

The Turkic World as an Emerging Center of Power in the New World Order

Irada Abdullayeva 

Abstract. *The article examines the Turkic world as an emerging center of power during the development of a multipolar world order. The topic is relevant because the weakening of the former unipolar system and the return of power concept to international relations bring new non-Western groupings to the forefront, among which the Turkic world remains one of the least studied as an independent unit of the balance of power, rather than as a cultural phenomenon. The article examines the Turkic world not as an ethnic ideology or a cultural community, but as an emerging structural component of the Eurasian balance of power, with Türkiye at its core and Azerbaijan as the key connecting element. Drawing on balance-of-power theory and the classical geopolitical tradition, the study explores the conditions under which an actor acquires the properties of an independent center of power, and shows that combining military might with cultural and diplomatic influence gives the Turkic union the quality of a single political subject. It is argued that, in their aggregate potential, the Turkic states are gradually acquiring the features of an independent pole capable of influencing the distribution of power in Eurasia, while their institutional and military-political consolidation remains incomplete, which defines its emerging status. Special attention is paid to the system-forming role of Türkiye and Azerbaijan, and it is concluded that the Turkic world should be regarded as an independent geopolitical factor reshaping the configuration of forces in Eurasia.*

Keywords: *Turkic world, center of power, balance of power, new world order, Organization of Turkic States, Türkiye, Azerbaijan*

Baku State University, Baku, Azerbaijan

E-mail: irada.abdullayeva.19@gmail.com

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Türk dünyası yeni dünya nizamında formalaşan güc mərkəzi kimi

İradə Abdullayeva 

Xülasə. *Məqalə türk dünyasının çoxqütblü dünya nizamının formalaşması şəraitində yaranmaqda olan güc mərkəzi kimi dərk edilməsinə həsr olunmuşdur. Mövzunun aktuallığı keçmiş birqütblü sistemin zəifləməsi və beynəlxalq münasibətlərə güc məntiqinin qayıtması ilə müəyyən olunur; bu şəraitdə yeni, qərbyönlü olmayan birliklər ön plana çıxır və onların arasında türk dünyası məhz güc balansının müstəqil vahidi kimi, mədəni hadisə kimi deyil, ən az öyrənilənlərdən biri olaraq qalır. Məqalədə türk dünyası etnik ideologiya və ya sadə mədəni birlik kimi deyil, nüvəsini Türkiyənin təşkil etdiyi, əsas əlaqələndirici həlqəsi isə Azərbaycan olan Avrasiya güc balansının formalaşmaqda olan struktur ünsürü kimi nəzərdən keçirilir.*

Güç balansı nəzəriyyəsinə və klassik geosiyasi ənənəyə əsaslanaraq, aktorun müstəqil güc mərkəzi xüsusiyyətləri qazandığı şərtlər araşdırılır və hərbi qüdrətin mədəni və diplomatik təsirlə birləşməsinin türk birliyinə vahid siyasi subyekt keyfiyyəti verdiyi göstərilir. Əsaslandırılır ki, məcmu potensialına görə türk dövlətləri tədricən Avrasiyada güclərin nisbətində təsir göstərə bilən müstəqil qütb cizgiləri qazanır, lakin onların institusional və hərbi-siyasi konsolidasiyası başa çatmamış qalır və bu da onun formalaşmaqda olan statusunu müəyyən edir. Türkiyə və Azərbaycanın sistemyaradıcı roluna xüsusi diqqət yetirilir. Belə nəticəyə gəlinir ki, türk dünyası yalnız mədəni-sivilizasiya birliyi kimi deyil, həm də Avrasiyada güclərin konfiqurasiyasını dəyişən müasir dünya nizamının müstəqil geosiyasi amili kimi nəzərdən keçirilməlidir.

