

INTERPRETING THE JULY 15 FAILED COUP ATTEMPT IN TURKEY ACCORDING TO THE BARAKAH CIRCLE THEORY OF BAYT AL-MAQDIS

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ABSTRACT: This paper will discuss the event of the 15th July failed coup attempt in Turkey according to Barakah Circle Theory. Turkey has a long list of military coups in its political history; the last bloody coup attempt Turkey occurred on the evening of 15th July 2016. Some factions within the Turkish military alleged to have relations with the Fethullah Gulen organisation –a ‘terrorist organisation’ according to Turkey– launched a coordinated operation to topple the government. While it failed, it also left several questions unanswered. Why did it take place at a time when the “Turkish star” was supposedly shining in a regional and economic sense, especially when previous coups had occurred mainly due to economic and political instability? Is there foreign support and was it part of an agenda for the emergence of the coup? And lastly, how has it affected the well-being and freedom of IslamicJerusalem and future prospects for the region?

KEYWORDS: July 15 Failed Coup Attempt, Barakah Circle Theory, Bayt al-Maqdis, Yinon Plan.



Beytülmağdis Bereket Daireleri Teorisi bağlamında 15 Temmuz Başarısız Darbe Girişimini Değerlendirmek

ÖZ: Bu çalışma, çığır açan 15 Temmuz başarısız darbe girişimini Bereket Daireleri Teorisi bağlamında tartışmaktadır. Türkiye'nin siyasi tarihinde uzun bir darbe listesi vardır ve Türkiye, son kanlı darbe kalkışmasına 15 Temmuz 2016 tarihinde şahit olmuştur. Türkiye'nin terörist bir örgüt olarak adlandırdığı Fetullah Gülen teşkilatı ile ilişkileri olduğu iddia edilen Türk ordusunun içindeki bazı hizipler, hükümeti devirmek için koordinasyonlu bir operasyon düzenlediler. Başarısız olmasına rağmen, bu girişim geride cevaplanması gereken bazı sorunlar bırakmıştır. Ekonomik ve siyasi istikrarsızlığın olduğu önceki dönemlerin aksine, bu darbe girişimi “Türk yıldızının” ekonomik ve siyasi anlamda parladığı bir dönemde neden yaşandı? Darbenin ortaya çıkışında herhangi bir dış destek ve gündem var mı? Ve son olarak, darbe girişimi, İslam Kudüs'ün refahını ve özgürlüğünü ve bölgeye ilişkin gelecek beklentilerini nasıl etkiledi?

ANAHTAR KELİMELER: 15 Temmuz Başarısız Darbe Girişimi, Bereket Dairesi Teorisi, Beytülmağdis, Oded Yinon Planı.

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INTRODUCTION

Studying this putsch is important for International Relations because it is expected from governments to provide security for public they inherent. However, in Turkey things went different and citizens provided security for the survival of the government when millions poured into streets (and stopped the factions within the military attempting to seize the power) against “Fetullah Gülen terror organisation” (whose goal was to eliminate the government) which had infiltrated the agencies and institutions (inside the national police agency, the judiciary, the military and the civilian bureaucracy) of the Turkish state like a Trojan Horse in the early 1970s. However, the last attempt of the failed coup in 2016 was not just related with Turkey but it was also a breaking point for the fate of the “Middle East” and even beyond. The paper will start identifying the Barakah Circle Theory, claiming the current power play in the “Middle East” can be pictured in an analytical way. As a non-western theory, it is decorated with geopolitical and religious features that fits the regions conditions. The study will initially focus on the geopolitical realities of Turkey and its position in the theory, as an actor of having power and capability to be a game changer. In the next section, the relations of Turkey with other regional actors who are taking part of second and third circle and international actors will be analysed under the framework of regional power competition where the weakness of Turkey may wear down the capacity of Muslim Eastern countries since the other significant powers of the theory were already vitiated. Thus leaving the hope of a power unity to free the Bayt al-Maqdis seems to have been left in the hands of Turkey.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: THE BARAKAH CIRCLE THEORY

