearth) and adopted by the military after the 12 September 1980 coup. The main aim of this Synthesis was to integrate Islamists and Nationalists against radical leftist ideologies in order to reduce their appeal and to get rid of the influence of non-Turkish strands of Islamic thinking. In this way, the integrity of the Turkish nation-state would be maintained and counter-revolutionary sentiments would be eliminated.<sup>31</sup>

Although Özal was a pious Muslim, he generally supported secularist aspects of the state. While he supported the Turkish version of Islam, Özal emphasised the differences between this and the Iranian version of Islam and Wahhabism, the dominant form of Islam in Saudi Arabia. The reason for this emphasis was that the Turkish version of Islam was more tolerant and liberal than the other versions. From the perspective of Özal, that was the prerequisite to establishing a link between Muslims and the rest of the world.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Gareth Jenkins, *Political Islam in Turkey: Running West, Heading East?* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008): 149.

<sup>31</sup> For further information on Turkish-Islamic Synthesis see Angel Rabasa and F. Stephen Larrabee, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey* (California: RAND, 2008); Cemal Karakaş, *Turkey: Islam and Laicism between the Interest of the State, Politics and Society*, Peace Research Institute Frankfurt (PRIF) Report No. 78; Gökhan Çetinsaya, 'Rethinking Nationalism and Islam: Some Preliminary Notes on the Roots of "Turkish-Islamic Synthesis" in Modern Turkish Political Thought', *The Muslim World*, 89: 3–4 (1999): 350–76; Binnaz Toprak, 'Religion as State Ideology in a Secular Setting: The Turkish-Islamic Synthesis' in Malcolm Wagstaff (ed.), *Aspects of Religion in Secular Turkey*, No. 40 (Durham: University of Durham, Centre for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, Occasional Paper Series, 1990): 10–15; Anat Lapidot, 'Islamic Activism in Turkey since the 1980 Military Takeover', *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 3 (1997): 62–74 (Special Issue on 'Religious Radicalism in the Greater Middle East' edited by B. Maddy-Weitzman and E. Inbar).

<sup>32</sup> For further discussion on Özal's Neo-Ottomanist and Neo-Islamist approach see: Laçiner, *From Kemalism to Özalism*; Gamze G. Kona, 'The Rise and the Fall of Political Islam in Turkey', paper presented at the International Conference on 'Political Islam in the Middle East', Chaim Herzog Centre, Ben-Gurion University, Beersheba, Israel, 29 March 2006; Çolak, 'Ottomanism vs. Kemalism'.

I have, I hope, demonstrated that Turkey has never abandoned secularism. In this context one can refer to Ghazâlî's distinction between faith and reason. The Turk is aware that faith, in itself, does not affect secularism, nor does it prevent him from being rational, provided that their respective realms are not encroached. In life today there is no difference in this respect between the Christian European and the Muslim Turk. Thus a synthesis has been achieved between the West and Islam, a synthesis which has put an end to the identity crisis of the Turk ... French and Germans have separate cultures, but both constitute Western civilization, so would Turks while stressing and vitalizing their Turkish nationalism ... the universal humanism created by secularized Islam, together with the concept of the brotherhood of mankind, a product of Turkish Sufism.<sup>33</sup>

The next revival of Islamism occurred during the late 1990s when Refah Partisi (the Welfare Party) won 21.4 per cent of the vote. The December 1995 elections saw the RP become the biggest party, while the ANAP (Motherland Party) and DYP (True Path Party) were the opposition parties. However, that percentage was not enough to form the government. That was why ANAP and DYP formed a coalition, though it lasted only three months. After that, the RP and DYP agreed to form a government on 28 June 1996. Thus, Necmettin Erbakan, who was the leader of RP, became the first Islamist prime minister of Turkey. During the RP and DYP coalition, Islamist discourse was dominant in Turkey's foreign policy. Once Erbakan became prime minister, he began visiting many Muslim states such as Pakistan, Iran and Indonesia. In particular, the first official visit, to Iran instead of the USA, was a clear message of how the new Turkish foreign policy was going to be formalised. During almost two years in office Erbakan did not conduct an official visit to any Western country.<sup>34</sup> Moreover, Erbakan's salient distrust toward the European Union, the USA and Israel discouraged the government from embarking on high-level relations. The distrust was mutual: the USA also was suspicious about the 'fundamentalism' of Erbakan and considered his rule a threat to their interests.<sup>35</sup>

The next step was establishing an Islamic organisation which could be an alternative to the EU. For that reason, on 15 June 1997 in Istanbul,

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<sup>33</sup> Turgut Özal, *Turkey in Europe and Europe in Turkey* (Nicosia, Northern Cyprus: K. Rustem & Brother, 1991): 296–7.