Açar sözlər: türk dünyası, güc mərkəzi, güc balansı, yeni dünya nizamı, Türk Dövlətləri Təşkilatı, Türkiyə, Azərbaycan

Bakı Dövlət Universiteti, Bakı, Azərbaycan

E-poçt: irada.abdullayeva.19@gmail.com

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Introduction

Contemporary international politics is moving away from the period when a single power set the rules for everyone. The unipolar moment that began in 1991 has almost completely lost its character. China has risen to the level of a global economic and military rival, Russia has returned to open redistribution, a group of middle powers has gained confidence, and the universal institutions that once ensured Western authority, from the United Nations to the World Trade Organization, look weaker than they did a generation ago. In their place a polycentric order is emerging with multiple power centers, more intense regional competition, and an open struggle over who writes the rules.

In such an order a state's weight is no longer determined by its own resources alone. It also depends on whether that state is able to act as the core of a wider grouping. It is in this context that the Turkic world becomes interesting. Over the past two decades the Turkic states have moved from vague cultural sympathy to real institutional cooperation, and Türkiye has turned its position as a rising regional power into something larger by working through this grouping.

The aim of the article and of the research is the following: can the Turkic world be understood as an emerging center of power in the new order, and what facts and conditions confirm or limit this. The relevance of the question is both scholarly and practical. Scholarly, because the rise of non-Western groupings is one of the defining features of the emerging order, and the Turkic world remains one of the least studied among them precisely as a unit of power rather than as a cultural label. Practical above all for Azerbaijan, since the country stands at the center of this process and has benefited from it directly during and after the Second Karabakh War.

Methods

The novelty of the study lies in a new way of analyzing the Turkic world. Expressions such as a Turkic axis or a Turkic pole already appear in the literature. What earlier work does not provide is, first, an explicit set of criteria for what makes a center of power, applied to the Turkic states on real and comparable figures and set against the European Union, China and Russia. Second, we identify the mechanism that actually binds the grouping together, namely the coupling of soft and hard power into what may be called smart power, and this synthesis links the study to the broader research on

Türkiye's foreign policy (Nye, 2011). Third, we openly examine the difficult questions and obstacles, and out of all three approaches a testable analytical thesis takes shape, and it is this thesis that we seek to defend.

Results

A center of power and how we measure it. Before applying this idea to the Turkic world, one must define clearly what a center of power is. In the realist tradition the international system is shaped by the distribution of power among its leading units. Morgenthau saw international politics as a struggle for power, in which interest defined in terms of power guides the behavior of states (Morgenthau, 1948), while Waltz placed the same logic in the structure of the system, where units build up their weight and form counterweights so that no single player dominates the whole (Waltz, 1979). On this basis a center of power, or pole, can be defined as an actor, a single state or a cohesive group of states, that concentrates enough might and connectivity to order relations and shape processes in the space around it. Classical geopolitics gives this idea a spatial form. Mackinder argued that command of the inner mass of Eurasia, the heartland, is decisive in world affairs (Mackinder, 1904). Spykman shifted the emphasis to the rimland, the belt of marginal lands framing that core, as the true key to world power (Spykman, 1944). At the end of the twentieth century Brzezinski treated Eurasia as the grand chessboard of world politics and singled out its middle spaces, among them the Caucasus and Central Asia, as the pivot of the coming rivalry (Brzezinski, 1997). Taken together, these authors make clear that an actor becomes a center of power when several factors converge: a large material base of territory, population and resources, a strong and relatively autonomous economy, the military capacity to defend itself and project force, a commanding or pivotal geographic position, an institutional framework that gives the group a single will, and a shared identity that lowers the cost of joint action. The Turkic states stretch in a belt from Anatolia to the borders of China and lie on precisely the contested territory these authors describe, which gives their combined weight a geopolitical meaning greater than the size of any one of them alone.

