

Security Services Reveal that Turkey Attempts to Control the Muslims of France

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*Newspaper Le Journal du Dimanche reported days ago that French security services alerted the Elysee last October about Turkey’s interference in the country’s Muslim community. The French newspaper reported about a strategy of infiltration by certain Turkish associative, educational and religious networks that have the objective, according to the security services, of not only controlling the one million people strong Turkish diaspora, but all 5.7 million Muslims in France. By interfering so strongly into the Turkish diaspora and Muslim community in France, **President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan** hopes to build support for his Justice and Development Party (AKP) in future elections and be able to influence French elections by being the voice for millions of Muslims in the country.*

The report emerged at a precise moment. The bill on religious separatism is being debated in Parliament and the discussion focuses on the formation of a French Islam that is not subservient to external influences.

Erdoğan does not hide using a discourse of Political Islam aligned with the Muslim Brotherhood. In Central Asia, the Caucasus and the Balkans he speaks of pan-Turkism, but elsewhere in the Muslim World he uses pan-Islamism to extend his influence. Erdoğan considers the Muslims of Europe as his subjects. It is recalled that on January 5, 2018 the Turkish leader publicly supported the French Council for Muslim Worship by declaring that “the Muslims of France are under my protection. Those who touch you, touch me.” Taking advantage of European weakness in dealing with extremism, Erdoğan intends to give Muslims a voice and a vision under his model.

From mosques to associations, there is powerful organization behind Turkey’s efforts to coercively control the Turks and Muslims of France. This organization is to indoctrinate new generations towards radical Islam and pan-Turkism. Turkey exercises a real power of attraction for many Muslims as it portrays itself as a dynamic country with huge economic and military ambitions that manages to oppose the West on questions relating to Islam whilst simultaneously being appeased by the West.

Erdoğan is now leading condemnations against France’s limited efforts to control and reform Islam. The Turkish president even launched an international boycott against all French products, in which several Muslim countries joined. This was in protest against French President Emmanuel Macron’s outrage against radical Islam following the beheading of

schoolteacher Samuel Paty.

Due to its proximity to Germany, Turkish influence is especially strong in the Alsace-Lorraine region. According to [Le Journal du Dimanche](#), several local elected officials are subservient to Ankara. Turkish authorities are taking advantage of this to establish their religious and community presence because of the special status the region enjoys. Alsace-Lorraine is not subject to the 1905 Law of Separation of Church and State. With this growing Turkish influence in France, local authorities are to blame for their immobility. Erdoğan, with the help of Turkish intelligence services, impose a right of scrutiny over the diaspora.

France is not alone in this penetration of Turkish influence. Not wanting to alienate the Turkish diaspora that mostly give their votes to her, Angela Merkel allows Erdoğan greater privileges in domestic affairs not afforded to most other foreign leaders. Erdoğan even went to the inauguration of the Grand Mosque in Cologne, a ceremony which attracted more than 20,000 Muslims.

However, returning to France, since the 1970's, the teaching of language and culture of origin allowed the Turkish Ministry of Education to send their own textbooks to France which are full of Turkish and Islamist propaganda. There is no control by French authorities over these textbooks that are full of anti-Greek and anti-Armenian sentiment, as well as Islamist rhetoric.

Erdoğan also benefits from a multitude of Turkish and Islamic associations that aim to promote education in line with the Islamo-nationalist line of the AKP, according to the French newspaper. Recently, politicians have been debating the importance of training imams in France. Turkey, a follower of Political Islam, trains and controls many of the imams who preach in France. Today, 50% of imams in France are trained in Turkey and serve Turkish interests rather than French.

In addition, despite its dissolution by the Ministry of the Interior last November, Turkey continues to support the Far Right and once CIA Operation Gladio funded and supported Gray Wolves. This extremist group regularly calls for raids in Armenian neighborhoods in France. They conducted several such raids during last year's war in Nagorno-Karabakh. Erdoğan does not hesitate to publicly show them his support by making their distinctive hand gesture.

Through the Qatari-funded Muslim Brotherhood ideology, Turkey continues to extend its influence via Islamic networks in France. Mosques, Qu'ranic schools, associations, and a whole range of organizations are part of Erdoğan's project. In addition to financing its military interventions in Libya, Syria and Iraq, Qatar ensures that Turkey lacks nothing to support the Muslim Brotherhood ideal, including in France. This latest revelation will likely force Macron to take full control of Islam in his country, something that Erdoğan will surely claim is an attack against Islam in which he needs to defend against.

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