Bayt al-Maqdis (IslamicJerusalem), today known as al-Quds, has been a focal point in human history through its significance for all the monotheist religions. Its political effect has not been only for the actors in the region but also for the players in the international arena over the centuries. From the perspective of Islam and from the Quranic verse on al-Isra', the final messenger Prophet Muhammad was transported from Al-Haram Mosque to the al-Aqsa Mosque on al-Buraq. This territory is a place of Barakah (blessing) whose demarcation has been elaborated on by Muslim scholars (El-Awaisi, 2007, 2007a). This Barakah is mentioned in numerous verses of the Qur'an (21:71, 81; 7:137; 34:18) as *al-Ard al-Lati barakna fiha* (The land that We have bestowed Barakah). But in verse (al-Isra' 17:1) it mentions the centre as al-Aqsa Mosque and the surroundings (*hawlahu*), in other words this Barakah¹ spread out from the centre to the rest of the world in varying degrees. In an example, the degree of Barakah Turkey profits from differ from that of Egypt in accordance with their proximity to the centre. The theory is based on Quranic verses and geopolitical dimensions of the actors and region as a whole. Concerning the theories putting a meaningful political understanding of the related territory or regions, the Barakah Circle Theory is no less than previous interdisciplinary studies. The theory compromises three main circles and each of them includes significant countries and areas in accordance

with its position and power projection. The first circle, comprises of the region of Bayt al-Maqdis/ Holy Land, which is the centre of Barakah while second circle includes most part of Egypt (as the power centre of the Arab world); which has a specific significance in the theory. The historical facts approves that the control (in hegemonic sense) over the today's "Middle East" (West Asia) can be done easily once the support or control of Egypt is attained. As the theory asserts, whoever controls Bayt al-Maqdis, may have dominance over the Egypt and historical Syria or Bilad al-Sham (constitutes of today's Syria, occupied Palestine, Lebanon and Jordan) and Cyprus; as Israel does today through different politics and instruments. The third circle –taking into account West Asia- is composed of Muslim Eastern countries (including: Hijaz; Makkah and Madinah, the rest of the Egypt, Iraq, Libya, Sudan and Turkey).

Geopolitical Importance of Turkey and the Third Circle

Turkey has historically been important to the states and empires in the region as well as to the states remotely located, thanks to its strategic position between Asia and Europe as a bridge; West Asia and Europe as both a barrier and a link for pipelines and lastly, it is the edge for distinct political and ideological segments. Turkey has been in favour of a secular, liberal economist, parliamentary democracy in contrast to surrounding West Asian countries. As,

- Inheriting a rich historical heritage from Byzantium, Seljuk and Ottoman Empires,
- Having the second highest density in population after Egypt,
- Surrounded by four seas (Mediterranean, Aegean, Marmara and Black Seas),
- Having control of the waterways (Dardanelles, the Sea of Marmara and the Bosphorus) from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean,
- Having a prominent position between natural resources, rich regions and oil-needed markets (Since the 2000s, Turkey has been part of key infrastructure projects² meant to bring oil and gas from Central Asia, the Caspian and Middle East to the European market),
- Having the strongest military power in terms of 'military balance' and second strongest military power in NATO (Dudley, 2018),
- Empowering its military technology (unmanned and armed distinct types of air vehicles, national technology against cyber-attacks and national product of armours, advanced military technology (Mahmandar, 2018)

reverberates its strategic position in the third circle. According to Rubinstein³ "Turkey is simply the most important country in the Middle East. What Turkey does or does not do will critically affect the course of events, including stability, not only in the Middle East" (Carley, 1995). Course of action Turkey is taking responsibility in the region from conflict settlement, mediation efforts, peacekeeping or following pragmatic politics are indicators of her geopolitical power as well. As Aydın⁴ expresses that "Turkey, thanks to her geo-strategic location [...] has been able to play a role in world politics for **greater than** her size, population, economic strength would indicate" (Aydın, 2004). So, the interpretation of the theory is true that if Turkey gets weak, the whole of the Muslim East will be weak and some new powers will try to fill the gap. After the contemporary developments

in the MENA (2013 coup in Egypt, destruction of Iraq and Syria, weak and biased position of Saudi Arabia), Turkey seems sitting in a game changer position.

