

Battle for Aleppo - the End of Erdogan's Ottoman Dream in Syria

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Forget Damascus and forget President Bashar al-Assad's seat of power – the real battle for Syria is being played out in the northern city of Aleppo, where Turkey dared dream it would revive its empire of old. Ankara here, is in for a rude awakening!

So rude in fact that Turkish President Recep Erdogan is contemplating a military incursion into Syria – a move fraught with dangers, as it could potentially send Turkey in a collision course with not just Damascus, but two military superpowers; Iran and Russia. Needless to say that while both Moscow and Tehran have exercised restraint and measure when dealing with Ankara's political folly, for the sake of regional stability; a direct military move against Syria would likely send ripples across the region that no amount of diplomacy will quiet.



Turkey of course argues that its position is legitimate and true ... how could it not, when Turkey has proven such a true NATO ally, such a

bulwark against terror? President Erdogan's main line of defense – or rather, attack is that he needs to absolutely protect Turkey's national sovereignty against dangerous radical militants. Turkey's right to self-defence is so imperious in fact that its expression justifies its trampling over the territorial integrity of another sovereign nation: Syria.

In this exceptional narrative Syria has been relegated to a military theatre where nation-states have come to play war, and empire-building. Syria, Mr Erdogan has implied, stands but a dwarf before Turkey's political and military needs ... who cares for international law when one towers a strategic chokepoint in between the EU and a flood of migrants?

Who will speak against Turkey now that its will has been left unchecked, and has stood unchallenged ... may I dare say rogue ... for such a long time. What I'm really asking is how do you put THAT genie back in its bottle? From the looks of it, President Erdogan has no intention on slowing down his neo-imperial horses. If anything he's quite determined to see his ambitions through ... to the bitter end if needs be, atop a ravaged nation most likely.

But if Turkey is acting a rogue state at a time when even Washington is waking up to Russia's logic in Syria, President Erdogan is not without a tuned up rationale. "Tens of thousands of lives have been saved and a million people have received aid, thanks to Syria ceasefire established with Russia's help," US Secretary of State John Kerry [said](#) this May in what can only be described as a political volte face.

Ever the keen strategist, Erdogan is holding a mirror to America's exceptionalism, playing the world's public to the same counter-terrorism tune, and identical military beat – a grand neocon after his own masters.

"Turkey is prepared to take unilateral actions against the Islamic State (IS) in Syria to protect its southern border town Kilis from IS attacks, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan," Xinhua news agency reported him as saying on May 12. "We are making necessary preparations in order to clear the other side of the border," he said.

To which he added: "Turkey will not wait... while we have martyrs every day ...I'd like to say that we will not hesitate to take unilateral steps on this issue ...The issue of Kilis would be "litmus paper" for revealing the sincerity of coalition partners in the fight against the IS group.

If you missed it, there is more than just a veiled threat hiding in President Erdogan's comments – minus of course the sheer hypocrisy of his sudden concern for human life. Ankara shed little tears when it negotiated the lives ... and deaths of war refugees with European capitals. Ankara then cared little for innocent lives ... civilian lives. Life for Mr Erdogan only matters when it can be held a weapon in his enemies' face.

The "Sultan" is really sending a warning to the NATO, and his European neighbours – stand down as I lay waste Syria's resistance or face to the migration flood I will unleash onto your cities. Of course there is always the possibility that ISIL elements could permeate through Europe's intelligence armour ... and then what? Considering that Ankara has acted a patron, and a profiteer of terror to assert its geopolitical ambitions in the Middle East, Turkey is well positioned to act a grand threat against the Old Continent. The fact that most EU governments have failed to understand such reality is rather concerning.

Turkey long abandoned its political neutrality to the clamour of wars ... how much time will elapse before Turkey becomes a global threat?

Erdogan [complained](#) that the US-led anti-ISIL coalition has not provided Turkey with the desired support, reported Xinhua news agency. Support against what exactly no one seems quite sure since Ankara's only woes have been against those factions which have actively sought to destroy terror: i.e. the Kurds.

I will grant you that ISIL has in fact challenged Turkey in the province of Kilis, and that as such – on paper at least – Ankara could argue the need to defend itself. But then again giving Erdogan's history with ISIL one could argue the wannabe Sultan is self-harming to better sale his people, and the world, the war he always wanted in Syria.

It could also well be that Erdogan – a modern-day political Prometheus, burnt himself to the fire he unleashed onto Syria. Lost in his Ottomanesque ambitions Erdogan could soon find himself very much alone as he faces the radical hounds he helped train, arm and fund to depose the one man, who now could hold the key to Turkey's salvation: Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.

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