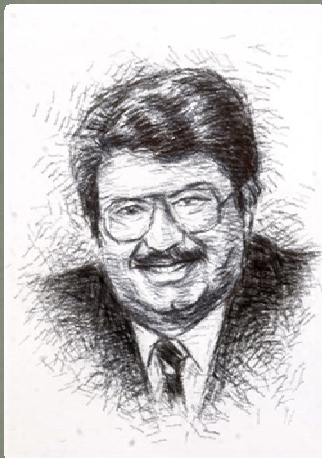


Inside Ocalan's Mind: Terrorist or Geopolitician?

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Kurdish Issue: Ozal's Major Fear



"The Republic of Turkey is facing **its gravest threat yet**. A social earthquake could cut one part of Turkey from the rest, and we could all be buried beneath it."

[Turgut Ozal (1927-1993)]

- Passage from a six-page letter to the Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel [February 1993, two months before his sudden death]
- Topic of the Letter: Progressive alienation of the Kurdish community and PKK's pervasive and growing authority, and of the long-term threat to Turkey's territorial integrity

What Ozal was foreseeing ?

“For the first time in their history

Kurdish interests are coinciding with the designs of the prominent members of the international community – the European Union and more importantly, the US. The consolidation of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) in Iraq is of huge importance”

The Kurds now have the opportunity

“to define their own future and influence other Kurds in the region”.

[Stansfield, G., Lowe, R. & Ahmadzadeh, H. 'The Kurdish Policy Imperative', Chatham House: Briefing Paper (December 2007)]



Abdullah Ocalan: Indicative Example of Kurdish-Western Coincidence of Interests

- *Western Interest:* Globally dominant Anglo-Saxon/Anglophone geopolitical/geocultural approach
- *Abdullah Ocalan:*
 - studied political sciences
 - member of the extreme-left (disciple of the Maoist ideology)

His gradual (from late 70s to the first decade of the 21st century) ideological transformation justifies two major observations:

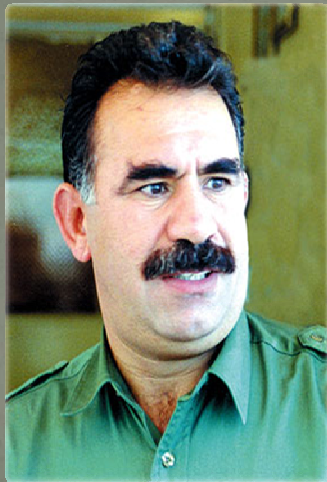
1. Kurdish interests as a whole could coexist with the Anglo-Saxon dominant geopolitical paradigm (Israel included)
2. A “terrorist”, from his prison is being transformed to a “politically correct” geopolitical analyst who adopts:
 - the dominant Anglo-Saxon views
 - an acceptable methodological approach in order to explain systemic changes
 - rational abstractions aiming to reach valid outcomes

"Letter" from Imrali, May 23rd



- Ocalan's ideas were dictated to his lawyers and through them have been published
- Ocalan is making certain observations that if interpreted correctly could unfold:
 - the intellectual vigilance
 - the scientific accuracy
 - the ideological transformationof the imprisoned leader of the Kurdish nation
- Overall, Ocalan's "notes" justify the crucial & gradual movement towards pro-western stance that has been accomplished to the Kurdish leadership from the 1990 onwards

Ocalan's Geopolitical Analysis



Ocalan's geopolitical/geocultural observations could be categorized into three major groups:

1. *Analysis of the local environment:*
 - Kurdish major aims and ways to achieve them
 - Developments within Turkey and their implications to the Kurdish cause
2. *Systemic analysis of the regional environment:*
 - New geopolitical groupings in the region & their aims
3. *Systemic analysis of the global environment:*
 - Analysis about the re-conceptualization of space
 - Grasp of the western-led globalization trends and their implications to nation-state formations

1. Analysis of the Local Environment [microscopic approach]

Kurdish Nation

- Kurds are divided into four parts and being oppressed by four different states (Turkey-Syria-Iran-Iraq)
- In order to achieve security, prosperity & progress, first should be united within the state formations they live, second they will have to achieve unity as a whole
- The center of their unification should be Erbil the capital of the Kurdistan Autonomous Region in northern Iraq

Geopolitical Implication: Ocalan, due to the geopolitical realities that have been formed after Gulf War I & II perceives the Iraqi Kurdistan as a potential Piedmont-Sardinia for the Kurds



1. Analysis of the Local Environment [microscopic approach]

Developments in Turkey & the Kurds

"Kurds should not legitimize through their participation to referendum the constitutional amendments introduced by AKP"

"AKP's constitutional amendments do not include anything that has to do with the Kurds. AKP tries to control state bureaucracy. For us does not have any difference if justice is being controlled by AKP or CHP. Needless to say that justice could become even more repressive towards us."



Geopolitical Implication

Q: what AKP aims with the referendum?

A: reality suggests that Neo-ottoman Pan-Islamic elite simply aim to replace a totalitarian regime with another totalitarian regime... Turkey nowadays is experiencing a reverse process, a counterrevolution that will bring in to power the elites that lost their dominant positions during the Young-Turk revolution of 1908.