15 July Failed-coup within the context of the Barakah Circle Theory

The abovementioned geopolitical opportunities changed outlook of Turkey after a regional-power-visions party, Justice and Development Party. The vision changes were not limited for foreign policy but also related with internal politics. The developments in the country, created a sympathy for Turkey to be an attractive model (Middle East Monitor, 2018) thanks to its increasingly effective policy of free market, democratic governance, and secularist outlook. This example indicates that the political and economic developments; territory, airspace and seas surrounding Turkey make it possible for it to control or influence its neighbours. Baskin Oran expressed that *“Turkey locates at the point in which world power axes divided world into two parts. For example during the Cold war, Turkey located just at the Western border of the Soviet Union. In current times North- South axes based on economic differences.”*

Over the years, Turkey has faced several coups in 1960 (Prime Minister was hanged), 1971 (known also coup of memorandum where government was forced by military to step down), 1980 (due to political infighting, a series of unprevented terrorist attacks and political assassinations), 1997 (is known as post-modern coup; the military expressed their concern over government’s increasingly powerful ties with the Muslim world) and lastly in 2007 (known as a-coup and was announced from the internet page of the Turkish Army Forces on the issue of selection of President). Many had thought that there would be no more military coup thanks to Turkey’s moving away from a centralised economy towards a free market system that has assisted its economic growth, constitutional amendments for the sake of European Union and increased regional relations with neighbours. In other words, everything seemed going as it was supposed to be. However, in July 2016, some factions within the Turkish military launched a bloody coup attempt in major cities to topple the government and oust President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Until midnight, it looked like Turkey was on the brink of devastating military coup. However, hundreds of thousands even millions of ordinary citizens gathered in streets and squares following the call of President Erdogan and managed to defeat the coup. To better illustrate how crucial the position of Turkey in *Third Circle* and the failed coup against the current government, the reasons of the coup will be detailed.

REASONS FOR THE COUP

From the time the Justice and Development Party was elected, several reasons forced it to develop high military technological equipment to *reduce foreign dependency*. First concrete sign was the production of unmanned drones which Turkey had used to import from Israel for its operations against the PKK (Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê/ The Kurdistan Workers' Party -acknowledged as a terrorist organisation by the NATO and EU) stationed on its border areas. However, due

to strained relations with Israel -due to the harsh criticism of Turkey for the bloody terror operation against the people of Gaza by Tel Aviv- it did not supply the required assistance. From that time on, Turkey seeks to produce its own armoured drones (one of the six countries in the world producing the drones), light rifles (MPT76; which has passed all of the weighted 42 NATO standard tests) (Hurriyet Daily News, 2019), attack helicopters, types of rockets, howitzer and tanks (Iddon, 2018).

On the other hand, some attempts to deteriorate the relations with the West or their “dual standard” policies pave the way for the shift in policy direction for Turkey and pushed it to collaborate with the other actors. In other words, the “*Turkish government matrix on making decision is no longer relating to other powers’ agenda – the US or the EU, but only Turkish agenda*” (Draitser, 2018). Turkey, after taking radical steps (such as the massive Turk Stream pipeline deal, purchasing missile systems from Russia and the signing of a lucrative nuclear energy deal with Russia (Aljazeera, 2018)) Erdogan began to be called a dangerous political manipulator, as was the case by many leaders and became the view taken by the US political elites, that he had to go (Draitser, 2018). Turkey knew that the relations with Washington is crucial in any segment of politics otherwise it could damage Ankara’s position on those areas. As Cengiz Çandar and Graham Fuller expressed the US needs Turkey in resolving the questions of the Middle East, but Turkey mostly did not follow on the same direction the US wanted (Fuller, 2001). In addition, as an example for this logic is “*the attempted coup took place just weeks after Turkey announced a move to restore diplomatic relations with Russia*” (Lecha, 2016).