<sup>34</sup> Hasret D. Bilgin, 'Foreign Policy Orientation of Turkey's Pro-Islamist Parties', *Turkish Studies*, 9:3 (2008): 411.

<sup>35</sup> Philip Robins, 'Turkish Foreign Policy under Erbakan', *Survival*, 39:3 (2007): 82.

Developing Eight (D-8) was formed by Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan and Turkey. D-8's objectives are described as follows: 'improve member states' positions in the global economy, diversify and create new opportunities in trade relations, enhance participation in decision-making at the international level, and improve standards of living'.<sup>36</sup> This initiative is still functioning but it lacks some essential aspects in order to become an alternative organisation to the EU, with problems that include geographical disparity and differences in political priorities.

The RP's counter-discourse on Turkish foreign policy was not long-lasting. The then coalition resigned because of the 'February 28 post-modern coup'.<sup>37</sup> On 28 February 1997, during a National Security Council meeting, the Turkish military leadership produced a memorandum consisting of several decisions to protect secularism against 'reactionaryism', and forced Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan to sign the memorandum. Although Erbakan signed the memorandum, he was forced to resign. Since there was no dissolving of the parliament, and because of the brutal action taken against Turkey's political institutions and figures, this intervention by the Turkish military leadership was called a 'post-modern coup'. Even though the Islamist discourse lost its influence after the RP era, it is still effective in Turkey as the offshoot of the RP and the AKP (Justice and Development Party) has become stronger than ever, but with more modest discourses.

In this sense, Islamism and Ottomanism have been two of the most significant ideologies that have shaped political and social life in Turkey – along with Pan-Turkism and Pan-Turanianism – and that underpin Eurasianist discourses in the country.

### ***Pan-Turkism: Red Apple***

Pan-Turkism emerged in the late 19th century among the Turks in the Russian Empire and it was an example of diaspora nationalism. It had a

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<sup>36</sup> Developing Eight Countries (D8), accessed 16 July 2011 at [http://cesran.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=223&Itemid=241&lang=en](http://cesran.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=223&Itemid=241&lang=en).

<sup>37</sup> Cengiz Çandar, 'Post-modern Darbe', *Daily Sabah*, accessed 16 July 2011 at <http://arsiv.sabah.com.tr/1997/06/28/y12.html>; Stephen Vertigans, *Islamic Roots and Resurgence in Turkey: Understanding and Explaining the Muslim Resurgence*, (Connecticut: Praeger Publishers, 2003): 69–71.

reflective motive toward the aggressive politics of the Russian government, such as the Russification and Christianisation policies.<sup>38</sup> Pan-Turkism aimed to unite all people of Turkic origin on an ethnic basis. At the end of the 19th century, more than 13 million Turkic peoples (consisting of 11 per cent of the whole population of the Empire) were living in the Russian Empire. And 85 per cent of this Turkic population were Muslim.<sup>39</sup> Through Pan-Turkism, it was intended that this 11 per cent would be separated from the Russian Empire, after the Empire's destruction. Then, a solid Turkic union would be established by means of merging with the Ottoman Turks on a vast land which included the territory of the Russian Empire and the majority of the territory of the Ottoman Empire. For all of these reasons, this school of thought can be considered as one of the irredentist movements.

In a manner, the word 'Pan-Turkism' was used in the sense of Pan-Turanianism, and vice versa, during the early 20th century. To clarify the difference between these two schools of thought, it is meaningful to say that whereas Pan-Turkism aspired to unite all Turkic peoples, Pan-Turanianism was aimed at the unification of the Turkic peoples with the Finno-Ugric peoples. The pre-eminent theorists of the Pan-Turkist movement were the Crimean Tatar Ismail Gasprinsky (1851–1914), the Tatar intellectual Yusuf Akçura (1876–1935), the Azeri Turk Ahmet Agayev (1869–1939), the Azeri Ali Hüseyinzade (1864–1941) and Ziya Gökalp (1876–1924), the Turkish sociologist.<sup>40</sup>