To avoid arbitrary judgments, we treat the Turkic world as a center of power only to the extent that it meets several measurable conditions. The first condition is institutional. A center needs a permanent organization with summits, a secretariat, a budget and shared long-term goals, not merely warm declarations. The second condition is military. It requires a defense-industrial base and the ability to project force beyond its borders. The third is economic and infrastructural. It requires trade, energy resources and the routes that carry them. The fourth is civilizational, that is, a common language and a sense of shared identity that lower the cost of cooperation and make institutions easier to sustain. The fifth is demographic and territorial, that is, the combined population, area and natural resources that set the outer limits of any power.

This framework also helps to mark the concept of a center of power off from neighboring notions with which it is easily confused. We describe not an ethnic project of uniting all Turks into one nation, but a structural unit measured by capabilities and institutions, in which the participants remain sovereign states with their own interests. The concept draws on Davutoğlu's idea of strategic depth and on the image of Türkiye as a central power, and develops them (Davutoğlu, 2001). The might Türkiye has accumulated becomes the basis for forming, in the future, a wider Turkic center of power, in which Azerbaijan and the states of Central Asia act not as Ankara's depth but as its partners and co-participants in a common project. And this is something more than mere Turkic integration. Integration names the process of growing cooperation, whereas a center of power adds a further question, about how this process changes the distribution of power in Eurasia.

The new order and Türkiye's place in it. Türkiye reads the new order as an opportunity rather than a threat. Its drive for strategic autonomy is visible in several areas. It has built its own defense industry,

which now covers a significant part of its needs. It acquired the Russian S-400 air-defense system in spite of strong pressure from its allies and accepted the price of exclusion from the F-35 program without backing down. It has conducted independent military operations in Syria, northern Iraq and Libya and has used its own drones, changing the course of regional conflicts. These are the steps of a state that wants to chart its own course rather than follow one drawn elsewhere.

Turkish diplomacy clothes this drive in two ideas worth noting. The idea of a central power, going back to Davutoğlu, presents Türkiye as a node at the junction of regions rather than the periphery of someone else's system (Davutoğlu, 2001). The formula "the world is bigger than five," repeated by President Erdoğan in many addresses, including from the rostrum of the United Nations, strikes at the monopoly of the five permanent members of the Security Council and calls for a more just and pluralistic order (Erdoğan, 2013). This theme is close to the argument we develop below, since a Security Council paralyzed by the veto is one of the reasons states increasingly rely on their own capabilities rather than on collective bodies.

What turns a Turkish story into a Turkic one is the platform. In the new order status is set not only by national resources but also by the ability to lead a wider grouping, and Türkiye converts its position as a rising middle power into the weight of a center of power by working through the Turkic world. The grouping becomes the means through which Türkiye, and with it Azerbaijan and the states of Central Asia, enters the multipolar order as an independent pole rather than as the periphery of Russia, China or the West. On this reading the Turkic project is not a romantic digression from Turkish foreign policy but one of its most rational instruments.

The combined potential of the Turkic world. Taken together, the five full members of the Organization of Turkic States, namely Türkiye, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, form a substantial block on every measure that matters. Their combined population is close to 160 million, their territory about 4.24 million square kilometers, their nominal output around 1.86 trillion dollars, and their output by purchasing power parity about 5.5 trillion dollars, while their combined military spending exceeds 30 billion dollars a year (World Bank, 2024; SIPRI, 2024). Behind the aggregate lies a useful division of labor. Türkiye supplies the largest economy, about 1.36 trillion dollars in nominal terms, the strongest military, among the top ten in the world by most rankings, and the most developed defense industry (World Bank, 2024). Kazakhstan brings vast territory, the ninth largest in the world, together with major reserves of oil and gas, and is also one of the principal states holding uranium reserves, with about 14 percent of the world resource (Nuclear Energy Agency & IAEA, 2024). It is a leading producer of the raw material on which the energy security of most countries depends. Uzbekistan adds the largest population in Central Asia and a fast-growing economy. Azerbaijan contributes energy wealth and the geographic key that joins the two wings of the grouping. Kyrgyzstan anchors the block in the Tien Shan and on the routes toward China.