Strained relations with the US

Diplomatic relations between the Turkey and the US have become dramatically shaky over the years. At the beginning of 2000 Turkey followed the same policy the US followed in the MENA, however the cracks started to appear especially after the PKK had established stronghold in Iraq (Turkey, historically has feared an independent Kurdish state arising from a destabilised Iraq). Turkey’s intention to take a military operation in Northern Iraq against the PKK (clamping down on guerrilla training camps) caused a long-term tensions. The other reason of strained relations was the Iran’s nuclear program. The administration in the US stepped up its efforts to impose sanctions on Iran. Turkey, China and India urged its withdrawal and pointed to the possible backfire. The criticism from Turkey resulted in delays of arms sales to it, at time when it has sought to take steps against PKK in Iraq. However, Turkey put emphasise on solving Iran’s nuclear enrichment policy which creates de facto economic deficiencies due to international trade blockade. Over the negotiations with Brazil, Turkey asked the international community to support their plans to supply Iran’s need of low-enriched nuclear substances. This illustrated Turkey’s regional policy which is in return was a threat to the US’s policies (this is clear when taking into account Turkey’s policies and position in the Greater Middle East Project).⁵

On the other hand, over the otherisation of the US administration, Turkey diversificatied its foreign policy perspective as it had happened after the Jupiter Missile Crisis. This institutionalisation was titled by the Foreign Policy magazine as “False Friends” after Turkey’s intention to have more common relations with Russia and its allies. In 2015, Erdogan issued an apology for downing the Russian jet. This should not have been read just as an apology, indeed, it was the beginning of reorientation of Turkish foreign policy towards Russia (Following the coup attempt Turkey purchased s-400 missile system after dismissing the one provided by the US. There are several other steps taken such as negotiating for Nuclear Power Plant by Turkey which is criticised by the western media as the Turkish recalibrating its path since Turkey regards the regional issues greatly differ from its allies in the region) and non-Western countries rather than the US, NATO and Europe. However, having tense relations with the US will not be meant of breaking up the whole relations with the Western Block, Turkey is still a member of NATO and leans on a membership of EU. *“There is no doubt that the boundaries and the possibilities of change within Turkish policy are limited to and governed by Turkey’s alliances and the possibilities of reviving relations within the region”* (Middle East monitor, 2018). Fresh tensions flared by the issue of the YPG (Syrian-Kurdish People’s Protections Units) in Syria. The issue began towards the end of the Obama administration. The US decision to support the YPG’s fighting against the Assad regime, was harshly criticised by the Turkish government who sees no distinction between PKK, Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) and YPG, the first is recognised as terrorist organisation (others have direct and multi-layered relations with the PKK) by the US and the EU.

Relations with Israel

Turkey was one of the first countries diplomatically to recognise the state of Israel. The relations between both countries were mostly based on military deals. Within the decades of this relationship it has seen to be fluctuating; in some cases, Turkey found Israel as the reliable partner as in the Bulgarian issue in 1980s or the threat of Saddam in 1991 or on the Syrian issue on matters of the PKK in the 1990s as well as in the present day. Turkey also supported the peace process officially starting in Madrid in October 1991, resulting in the historic Oslo Agreements in September 1993. Positive relations however halted (as Turkey voted for the condemnation of Israel at the United Nations General Assembly) when Ariel Sharon stormed al-Aqsa Mosque which triggered the second Intifada. From that day on, strained relations come close to a break up. In 2004, Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan condemned the Israeli government for “state terror” against Palestinians. In 2006 elections, Hamas (Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiya / Islamic Resistance Movement) won the majority of the seats in the parliament. Hamas was on the terror list of Israel and it caused major deadly clashes. Turkey harshly criticised Israel whenever it saw Palestinians suffer. However, Turkey also supported solving the problems of its neighbours such as the clandestine Syrian-Israel talks which Turkey fostered. However, Turkey was ousted from the

talks following Turkey's banning Israel's participation in the Anatolian Eagle military exercise because of Israel brutal assault to Gaza. Strained relations peaked at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.