Ismail Gasprinsky disseminated his ideas through his newspaper *Tercüman* and advocated the idea of 'unity in language, ideas, and deeds'. Although Gasprinsky synthesised Turkism and Islam, he was a fervent advocator of Westernisation.<sup>41</sup> This was a precaution to prevent being left behind the developed West. Another prominent figure, Yusuf Akçura, is known for his work 'Üç Tarz-ı Siyaset' (Three Kinds of Policies), which

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<sup>38</sup> Stefan Wiederkehr, 'Eurasianism as a Reaction to Pan-Turkism', in Dmitry Shlapentokh (ed.), *Russia between East and West: Scholarly Debates on Eurasianism* (Leiden: Brill, 2007).

<sup>39</sup> Jacob M. Landau, *Pan-Turkism: From Irredentism to Cooperation* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1995): 7; Serge A. Zenkovsky, *Pan-Turkism and Islam in Russia* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960): 9.

<sup>40</sup> Wiederkehr, 'Eurasianism as a Reaction to Pan-Turkism'; Landau, *Pan-Turkism: From Irredentism to Cooperation*.

<sup>41</sup> Hakan Kırımlı, 'Ismail Bey Gaspralı, Türklük ve İslam', *Doğu-Batı*, 31 (2005): 147–76 (169).

was published in the Cairo-based journal *Türk*. In this paper, Akçura examines Ottomanism, Islamism and Turkism. And it was Pan-Turkism that Akçura supported at the expense of Ottomanism and Pan-Islamism, as he believed that ‘Turkism was the sole concept capable of sustaining the *Türk millet* (Turkish Nation)’.<sup>42</sup> This way of understanding gained acceptance and Akçura’s work has been regarded as the manifesto of the Pan-Turkists.<sup>43</sup> As for Ziya Gökalp, he was in favour of Turkish nationalism in his articles in the journal *Türk Yurdu*. He also supported the vision that the Ottomans should pursue a more open foreign policy and not be imprisoned in their territory. The developed Western world’s science and technology would guide the Ottomans to reach the level of other contemporary civilisations.

The most important criticism directed against Pan-Turkism is related to the racist specification of its main justification. Landau, Finkel and Sirman emphasise that the supporters of Pan-Turkism have headed toward the use of racist undertones since World War II.<sup>44</sup> For instance, the cover of *Bozkurt*<sup>45</sup> might be an obvious example of this (see Figure 1.1). In this specific cover, the claimed extent of the Turkic ethnic homeland is shown and the meaning of the slogan at the top is ‘Turkish race is above all others’, while the *bozkurt*, i.e. the steppe wolf, is symbolised below the title.<sup>46</sup>

Pan-Turkism can be counted as one of the long-lived nationalist movements. During the late Ottoman era, the early Turkish Republican era and the 1960s, and after the disintegration of the Soviet Union, Pan-Turkism was at the peak of its power. In particular, the Turkic world witnessed a significant revival of Pan-Turkism during the disintegration of the Soviet Union. When the Soviet Union, the most powerful multinational state of the 20th century, collapsed, five new Turkic-Central Asian states emerged: Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan,

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<sup>42</sup> Touraj Atabaki, ‘Recasting Oneself, Rejecting the Other: Pan-Turkism and Iranian Nationalism’, in Willem Van Schendel and Erik-J. Zürcher (eds), *Identity Politics in Central Asia and The Muslim World: Nationalism, Ethnicity and Labour in the Twentieth Century* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2001): 69.

<sup>43</sup> Touraj Atabaki, ‘Recasting Oneself, Rejecting the Other’, 69.

<sup>44</sup> Jacob M. Landau, *Radical Politics in Modern Turkey* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1974); Andrew Finkel and Nukhet Sirman, *Turkish State, Turkish Society* (London: Routledge, 1990).

<sup>45</sup> *Bozkurt* was a Pan-Turkist journal which was published between 1939 and 1942.

<sup>46</sup> Landau, *Pan-Turkism: From Irredentism to Cooperation*, 3.