Energy is one of the most important factors in measuring this potential. The combined proven natural gas reserves of Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan amount to about 17 trillion cubic meters, which places the grouping among the world's largest concentrations of gas, and Turkmenistan alone holds one of the four or five largest reserves on the planet (U.S. Energy Information Administration, 2025). Kazakhstan adds about 30 billion barrels of oil and Azerbaijan about 7 billion, and Azerbaijani fields already feed Europe through the Southern Gas Corridor (U.S. Energy Information Administration, 2025). If the Turkic observers, Turkmenistan and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, are added, the population rises to about 168 million and the territory to about 4.74 million square kilometers.

The asymmetry within the block is clearly visible: Türkiye accounts for roughly three quarters of the combined output, so the grouping can resemble one strong state with others attached rather than a

union of equals. None of this cancels the weight of the block, but it supports the word emerging. And it is worth noting that a single block need not contain members equal in strength; they may complement one another by various criteria, as can be observed in different blocks.

To assess the figures of the new emerging center of power, we compare them with established centers of power. The table below places the five full members of the Turkic world alongside the European Union, China and Russia by territory, population, economy, trade, military spending and resource reserves. The figures are drawn from different sources and different years.

Indicator	Turkic world (OTS-5)	European Union (27)	China	Russia
Population	about 160 mln	450 mln	1409 mln	144 mln
Territory, km ²	about 4.24 mln	about 4.23 mln	9.60 mln	17.10 mln
GDP nominal, USD	1.86 trln	19.5 trln	18.7 trln	2.17 trln
GDP by PPP, USD	5.5 trln	28.1 trln	40.7 trln	6.9 trln
Military spending, USD	above 30 bln	about 371 bln	314 bln	149 bln
Goods exports, USD	about 400 bln	2.8 trln (extra- EU)	3.58 trln	434 bln
Natural gas reserves, tcm	about 17	under 1	about 8	about 48
Oil reserves, bln bbl	about 38	about 5	about 26	about 80

Sources: the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund for population and output, Eurostat for the European Union, SIPRI and the European Defense Agency for military spending, the World Trade Organization for trade, the Energy Institute and OPEC for energy reserves, all for 2024 (World Bank, 2024; SIPRI, 2024; Eurostat, 2024; European Defense Agency, 2024; World Trade Organization, 2024; Energy Institute, 2024; OPEC, 2024).

The comparison shows that in territory the Turkic world is almost exactly equal to the European Union, about 4.24 million square kilometers against roughly 4.23 million, though this is only a quarter of Russia and less than half of China. In population it stands above Russia, about 160 million against 144 million, while remaining far below the European Union and China. In nominal output it reaches roughly 85 percent of Russia, but only about a tenth of the European Union or China. Its goods exports, about 400 billion dollars, are again close to the Russian figure. The clear exception is the military field, where Turkic spending, a little above 30 billion dollars, is about a fifth of the declared Russian total and well under a tenth of the Chinese or European one.

Natural resources are a further dimension where the Turkic world stands out. Its proven natural gas reserves, close to 17 trillion cubic meters, and its oil reserves, about 38 billion barrels, place it far above the resource-poor European Union and roughly on a par with a major energy power, while Kazakhstan is also a world leader in uranium production, and the region holds large reserves of gold, chromium and other minerals (U.S. Energy Information Administration, 2025; Energy Institute, 2024; OPEC, 2024). On this measure the grouping is much closer to Russia, the holder of the world's largest gas reserves, than to the European Union, which depends almost entirely on imported energy. A strong resource base is one of the clearest material foundations of the emerging Turkic pole.

On the slow-moving foundations of power, territory and population, the Turkic world already stands on the scale of an established pole, equaling the European Union in territory and surpassing Russia in numbers. In economic weight it is in the same range as Russia, though far behind the two largest economies. In hard military might it remains a fraction of each of the three. A grouping that equals

the European Union in size and is comparable to Russia in population, economy and exports, yet spends only a fraction of any great power on defense, is precisely what calls for the word emerging. The geographic and human base of the pole is already in place, while the military dimension, and to a lesser degree the economic one, is still being built.