Further events created increased tensions as Israel seems to be taking revenge. In 2010 Israel humiliated the Turkish ambassador who was seated on a stool that was lower than that of Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Danny Ayalon. Turkey was accused of cooperating with Hamas and Iran. The strained relations was on the brink of a hot conflict when eight Turkish citizens and one Turkish-American with dual citizenship) were killed on the Gaza Freedom Flotilla in 2010. Turkey called the incident as state terrorism and Turkey downgraded diplomatic ties with Israel leading to the expulsion of Israel's ambassador in Turkey in September 2011. These issues were resolved in 2016 following Israel meeting some of Turkey's conditions. Yet the decision of the United States to move their embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem created upheaval among Palestinians and lead to further tensions in relations. Turkey expelled the Israeli ambassador once again and withdrew its ambassador from Tel Aviv. The above mentioned crisis turned Turkey into a direct target for Israel as Netanyahu tweeted: "*Erdogan is among Hamas's biggest supporters and there is no doubt that he well understands terrorism and slaughter*" (Twitter, 2018).

Regional competition

The military coups and revolutions are the natural phenomena in the "Middle East". However, some brings about much more repercussion than others such as the coup in Egypt. After a long repressive and undemocratic history, Egypt had its democratically elected President, Morsi. Although, he did not have power over the institutions, he had mass popular support which is mostly given by Muslim Brothers sympathises. The coup was organised and assisted by the Gulf States. Just after the successful coup, \$8 billion in aid was offered to the coup leader el-Sisi (Werr, 2018) to resuscitate Egyptian economy and in return to diminish the Muslim Brothers⁶ mentality.⁷ The three countries; Saudi Arabia, UAE and Egypt created an 'axis of Cruelty' in the region. No matter how much billions of dollar were given, no country in the "Middle East" and beyond has condemned the coup more than Turkey. Also thousands poured to the streets to protest the military coup against the democratically elected leader. The Turkish government, in all platforms, spoke rigorously against el-Sisi and his regional and international allies, Riyadh, Abu Dhabi, Tel Aviv and Washington. Saudi Arabia hoped that Turkey would restore its relationship with Egypt; however, Ankara kept adamantly maintaining its political stance with the Egyptian regime (Kosh, 2018). Turkey was concerned that this was dangerous to its regional interest. Also around the same time, in Tunisia, a smear campaign was on the scene against al-Nahda and there was a clear-cut dispute on the issue between the government and Fetullah Gulen members in Turkey. The same policy can be said for Libya against the religious and political leaders siding with Turkey and Qatar.

On the other hand, fear of Iran's growing regional influence and military capacity forced Saudi Arabia, Israel and Egypt to take action against Iran. Turkey was also anxious about Iran's escalating impact in the Syrian war. However, Turkey shares some expediencies such as natural gas need, the Kurdish issue and concerning the Syrian issue, it is one of the countries that sides with Syria's territorial integrity. Despite Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman Al Saud's view of Turkey, Iran and political Islam as an "axis of evil" (Tharoor, 2018), negotiating with Russia and Iran seems more of a logical policy for Turkey since the US and Saudi Arabia failed to contribute to Turkish interests on the issue of Syria, where Turkey share the longest border with it.

Sudan's (Suakin Island) issue was another chapter of the competition in Africa between Ankara and 'axis of cruelty'. The island has a strategically important location. On the one side Saudi Arabia and on the other Egypt was where Ankara intended to bolster the Turkish economic presence on the African continent. The crisis blow out following Egypt's accusation of Turkish future plan to build a military base around the island. Concerning the Ankara and Cairo's diplomatic relations after the coup, Egypt is asserting that Turkey and Qatar are conspiring against Egypt using Egyptian Muslim Brothers who are residing in Sudan (Sheiko, 2018). Another Africa destination is Somalia where Riyadh and Abu Dhabi have geopolitical goals in trying to diminish the cooperation between Somalia and Turkey. In which Turkey has the second overseas installation which creates a regional fear for the 'axis of cruelty'.

The Palestinian Issue

In a statement from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Turkey, it is said "Turkey shares a century's long joint history and has close cultural and social bonds with the Palestinian people" (MFA, 2018). Official relations began in 1975 till now, Turkey's minimal goal was to improve the living conditions of the Palestinian people since the "problem of Israel" is evaluated as one of the prolonged conflict in the Middle East. The issue was misused by the leaders (Abdel Nasser, Hafez Assad and Saddam Hussein) of regional countries. Despite criticism as Davutoglu states; *Al-Quds is our cause even if everybody else forgets and it will continue being our cause for eternity. Nobody can turn to a Turk and say 'al-Quds is not your cause* (Youtube, 2018). The Iranian involvement to the issue changed the dynamics of the problem. The race for regional hegemony averted Saudi Arabia and UAE to take a non-supportive position for the Palestine cause and ignited a showdown with Turkey. Muslim countries were side-lined while the liberation of Islamicjerusalem an Palestine remained idle since joining the ranks of the Zionist cause as it has become fashionable amongst the 'axis of cruelty'.