**HER İRKİN ÖSTONDE TÖRK İRKİİ**

# BOZKURT



**SAYI**  
11

**TEMMUZ**  
1941

**KURUŞ**  
20

Figure 1.1 The Cover of *Bozkurt* Newsletter

and the Kyrgyz Republic. The population of these states was more than 50 million. Along with Turkey, these Turkic states have been called ‘one nation with six states’ ever since. It is also often argued that Turkey is the

backbone of these states. Admittedly, Turkey is the most powerful and best-established Turkic nation in the world. What is more, Turkey has been the core state of Pan-Turkic movements in the post-1990s. For instance, a statement of Mahir Yağcılar, leader of the Kosovo Turkish Democratic Party, former Minister of Environment and incumbent Minister of Environment for Kosovo, had a confirmatory attribute regarding this issue. In October 2010, Yağcılar stated at the World Turkic Forum in Istanbul that ‘The main target of the forum is to improve our values, expand our national values and make them international ... The Turkish Republic is the mainland for us.’<sup>47</sup>

Since the Soviet dissolution, a myriad of activity to bring Turkic-speaking countries together has been organised at both the state and individual level in the Turkic world; this includes the annual Friendship, Brotherhood, and Cooperation Congress of the Turkic States and Communities, the annual Eurasian Economic Summit, the World Turkic Forum, the Summit of Turkish-speaking countries’ leaders, and the Turkish-speaking Countries Parliamentary Assembly (TurkPA). While some of these have been held since 1993, such as the Friendship, Brotherhood, and Cooperation Congress of the Turkic States and Communities, some have started as recently as 2008, such as TurkPA. However, all these initiatives are consequences of endeavours to rediscover the linguistic and cultural affinities between Turkic countries. Through these initiatives, activists are in search of means of promoting closer cultural, economic and political ties between Turkic-speaking countries.

Although Turkey takes the initiative, there are several obstacles toward accomplishing such a comprehensive aim. First of all, despite the fact that some of the Turkic countries have a vast amount of proven oil reserves, it cannot be claimed that they are economically powerful states, yet. Having said that, this does not mean that Turkey does not have economic relations with these states. Apart from enhancing the cultural ties, Turkey places a lot of importance on economic relations with the Turkic states. Since the 1990s Turkey has provided 1.2 billion dollars in credit to these countries in order to make them attractive investment areas for Turkish

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<sup>47</sup> ‘Istanbul Summit Looks to Foster Greater Unified Turkic Identity’, *Hurriyet Daily News*, accessed 29 October 2010 at [www.hurriyetdailynews.com/n.php?n=summit-discusses-turkic-identity-2010-10-21](http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/n.php?n=summit-discusses-turkic-identity-2010-10-21). For an elaborate discussion of Turkish nationalism and Turkish ethnopolitical mobilisation in Kosovo see Hüsrev Tabak, *The Kosovar Turks and Post-Kemalist Turkey: Foreign Policy, Socialisation and Resistance* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2016).

businessmen.<sup>48</sup> The volume of Turkey's trade with Turkic states was approximately 1 billion dollars during the 1990s. However, the volume has increased since 2002 when the AKP came to power. As seen in Figure 1.2, there was a steep increase in the trade volume between 2002 and 2010, compared to the 1990s. Until recently, the trade balance was in favour of Turkey. However, with the start of importing natural gas and oil from Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan the balance has changed in favour of the Turkic states. Despite all these developments, unless there is at least one economically powerful state among the Turkic states, it is highly unlikely that the ideals of Pan-Turkism will be accomplished.