One of the specific features of a center of power is its framework, and the Turkic world has been building one for fifteen years. The Cooperation Council of Turkic-Speaking States, known as the Turkic Council, was founded by the Nakhchivan Agreement of 2009, with Türkiye, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan among the founders and Uzbekistan joining in 2019 (Organization of Turkic States, 2009). At the Istanbul summit of November 2021, the body was renamed the Organization of Turkic States, and this change of name signaled a change of ambition, from a council for dialogue to an organization with a common strategy (Organization of Turkic States, 2009). The same summit adopted the document "Turkic World Vision 2040," a long-term road map with goals in politics, economy, transport, education and security (Organization of Turkic States, 2021).

Around the central body sits a family of supporting institutions that give the grouping cultural and parliamentary depth. TÜRKSOY, the international organization of Turkic culture, has promoted the common heritage since 1993. The Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic States, founded in 2008, links the legislatures of the members. The International Turkic Academy in Astana coordinates scholarly work, and the Turkic Culture and Heritage Foundation, based in Baku, finances common projects. In 2023 the members took a further step, establishing the Turkic Investment Fund with its headquarters in Istanbul and an authorized capital of 500 million dollars, the grouping's first common financial instrument (Turkic Investment Fund, 2023). In 2024 a commission of the member states agreed on a common Turkic alphabet of thirty-four letters, a quiet but important step toward a shared written space (Organization of Turkic States, 2021). Each of these bodies is modest in itself, but together they turn cultural closeness into an institutional fact.

Connectivity gives the framework of a center of power an economic spine as well. The Middle Corridor, the route that crosses the Caspian and links China with Europe through Central Asia, the South Caucasus and Türkiye, carried about 4.5 million tons of cargo in 2024, well above the level of several earlier years (Trans-Caspian International Transport Route, 2024). In 2025 volumes fell somewhat, but the trend over the decade is still one of rapid growth, roughly a fivefold increase in freight in seven years, and the corridor gives the Turkic states a shared material interest. As trade between China and Europe seeks routes that bypass both Russia and the longer sea lanes, the Turkic belt becomes a corridor of genuine strategic value.

Türkiye and Azerbaijan are effectively the driving force of the process. Türkiye is the core and the indispensable leader of the grouping. It supplies by far the largest economy, the strongest military, the most developed defense industry, the widest diplomatic network and a cultural pull through a common language, media and education that holds the whole space together. It is Türkiye that provides the political will and the resources behind the Organization, drives the common agenda from the unified alphabet to the investment fund, and gives the Turkic world a single voice on broader international platforms.

If Türkiye is the core, then Azerbaijan is the indispensable connecting link, and its weight in the project rose sharply after 2020. The Second Karabakh War, won with close military and technical support from Türkiye, restored Azerbaijani control over its territories and shifted the regional balance in the South Caucasus in favor of the Turkic side. The alliance was then set down on paper by the Shusha Declaration of June 2021, which raised relations between Baku and Ankara to the level of a formal alliance and gave the bond a legal, not only a political, form (Shusha Declaration, 2021). No less important for the argument of this article, Azerbaijan is the geographic node without which the

South Caucasus would not connect to Central Asia and the Middle Corridor would have no western gate, which means that without Azerbaijan the two halves of the Turkic world simply would not meet. The transport links now being developed, above all the route through Zangezur, would close the last geographic gap between Türkiye and the Turkic states of the east, while the Southern Gas Corridor already carries Azerbaijani energy westward to Europe and turns the country into an energy bridge between the Caspian and the European market. Azerbaijan is therefore not a junior partner in the Turkic world but one of its two load-bearing pillars, and a significant part of the grouping's current momentum runs through Baku.