REACTIONS TO THE COUP IN TURKEY AND POST-COUP RELATIONS

As mentioned in early discussion the tension between UAE and Turkey is purely political. Regional developments and ideological conflict between them found a milestone on the 15th July 2016. Turkish Media accused the UAE of backing the

coup and it was also expressed by Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, Minister of Foreign Affairs. He said that “we know that a country gave three billion dollars of financial support to the coup attempt in Turkey” (Dailysabah, 2018). Despite the news channels SkyNews and Al-Arabiya openly declaring support for the coup, the UAE later on officially welcomed the returning of the government to its constitutional track. But no Turkish authorities regarded their message positive since bin Zayed reportedly said: “All our aim is to turn Turkey into Egypt” (SigmaTurkey, 2018), during the failed Arab Awakening. On the other side, the US media had conducted a large smear campaign against the Turkish legal government before the failed-coup took place. The US continue to host the leader of the coup and also issues residence permits for high level members of his terror organisation. All the evidences, according to Turkey, provide clear picture that the US was behind the coup (Telci, 2018). Even so that Secretary of State John Kerry, merely expressed his desire for stability and continuity and limiting himself to calling for respect for democratic institutions. What is interesting President Barak Obama made a statement in support of the Turkish government after things have settled (Dailysabah, 2018).

Due to increasing sphere of military and political influence, Iran has been close auspicious of axis countries whose interest were only in limiting Iran’s reach. Iran knew that a successful coup in Turkey backed by Gulf States could result in a negative outcomes for the regional interests of Iran (Duman, 2018). When Riyadh has not adopted an attitude against the coup (15 hours after the evens) Iran worked hard to benefit from this indecisiveness and also the information about Saudi media channel “Al-Arabiya” had criticised Erdogan sharply and they also had an interview with the Turkish opposition religious leader Fethullah Gülen who is living in in Pennsylvania in the United States. In the same interview Gülen described Erdogan as a dictator and a tyrant (MEMRI, 2018). Egypt chose the same path that Saudi Arabia had followed. According to the study of Hacıbekiroğlu, the official and semi-official newspapers announced the coup as if it had been accomplished. “Al-Ehrâm and al-Misriyu al-Yawm reported that “the Turkish army overthrew Erdogan” while Ahbâr al-Yawm newspaper “coup attempt in Turkey”, al-Watan newspaper “Soldier seizes control in Turkey and overthrows Erdogan”, appeared in front of readers with headlines” (Güngör, 2016). Turkey did not receive what normally a state would expect. One of the indicator is the NATO’s deficiency in giving information regarding the coup attempt, although Turkey is the second strongest army in that organisation. What is more interesting, it was Russia who first conveyed intelligence to MIT (Turkish Intelligence services) on the matter.

ODED-YINON PLAN

The Oded-Yinon Plan is mostly known as a political project in the Middle East and was penned down in 1982 by Oded Yinon, reputedly an Israeli strategist and former advisor to Ariel Sharon. It is aimed to ensure Israeli regional superiority and reconfigure its geopolitical environment through balkanisation of Arab

countries (Globalresearch, 2018). Since the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948, it is mostly believed that the politicians and military chiefs have been asserting to extend the borders of current Israel to the borders of the ‘promised land’. This assertion and the current foreign policy of the state of Israel (*Divide et Impera*) match each other. The siege on Gaza, the invasion of Iraq, the 2006 war on Lebanon, the ongoing wars in Syria, Iraq and the political crisis in Saudi Arabia are all related with the establishment of Greater Israel. The military coup in Egypt is also part of this project. According to Barakah Circle theory, Egypt is centre of Arab countries and if Egypt becomes weak then the whole Arab World becomes weak. The coup became a direct threat to the power of Egypt in the *Second Circle*. On the other side, the rapprochement of Israel and Saudi Arabia (and UAE) is a means to expanding Israel’s spheres of influence against the threat of Iran. Furthermore, the plan is also related with the southern part of Turkey. One of the specific point of the plan is that neighbouring countries of Israel should be separated in accordance with ethnic and sectarian divisions on the long term. Despite the fact that the plan aims to have fragmented small countries or entities, the very beginning of it conveys that those surrounding countries should comply with the policies of Israel. In this current political arena, as pointed out, UAE and Egypt even Saudi Arabia follow and cooperate with some of the political direction of Israel in the Middle East and North Africa.