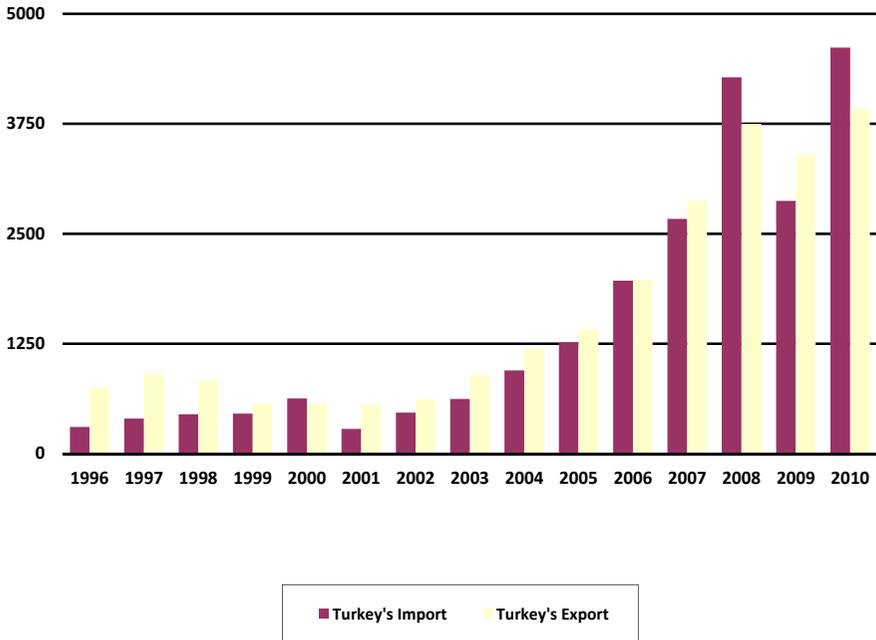


Figure 1.2 Turkey–Turkic States' Foreign Trade (US \$ millions)<sup>49</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Mehmet Alagöz, Sinem Yapar and Ramazan Uctu, 'Türk Cumhuriyetleri İle İlişkilerimize Ekonomik Açından Bir Yaklaşım' (The Relationships with the Turkic States: An Economic Approach), *Selçuk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, 12 (2004): 59–74.

<sup>49</sup> Statistics of the Undersecretary of Foreign Trade, accessed 10 April 2011 at [www.dtm.gov.tr/dtmweb/index.cfm?action=detayrk&yayinID=1116&icerikID=1225&dil=TR](http://www.dtm.gov.tr/dtmweb/index.cfm?action=detayrk&yayinID=1116&icerikID=1225&dil=TR).

The second obstacle is that some of these states are not even close to sustaining their own internal security. For instance, Kyrgyzstan is one of the states that has not managed to strengthen its own internal and external security. Religious extremism and illegal drug trafficking are still major challenges for Kyrgyzstan.<sup>50</sup> The final obstacle is the leadership issue among these Turkic countries. This issue has come to prominence since Turkey tried to play a ‘Big Brother’ role instead of Russia following the dissolution of the Soviet Union. It is well known that this role was not welcomed by the post-Soviet Turkic states. In this regard, in the case of forming a Union and being a leader state, there are several candidates apart from Turkey, including Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.<sup>51</sup> These three drawbacks are the answers to the question of why Pan-Turkism is a distant goal, and as long as these barriers remain, it seems this aim will stay unrealised.

As for a brief comparison of Eurasianism and Pan-Turkism, there are certain differences between them. First of all, it is true that one of the motives of the founders of Eurasianism was to build a counter-view against Pan-Turkism. It was a timely opportunity for Russian emigrants to build an ideology against separatist thoughts of Pan-Turkism. Another disparity between Eurasianism and Pan-Turkism is the ‘open–closed nationalism’ dichotomy. Similarly to Pan-Slavism, Pan-Turkism is ‘closed’ nationalism while Eurasianism is unequivocally ‘open’ nationalism.

Concerning the characterisation of a potential union, Pan-Turkists give ethnic roots a lot of importance. As can be understood from the name of it, there is no alternative to establishing a Turkic Union which is composed of only Turkic-origin people. Whereas Turkist intellectuals emphasise the one-sided link among the Turkic-origin peoples, Eurasianists are more comprehensive. And in a potential Eurasian Union, people’s common culture and historical destiny are deterministic instead of ethnic.

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<sup>50</sup> For further information about the security issue in Kyrgyzstan see Krishnamurty Santhanam (ed.), *Eurasian Security Matters* (New Delhi: Allied Publishers, 2010); Hooman Peimani, *Conflict and Security in Central Asia and the Caucasus* (California: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2009); Stephen J. Blank (ed.), *Central Asian Security Trends: Views from Europe and Russia*, accessed 18 February 2014 at [www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/pub1063.pdf](http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/pub1063.pdf).

<sup>51</sup> John C. K. Daly, ‘The Rebirth of Pan-Turkism?’, accessed 29 October 2010 at [www.jamestown.org/single/?no\\_cache=1&tx\\_ttnews\[tt\\_news\]=33286](http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=33286).

The last comparison is on the philosophy of territory. So far, the territory of a potential Eurasian Union has been clarified. However, the territory of the potential Turkic Union is composed of lands where Turkic-speaking people live. On the one hand, this is a vast area to unite. On the other hand, the lands of Turkic-speaking people are spread from the Balkans to Siberia and not all of these lands have a common land border.