Discussion and Conclusion

For the emerging center that is the Turkic world there are real obstacles, and they deserve a full listing. The first is internal asymmetry. Türkiye so far surpasses its partners in economy and military might to such a degree that the grouping can look like one large state surrounded by those who have joined it rather than a union of equals, and this breeds a quiet caution among the smaller members. The second is the absence of a binding security pact. There is no Turkic Article Five and no mutual-defense clause, so the block has nothing like the legal backbone of NATO or even of the Collective Security Treaty Organization, and defense cooperation stops at joint exercises and arms sales. The third is dependence and vulnerability. The Central Asian members remain tied to Russia by trade, labor migration and security mechanisms, and to China by investment and infrastructure, which limits how far they can lean toward the Turkic pole without touching their large neighbors. The fourth is the weakness and opacity of some members. Unreliable statistics and closed political systems, clearest in Turkmenistan, hamper planning and trust and leave parts of the block hard even to measure. The fifth is a chain of unresolved disputes around the edges of the space, from the division of Cyprus to the position of Turkic people living beyond the member states.

We may say that a rising center of power alarms others. Russia regards Central Asia and the South Caucasus as its near abroad and reads a consolidating Turkic block led by a NATO member as a threat to its own influence in a region it has long considered its own. Iran is uneasy for two reasons, both because of Turkish reach along its northern border and because of the pull that a confident Azerbaijan can exert on the large Azerbaijani population within Iran itself. China welcomes the trade corridors that cross the Turkic belt but watches the Turkic theme with concern, since the cause of Turkic solidarity touches directly on Xinjiang and its Uyghur population. Armenia sees in Turkic consolidation, and above all in the close tandem of Türkiye and Azerbaijan, direct strategic pressure on its own position. Greece, the Republic of Cyprus and part of the European Union resist Turkish assertiveness in the Eastern Mediterranean and over Cyprus and have no wish to see a stronger block behind Türkiye.

Each of these actors' risks losing relative influence or fears a challenge to its own territorial integrity if the Turkic world grows into a coherent pole. For Russia and China, the deepest concern is internal, since both rule large Turkic populations of their own. For Iran and Armenia, the concern is regional and immediate. The very fact that so many states treat the rise of the Turkic world as a problem is itself an argument for the thesis of this article, since a cultural club would alarm no one, whereas an emerging center of power alarms everyone whose position it touches.

Russia deserves a separate examination, because its position is genuinely twofold. On the one hand, Russia is home to millions of Turks. The Tatars are its largest non-Russian group, joined by the Bashkirs, Chuvash, Yakuts, Kumyks and many others, so that in purely cultural and demographic terms Russia overlaps with the Turkic world more than any single member state. In the Kremlin this is well understood. When Devlet Bahçeli presented President Erdoğan with a map of the Turkic world in 2021, one that reached into southern Russia, Siberia and beyond, the Russian spokesman Dmitry

Peskov responded without anger. He remarked that the map lacked only a red star at its center, since the heart of the Turkic world lies in the Russian Altai, where the Turks originate, and added that the Turkish partners' aspiration to Turkic unity was quite normal (Daily Sabah, 2021). The remark was light in tone but carried a clear signal that Russia considers itself to stand at the very source of the Turkic world rather than outside it.

On the other hand, Russia is a separate great power and a rival pole, and it treats both external Turkic consolidation and any hint of pan-Turkism within its borders as a threat to its territorial integrity. The question of Russia's inclusion in the Turkic center of power therefore has to be treated as a prospect rather than an assertion. In terms of structure, a rival great power cannot be placed inside the very pole against which it plays, for that would dissolve the concept itself. The Turks within Russia are its citizens, not sovereign actors, so they cannot form part of a grouping of states.

Russia's position toward the Turkic world is twofold, it is neighbor, partner and rival at once, and the large Turkic presence on its territory means that the two spaces can never be fully separated. A genuine rapprochement would be a long-term scenario, dependent on deep shifts in the world order and in Russia's relations with the West. It should be stressed that any such prospect concerns a possible rapprochement of sovereign states and in no way the redrawing of borders or the separation of regions. Placed within this strict framework, the Russian question enriches the concept of a Turkic center of power rather than undermining it.