CONCLUSION

Oded Yinon, an Israeli journalist formerly attached to the Israeli Foreign Ministry, has in his last interview, claimed that the plan has never matured into Israel foreign policy (Yinon, 2018), however, it is not wrong to claim the plan is actually constitutes the major axis of US foreign policy in the Middle East at the same time keeping in mind one of the fact that Washington administration is almost always in a pro-Israel direction⁸ according to John Mearsheimer (2008). The plan is basic but quite bloody in a sense that Iraq, Syria and Lebanon have already been destroyed. In other words, the plan, despite it is claimed that never been materialised, is successful in aforementioned countries. As Major-General Amos Gilad, a senior Israeli director of political-military affairs in the Defence Ministry said, in post-2011 Arab Uprisings era, “Unitary Iraq no longer exists”... “today, there is no such thing as ‘Syria’ anymore” (Rapaport, 2019). A miracle happened in Egypt and “Sisi came to power” (Judah, 2019). On the other side, according to the Barakah Circle Theory, there is no doubt that the development of this region largely depend on these (Egypt, Iraq, Syria and Turkey) major actors. They are essential with their power capabilities and play significant role to be a regional power. However, disregarding Syria and Iraq, political visions of tripartite (Riyadh, Abi Dhabi and Cairo) does not include the liberation of Palestine.

Despite the position in the theory, Saudi Arabia and UAE has a much more influential policy re-designing the Middle East in accordance with the policy of other powers and their regional interests. The leaders of the aforementioned

countries flinched from the scaremonger Iran and are already ready to cooperate with Israel and her structuralised policy against Iran. The policies followed each other beginning from supplying any means to overthrow Saddam Hussein to secure Israel's security needs which is also part of Yinon Plan. As to remember once again, according to Yinon plan, the territories belonging to Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Saudi Arabia (Hijaz) and a small part of Turkey is under danger. The military coup is important on this point; according to Prof. James Petras, from the Sociology department at Binghamton University, "*the US intelligence agencies... worked with the increasingly influential parallel government... Gulenists backed the US-Israeli policies in the Middle East; opposed the 'independent' and erratic power projections of Erdogan; favored pro-Western free market policies; accepted the US relations with the Kurds; rejected any accommodation with the Russians*" (GlobalResearch, 2018).

Turkey as a region from the *Third Circle* has been claimed from different platforms and actors, as the 'last citadel'. It is the reason, logically, has been trying to yield significant capabilities to be a regional power. However, this policy contradicts with the policy of regional countries (pro-Israel camp) and the US. The weakness of Turkey would directly affect the capabilities of Muslim East countries according to theory. 15th July was a corner stone for failure of western leaders who seeks to replace the non-western governments. In other words, this failed-putsch became a barrier for western powers (the US, Britain, France and Germany) and their collaborators in the region (axis of cruelty). Their moral superiority -which they imposed through power of knowledge- against non-western countries deteriorated a little bit more. Their non-harmonic reactions were due to the disappointment and anger emanated from the failure and changes of their plans. In the short run, *the Oded-Yinon plan became successful for the isolation of second and third circle countries except for Turkey.*