### ***Pan-Turanianism: An Ideology from the Balkans to the Yellow Sea***

Pan-Turanianism can be understood as a movement for the political unification of all speakers of Turanian languages. The term is often used in the same way as Pan-Turkism, but it is a more comprehensive nationalist movement compared to Pan-Turkism. Pan-Turanianism aims at not merely the unity of all Turkic peoples, but also the unification of the Ural-Altai race. According to Arnakis, this race embraces; ‘the Ottoman Turks of Istanbul and Anatolia, the Turcoman peoples of Central Asia and Persia, the Tatars of South Russia and Transcaucasia, the Magyars of Hungary, the Finns of Finland, the Baltic provinces, the aboriginal tribes of Siberia and even the distant Mongols and Manchus’.<sup>52</sup>

As for the word *Turan*, adequate information can be gathered from Ferdowsi’s<sup>53</sup> *Shahnameh*.<sup>54</sup> This epic gives information about the word *Turan*, which was the name given to northeast Iran. According to this epic, King Fereydun had three sons, Silim, Tur and Irij. The King divided the world up for his sons. Asia Minor was given to Silim, Iran to Irij and the eastern part of the world (*Turan*) to Tur.<sup>55</sup> However, today, the word *Turan* is used for Central Asia.

Pan-Turanianism is an ambiguous concept; so much so that everyone interprets it in different ways. For example, Ladis K. D. Kristof evaluates the movement as anti-Slav. According to Kristof, ‘Its immediate purpose was to check and counter-balance Pan-Slav expansionism in the Balkans by forging an alliance with the Pan-Turkic movement and establishing ties

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<sup>52</sup> George G. Arnakis, ‘Turanism: An Aspect of Turkish Nationalism’, *Balkan Studies*, 1 (1960): 19–32 (19).

<sup>53</sup> An Iranian poet, who lived between 940 and 1020.

<sup>54</sup> An epic poem written by Ferdowsi between 977 and 1010.

<sup>55</sup> Osman G. Özgüdenli, *Ortaçağ Türk-Iran Tarihi Araştırmaları* (The Research of History of Turk-Iran in Middle Age) (İstanbul; Kaknus Yayınları, 2006).

with all the Finno-Ugric peoples of the north from the Baltic to the Urals. Thus the Slavs were to be “taken from behind” and hemmed in.<sup>56</sup>

Another interpretation is made by Kaveh Farrokh. From his perspective, it was a racist, anti-Slav movement and aimed to establish a Turkic super-state, but for the benefit of Britain. In this context, Farrokh points out that:

Simply put, pan-Turanianism is an ideology that aims at creating a Turkic super state stretching from the Balkans in Europe, eastwards across Turkey, Iran (Persia), the Caucasus, Central Asia up to and including northwest China ... Pan-Turanianism is perhaps one of the last racialist movements that first began in the nineteenth century.<sup>57</sup>

To sum up, Pan-Turanianism is the idea of uniting all speakers of Turanian languages under the Turan state. But, it might be considered a utopia. Even comparing it to other pan-nationalisms, it is unequivocal that all of them might be more promising than Pan-Turanianism. Yet, several activities have been held in *alleged* Turanian lands (see Figure 1.3) in order to gather Turanian people. One of the biggest events, held in Hungary since 2008, is the Turanian Convention. It is a tribal convention and attracts more than 100,000 people every year.<sup>58</sup> By doing so, conveners aim to raise awareness and keep their own traditions alive. People from Turkey also show great interest in this Convention while they undertake other initiatives, such as the institution known as the Turanian Research Association and a journal called *Turan*.

When it comes to the outcomes of the brief comparison of Pan-Turanianism with Eurasianism, they are similar to the outcomes which can be obtained from the comparison of Pan-Turkism with Eurasianism. The first variable is a theoretical approach. From this perspective, it can be alleged that Pan-Turanianism is also an ideology that emerged to balance the Pan-Slavist vision. The second variable is the open–closed nationalism dichotomy. Pan-Turanianism is a ‘closed’ nationalism, while Eurasianism is an ‘open’ nationalism. Pan-Turanianism emphasises the Turanid race that includes the Uralic- and Altaic-speaking peoples more generally.

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<sup>56</sup> Ladis K. D. Kristof, ‘The Russian Image of Russia: An Applied Study in Geopolitical Methodology’, in Charles A. Fisher (ed.), *Essays in Political Geography* (London: Methuen & Co Ltd, 1967): 364.