In few words, up until 1908 the Pan-Islamic Neo-ottoman regime, under Abdul Hamid II, was ruling Ottoman Empire, while this caste was replaced in 1908 by the nationalistic Young-Turk elite, whose direct offspring is Kemalism of 1920s. Today, the "Ottomans are coming back" to take what was taken from them, a century earlier. Under this perspective the real issue in Turkey today is not a war between democracy and totalitarianism but a power struggle between two equally autocratic regimes."

2. Systemic Analysis of the Regional Environment [macroscopic approach]

Turkey-Syria-Iran Regional Alliance

"a *trilateral fascist alliance* has been formed between Turkey-Iran-Syria aiming to proceed to *genocidal actions against the Kurds*. All these actions emanate from a common center of decision-making"

"I compare this alliance with the *trilateral pact of Germany-Japan-Italy during the WWII period*"

Germany, through this alliance was able to genocide Jews, Ottomans/Turks have done the



Geopolitical Implications

1. Ocalan recognizes in the most affirmative way that the "turning point" of all the geopolitical developments in the broader region was Gulf War I & II. The Turkish rejection of the US request to create a northern front (March 2003), acted as the catalyst for the shifting alliances in the region.
2. For Turkey, Syria & Iran, the Kurdish Question is a matter of life & death. The formation of the alliance, against US & Israel came quite naturally.
3. The geopolitical abstraction through comparing the axis-powers with the enemies of the Kurds is being done in order to exemplify its point and promote the Kurdish "drama" in digestible for western public opinion terms

3. Systemic Analysis of the Global Environment [macroscopic approach]

The Importance of Kurdish Revolt

In spatial terms: "The Kurdish Revolution touches *the heart of the Middle East*. Is *not like the Palestinian or the Afghan problem*. The revolution of the Kurds is going to influence world history as much as the *French and Bolshevik* revolutions did"

In ideological terms: "I propose, for the solution of the Kurdish problem, the *granting of democratic autonomy... within the realm of a global hegemony... including the principles of democratic confederation* (political, socio-cultural, economic, diplomatic, security)... *I do not accept the principles of the nation-state... the basic reason for the crisis within the EU...*"

Geopolitical Implications

1. Ocalan by indicating that Kurdistan is in the "middle" while Palestinian and Afghani issues are peripheral is very much aware of the recently introduced from the Anglo-Saxon geopolitical school of the notion of Broader Middle East & North Africa. West perceives as a common space, in geopolitical and geostrategic terms, the *locus* between the shores of Morocco and Indus river
2. Through his views concerning the obsolete role of the nation/state as the major state-formation designates the idea about the inevitable domination on of a western-type globalization throughout the planet



Ocalan's Geopolitical "Compass"

Ocalan's six major geopolitical assumptions are the following:

1. There is an urgent need for Kurdish regional and then intraregional unity with the Kurds of Northern Iraq acting like the Piedmontenes in Italy during its unification period
2. AKP is nothing more than the other face of the same coin of totalitarianism in Turkey and its target is either to "Ottomanize" the Kurds or to extinguish them
3. The intervention of the Western powers in Iraq, has launched a process of geopolitical and geostrategic shifts of the regional & extra-regional actors
4. Today Turkey-Iran and Syria, like the axis powers did to the Jews during WWII and Ottomans with the help of the Germans did to the Armenians during WWI, are trying to solve the Kurdish issue by extermination a whole nation
5. During the post-Cold War period a process of de-regionalization and re-regionalization is taking place in Eurasia and most importantly in the newly emerged space of the Broader Middle East & North Africa, within which Kurds are located exactly in the middle
6. Western-type globalization, addressing mainly the security and economic needs of the dominant Anglo-Saxon geopolitical factor, creates a satisfactory framework for the solution of the Kurdish problem



How important is the Kurdish Issue?



*...I never refer to thinks that
could lead to WWII,
without being very serious
about them...*

[Abdullah Ocalan]

Is Ocalan a terrorist?

Depends on the *looking glass* that somebody uses in order to approach the matter



Is Ocalan a freedom fighter?

Irrespectively if someone, depending on its ideological, national and political stance concludes that Abdullah Ocalan is a terrorist or a freedom fighters it has to admit two things about him:

1. He has developed a clear geopolitical argumentation and preaches a comprehensive "grand narrative"
2. He is the major reason why Kurdish nation, in general, has acquired a clear & distinctive national identity along with the hope that at the end is going to achieve its aims. Moreover, Ocalan is the main reason about the internationalization & politicization of his nation's problems



A Symbol of Ethnic Distinctiveness

Like the other famous Kurd, Saladin (1138-1193), Ocalan's ideological stance along with his activity brings into the mind Ahmad-I Khani's poem with the title Memu-u-Zin, a poem dated back to the seventeenth century and is considered to be the first written sense of ethnic awareness of the Kurdish people

*Look from the Arabs to the Georgians,
The Kurds have become like towers.
The Turks and Persians are surrounded by them.
The Kurds are on all four corners.
Both sides have made the Kurdish people
Targets for the arrows of fate.
They are said to be the keys to the borders
Each tribe forming a formidable bulwark.
Whenever the Ottoman Sea [Ottomans]
and Tajik Sea [Persians]
Flow out and agitate,
The Kurds get soaked in blood
Separating them [the Turks and Persians] like an isthmus.*

Mckdowall, D. *A Modern History of the Kurds*. [London, 1997], p. 5



Thank you for your patience!!!!!!!