

## "NEO-OTTOMANISM" IN THE REGIONAL POLICY OF TURKEY

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### ANNOTATION

This article focuses on the importance of state ideology in Turkey's foreign policy activities. The role of "Neo-Ottomanism" as a state ideology is analyzed as the main tool in determining its place in the region and the world community. The main directions of the strategy of neo are the Middle East, North Africa, Central Asia, the Caucasus, the Crimea, and the Balkans. Particular attention is paid to manifestations of neo-Ottomanism in the post-Soviet region and the Middle East, as well as "soft power" strategy in the Turkish neo-Ottomanism.

**KEYWORDS:** Turkey, foreign policy, geostrategy, "Neo-Ottomanism", state ideology.

In recent years, significant changes have been made in Turkey's foreign policy. Its theoretical and practical foundations have been changed. In the context of the expansion of the country's foreign political activity in the scientific sphere, the term "Neo-ottomanism" appeared, which, although interpreted differently by the world community, is the main optimal concept that determines the country's foreign policy strategy. Today's growing influence and reputation of Turkey at the world level can be explained by its economic potential and active foreign policy. At the same time, it can be observed that the views of the representatives of the two main directions of Turkish foreign policy collided: representatives of the Ottomans and the modernists; the foreign policy of each country is influenced by certain ideas and views.

The current political course of the state can be said to be a mixture of "neo-Ottomanism", pan-Turkism and Turkish nationalism. Various elements in it either come to the fore or disappear depending on who and what kind of policy Turkey pursues, that is, its own citizens, the Sunni allies of the Muslim Brotherhood in Libya and Egypt, Turkic-speakers in the Central Asia, and Syrian refugees. Neo-Turkism is similar to "Neo-Ottomanism" in many respects. "Neo-Ottomanism" is a doctrine that advocates the restoration of Turkey's influence over former colonial countries. They differ in origin, geography, and strategic goals. Pan-Turkism and neo-pan-Turkism came from abroad, while "neo-Ottomanism" is a truly Turkish idea. Neo-Turkism is an idea focused on recapturing more colonial territories (Balkan Peninsula, Crimea, Cyprus, Rhodes, Caucasus, Levant, Iraq, part of Iran, Algeria, Libya, Egypt).

"Neo-Ottomanism" is Turkey's foreign policy doctrine to expand its sphere of influence on neighboring regions through "soft power" at the expense of economy, humanitarianism and internationalism. The main aims are the Middle East, North Africa, the Caucasus, the Crimea and the Balkans. It is important that the term "Neo-Ottomanism" is not used in official

documents and refers to Turkey's unofficial doctrine to expand its influence in the countries that were part of the Ottoman Empire. The term "Neo-Ottomanism" was coined by the English researcher David Burchard in 1985, but this concept became a topic of discussion only in 2003, when Turkey refused to allow the passage of American troops over its territory to Iraq. Ankara has shown that it does not want to play the role of a "junior partner" of the United States and that it has its own geopolitical interests in the Middle East. In essence, "Neo-Ottomanism" is a concept that combines a whole range of ideas and practices of the Turkish foreign policy. The main elements of the ideology of the "neo-Ottomanism" are neo-pan-Turkism, pan-Islamism, as well as relations with Arab and Balkan countries, Asian and African countries. Another special direction of the ideology of the "Neo-Ottomanism" is mutual cooperation with Arab countries. Its mission is to increase Turkey's role in the region and expand Ankara's sphere of influence by ensuring Turkey's economic, political and cultural participation.

According to experts, several fundamental positions can be distinguished in Turkey's new "neo-Ottomanism" strategy:

- 1) Turkey now claims to control the security system in the region independently of the US and NATO, considering itself the center of the Eurasian region;
- 2) Turkey's leadership rejected accusations of Islamization of foreign policy and strengthened relations with the West and Russia;
- 3) Turkish authorities do not contain signs of "Neo-Ottomanism" aggression, and some steps that have such signs at first glance mean that the sovereign state is defending its legitimate interests;
- 4) "Neo-Ottomanism" is focused on the main directions of the strategy - the Middle East, North Africa, the Central Asia, the Caucasus, Crimea and Balkans.

In conclusion, it can be said that "Neo-Ottomanism" is an attempt to form a new identity in the region and on the world stage by applying methods of humanitarian and economic influence. It represents geostrategy, which is the main ideology of all strategies and tactics of Turkish foreign policy. In developing such a concept of foreign policy, the majority of the population of Turkey is in favor of uniting under the flag of such an ideology.

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