<sup>57</sup> Kaveh Farrokh, *Pan-Turanianism Takes Aim at Azerbaijan: A Geopolitical Agenda*, accessed 15 March 2009 at

[www.rozanehmagazine.com/NoveDec05/Azerbaijan-Text\[nopic\].pdf](http://www.rozanehmagazine.com/NoveDec05/Azerbaijan-Text[nopic].pdf).

<sup>58</sup> For more information see <http://kurultaj.hu/english/>.

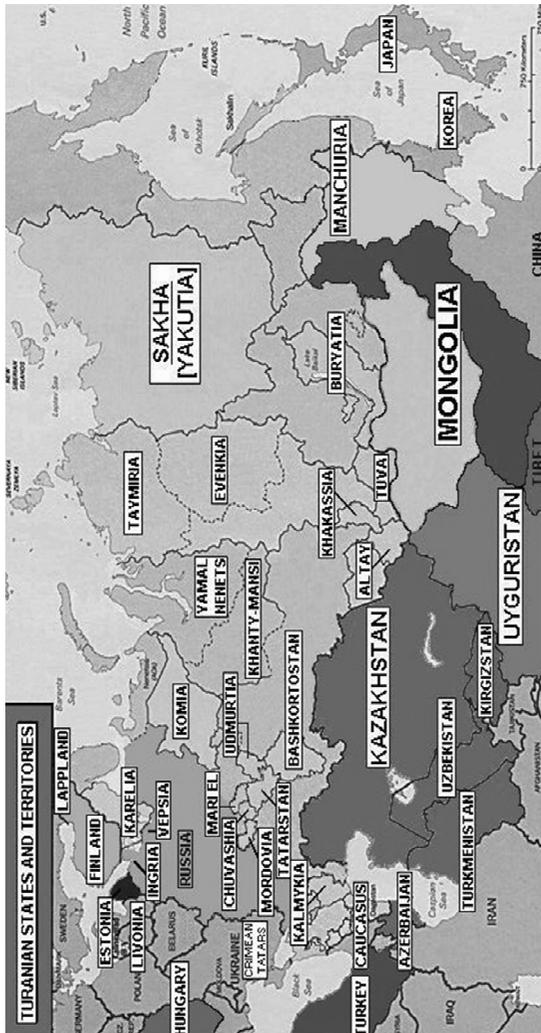


Figure 1.3 Alleged Turanian Lands<sup>59</sup>

However, Eurasianism does not address any specific race and, what is more, common culture and history are highlighted.

<sup>59</sup> ‘Turanian Lands, Turanian People’, accessed 23 May 2012 at [www.hunmagyar.org/turan/turan.html#turan](http://www.hunmagyar.org/turan/turan.html#turan).

Concerning the characterisation of a potential Turan state/union, it is clear who are entitled to be its citizens – speakers of Ural-Altai languages. Again, regarding characterisation it is not possible to claim that there is a constraint in the Eurasianist vision. The fourth and final comparison is on the philosophy of territory. The territory of a potential Turanian state/union is composed of lands where speakers of Ural-Altai languages live. Pan-Turanianism shares this trait with Pan-Turkism.

### **Discourses of Turkish Eurasianism**

Eurasianism was a way of thinking, an ideology or geopolitical thought to save the Russian Empire from collapse and create a propitious sphere in order to include all Eurasian nations. This version of Russian Eurasianism or Classical Eurasianism had various discourses, and having those discourses was one of the reasons why Russian Eurasianism faded away around the 1930s. Having many participants and eminent founders dwelling in different countries of Europe and various discourses caused the disappearance of Eurasianism until Gumilev's efforts to put together Neo-Eurasianism. Gumilev's followers A. Panarin and A. Dugin made an enormous contribution to Neo-Eurasianism during the 1990s. However, Panarin's death gave rise to a loss of influence and left A. Dugin as the sole ideologist of Neo-Eurasianism.

Whereas Classical Eurasianism could not penetrate Turkish society, Neo-Eurasianism has been perceived in various ways by Turkish intelligentsia. It might be considered that there are two reasons why Neo-Eurasianism has found greater acceptance than Classical Eurasianism. The first is that Turkey has been a convenient sphere for ideologies, as it is believed that Turkey has had a glorious history regarding Turkic ethnic roots and its facilitative role for new and stimulating ideologies. Besides, Turkey has started to embrace a new way of understanding this glorious history. That has been one of the catalysts which has created an appropriate environment for Eastern-oriented ideologies. The second reason is that the effect of the perception that '*The only friend of a Turk is a Turk*' on the Turkish identity-building process generated a tendency among some nationalist circles to become conscious against any threat by anyone seen as an *enemy* of Turkey. That is why these circles are in support of sustaining the 'balance of power' rhetoric, especially against the Western world, by promoting ideologies such as Neo-Eurasianism.