However, their plans continues with Jamal Khashoggi's case (journalist, who was killed in the Saudi consulate in Istanbul by a group having close ties to the Saudi government and bin Salman, he was always a defender of Palestine issue and opposed to the policies of Saudi administration both in Saudi Arabia and beyond borders such as in Yemen and cooperation with Israel), economic pressure and containment of Turkey. The latter has different ranges which started when Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, and Egypt (known also as anti-Qatar quartet) severed diplomatic ties with Qatar. Sunni-led coalition wanted to ostracise Qatar from its regional influence. Allegations on Doha to support terrorism pave the way of historic land, maritime, and air blockade on Qatar. They listed several demands from Doha including cutting the ties with Turkey and remove the Turkish military airbase (This military base has raised concerns among the Emirates and Saudi Arabia due to the fear that Ankara will use its growing influence in the region as a tool to pressure and provoke the two Gulf allies) (Sheiko, 2018). Following this, the quartet also imposed an economic embargo including cutting off all food supplies and access

to medicine. The first reaction of Turkey and Iran was the condemnation and secure the immediate food supplies. Turkey also fostered diplomatic assistance in every platform. Their initial project to limit the effect of Turkey and Iran became ineffective.

The other dimension of the issue appeared for the newly found gas fields offshore of the Mediterranean Sea (although it was discovered in 2014 but Turkey started conducting its first deep drilling with its ships Fatih and Yavuz. The prior is operating in waters west of Cyprus Island while the latter operates in the east) (Hurriyet Daily News, 2019). According to US Geological Survey, “the entire Leviathan Basin holds a mean approximation of 1.7 billion barrels of recoverable oil and a mean of 122 trillion cubic feet of recoverable gas” (Offshore Technology, 2019). This game-changer large scale of gas discoveries in the Levant Basin both solidified existing relationships between Israel, Egypt and Greece, and sharpened disputes with Turkey. Moreover, the ongoing state building project in Syria shockingly threaten Turkey’s territorial integrity (Northern Syria vs Southern Turkey) on the hand of the YPG which is the partner of the US in its fight against the Islamic State. Turkey ensues a policy on the integrity and unity of the countries in the “Middle East” and puts its energy not to allow the opposite. The last deal between the US and Turkey on the withdrawal of the SDF from a 20-mile safe zone along the border of Turkey in 17th October 2019 and its deal with Russia on 22nd October 2019 have aimed not to allow to the strategy of “Balkanising” the Middle East. While, after rolling back key states of Iraq and Syria, the justice minister of Israel Ayelet Shaked called for a “Kurdish state which would be integral to reshape the Middle East” in the Herzliya conference (Muallem, 2017). Yinon accepts the fact that “some of his 1982 ideas were adopted by the IDF intelligence (AMAN) at the time of the Civil War in Syria” (Yinon, 2018). It is probable that new evidences and secret relations will be revealed not only about 15th July coup attempt but also about the redesigning of the regions geography that directly affects Bayt al-Maqdis and its liberation.

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ENDNOTES

- ¹ Barakah basically stands for meanings of both material and non-material blessing. The prior is about its strategic position (close proximity to the intersection point of three continent), its topography and climate, weather and agricultural products. On the other hand, the latter represent the spiritual qualifications of this territory; as the cradle of three monotheist religion.
- ² For more information visit, <http://www.enerji.gov.tr/en-US/Pages/Natural-Gas-Pipelines-and-Projects>.
- ³ Mustafa Aydın, professor of department of International Relations in Kadir Has University.
- ⁴ Alvin Z. Rubinstein, professor of political science in the University of Pennsylvania.
- ⁵ Mustafa Aydın, professor of department of International Relations in Kadir Has University.
- ⁶ The same mentality has a continuum trend in 2018. Turkey has relations with Iran and Russia.
- ⁷ It is a transnational religio-political organisation founded in Egypt by a Muslim scholar, Hassan al-Banna, who argues for Islamic revival, while rejecting Western-style nationalism. Social welfare and political activism were the instruments for building popular support which allowed this non-state actor to have branches throughout the world.
- ⁸ The approach to the Muslim Brothers movement has caused further rifts. Turkey and Qatar (although no democracy is situated in) supported democratic demands in Egypt. However, Riyadh and Abu Dhabi were cautious about the democratic transformation in Egypt since both considered it as a threat to their regimes. Inevitable result was the support Egyptian military coup. The support from them encouraged el-Sisi to crush Muslim Brothers movement.
- ⁹ Recent foreign policy activities of Washington such as recognising Golan as a part of Israel and Jerusalem as its capital despite that it is not legally acknowledged proves this initiatives.