Overcoming the obstacles to the formation of a new center of power. Several steps would bring the Turkic world closer to a genuine center of power. The members could deepen the institutional framework by giving the Organization a stronger secretariat, a working common fund and, in time, a security dimension that goes beyond joint exercises toward common planning and procurement. They could turn the Middle Corridor from a promising into a reliable route through steady investment, harmonized customs and tariffs, modern ports on the Caspian and the completion of the Zangezur corridor. They could expand military and technical cooperation, drawing on the strong defense industries of Türkiye and Azerbaijan and on the export of Turkish systems to the states of Central Asia, while remaining honest that this is still far from a mutual-defense treaty. They could invest in the civilizational foundation through the new common alphabet, shared textbooks and universities, scholarly exchanges and the cultural work of TÜRKSOY, so that a shared identity grows from below. And they could manage the disputes around the edges, from a fair settlement in Cyprus to even and balanced diplomacy toward Russia, China and Iran that keeps wariness from turning into open confrontation. None of this happens on its own, and the asymmetry around Türkiye will remain a structural fact for a long time, but each step narrows the gap between the emerging center and the real one.

This brings us back to Huntington. On his map of civilizations there is no Turkic one. The Turkic peoples are folded into Islamic civilization, and Türkiye itself is offered as the model case of a torn country, pulled between Western and Islamic identity and unsure of where it belongs (Huntington, 1996). Can such an omission be considered a gap in Huntington's theory? The Turkic world is a real cross-border community, bound by language, by a shared history reaching back to a common origin, and by a growing set of institutions, and it extends far beyond the member states, into Russia, China and Iran. A framework that dissolves such a community into a larger religious category miss something that is now organizing itself into an actor with its own organization, its own summits and its own strategy.

Here the two readings of the Turkic world converge. As a geopolitical pole it is built on the sovereign states of the Organization, and it is there that the balance-of-power argument works and where the criteria and figures of this article do their job. As a civilizational community it is broader, and millions

of Turks within Russia and elsewhere belong to it in a cultural sense, even as they stand outside the pole. The thesis worth advancing against Huntington is twofold. First, the Turkic world is consolidating across his map of civilizations rather than within a single cell on it, and this feature his model does not capture. Second, in taking shape as a center of power it simultaneously advances a claim to recognition as an independent civilization, with its own language family, common heritage and increasingly common institutions. A map of civilizations drawn today, rather than in the 1990s, could hardly leave the Turkic world unmarked.

Summing up the research, it can be said that the Turkic world is becoming a center of power in the emerging world order, and this is visible in figures and institutions, not in rhetoric alone. The combined population, territory, economy and above all energy of the Turkic states, the institutional framework of the Organization of Turkic States with its cultural and parliamentary bodies, and the connecting role of the Middle Corridor together give the grouping a weight that already affects the Eurasian balance. Türkiye provides the core and Azerbaijan the backbone, and their alliance, sealed by the Shusha Declaration, is the axis on which the whole grouping turns. The factors holding the process back are asymmetry, the absence of a security pact, external dependence and unresolved disputes stretching from Cyprus to the position of Turkic peoples beyond the member states. Several states, Russia among them, regard the rise of the Turkic pole as a challenge, which is in itself a sign that the grouping is now counted in the calculations of others. The case of Russia is the most telling, for it is at once the historical cradle of the Turkic peoples and the power most wary of their consolidation, while also having an interest in cooperation and in strengthening a union of Asian states that would lend greater weight against the West. How far the Turkic world moves from an emerging center to an established one will depend on whether it can reinforce its energy and its identity with stronger institutions and steadier diplomacy. What already seems clear is that it can no longer be left off the map, neither the map of power nor the map of civilizations.

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