Three aspects – Islam, Ottoman history, and Turkishness – have played key roles and moulded the Turkish identity despite the efforts to exalt Turkishness (the ancientness of the Turkish language, history and race; the Turks’ contributions to Western civilisation<sup>60</sup>) and degrade Islamic and Ottoman history during the establishment of the Republic of Turkey. That is why, in contemporary Turkey, Islamism, Pan-Turkism and Neo-Ottomanism are popular ideologies for building, in their own capacity, a new Turkey which can be influential in the international arena, even a regional power.

The meeting of Turkish intelligentsia with Russian Eurasianism occurred through Gumilev and Dugin’s works. In particular, Dugin’s initial thoughts, which aimed to exclude Turkey from a prospective Eurasian Union, were not welcomed in Turkey, and caused Turkish intellectual circles to perceive Russian Eurasianism as a Russian imperialist ideology, even if Dugin later revised his approach to Turkey. Most of the discourses of Eurasianism, therefore, are built on the aforementioned ideologies, such as Islamism, Turkism, etc. In the light of this information, in a general manner, the discourses of Turkish Eurasianism can be classified into three separate divisions:<sup>61</sup> Nationalist Eurasianism, Multiculturalist Eurasianism, and Westernist Eurasianism (see Table 1.1).

### ***Nationalist Eurasianism***

The first discourse is Nationalist Eurasianism, which is in favour of turning Turkey’s face to the East and making alliances with countries such as Iran, India, Pakistan, Syria, Russia and so on. It is worth mentioning that, according to the Nationalist Eurasianists, the alliances with these countries should not be at the level of establishing a union with all of them.

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<sup>60</sup> For further information on the early efforts on exalting Turkish identity, see: Murat Ergin, ‘Cultural Encounters in the Social Sciences and Humanities: Western Émigré Scholars in Turkey’, *History of the Human Sciences*, 22:1: 105–130; Reşat Kasaba, ‘Kemalist Certainties and Modern Ambiguities’, in Sibel Bozdoğan and Reşat Kasaba (eds), *Rethinking Modernity and National Identity in Turkey* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997): 15–36; Ayşe Kadioğlu, ‘The Paradox of Turkish Nationalism and the Construction of Official Identity’, in S. Kedourie (ed.), *Turkey: Identity, Democracy, Politics* (London: Frank Cass, 1996): 177–93; Ayhan Akman, ‘Modernist Nationalism: Statism and National Identity in Turkey’, *Nationalities Papers*, 32 (2004): 23–51.

<sup>61</sup> For the illustration of the discourses see Table 5.1.

**Table 1.1 Typology of the Discourses of Turkish Eurasianism**

TURKISH EURASIANISM		
Nationalist Eurasianism	Multiculturalist Eurasianism	Westernist Eurasianism
Anıl Çeçen <i>(professor)</i>	Attila İlhan <i>(author, poet)</i>	Erel Tellal <i>(professor)</i>
Şener Üşümezsoy <i>(professor)</i>	Doğu Perinçek <i>(leader of the Turkish Workers' Party – jailed for a while in the Ergenekon trial)</i>	Sami Güçlü <i>(former minister)</i>
Özcan Yeniçeri <i>(professor)</i>	Mehmet Perinçek <i>(doctor – jailed for a while in the Ergenekon trial)</i>	Nabi Avcı <i>(incumbent Minister of National Education, MP)</i>
Ümit Özdağ <i>(professor)</i>		Akkan Süver <i>(President of the Marmara Groups Strategic and Social Research Foundation)</i>
Namık Kemal Zeybek <i>(former minister)</i>		Hakan Fidan <i>(incumbent Undersecretary of the National Intelligence Organization, MIT)</i>
Suat İlhan <i>(retired Lieutenant General)</i>		
Ali Külebi <i>(Acting President of National Security Strategies Research Centre)</i>		
Arslan Bulut <i>(author, columnist, researcher)</i>		
İhsan Çomak <i>(assistant professor)</i>		