**Yu Weihai: Analysis of Contemporary Imperialism by the Communist Party of Turkey**

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The world order after the Cold War has been summarized by many scholars as a single structure of “globalized” system, and imperialist aggression has been interpreted as a “surgical operation” to punish and transform the “bad” system. "

In response to the drastic changes in the world situation and the misconceptions and distortions in people’s understanding of imperialism, since 2008, at various International Meetings of the Communist and Workers’ Parties, the communist parties of various countries have listed the struggle against imperialism as an important task in the current international communist movement.

Since its establishment in 1920, the Communist Party of Turkey led by Mustafa Suphi has actively participated in the Turkish national liberation movement, and during World War II, it waged extensive anti-fascist struggles.

The current Communist Party of Turkey (2001) led by Kemal Okuyan is an important force in the world socialist movement and plays an important role in the social development and historical process of Turkey. The current Communist Party of Turkey was established after the liquidation of the original Communist Party of Turkey in the early 1990s. The current Communist Party of Turkey was established in 2001 and it has inherited some successful practices and the struggle tradition of the old Party, although it has different ideas and political strategy. In the new century, the Communist Party of Turkey has gradually shown active involvement in domestic and international politics, uniting and leading the masses in struggle against the reactionary ruling class domestically, and leading the front line in anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist struggles internationally, fights against reactionary capitalist forces to maintain peace and stability in the Middle East and the Balkans.

In recent years, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Turkey has published a series of articles on its website, analyzing contemporary imperialism, in the documents such as “The Program of the Communist Party of Turkey,” “The Tasks of the Communist Party of Turkey, Imperialism, Turkey, and the Communist Movement,” “Striking against the reactionary forces, promoting the socialist path,” and “The speech of the Communist Party of Turkey at the 14th International Conference of Communist Parties and Workers’ Parties,” providing an in-depth analysis of contemporary imperialism. This article will summarize the analysis of contemporary imperialism by the current Communist Party of Turkey.

1. **Currently, liberalism and the left have misconceptions about imperialism**

Imperialism emerged in the late 19th century as a product of the development of capitalism to a certain stage, as a result of the movement of capital, and as the “monopoly stage of capitalism.” At the end of the 20th century, with the end of the Cold War and the upheavals in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, there have been significant changes in the world situation. Understanding capitalism, socialism, and evaluating contemporary imperialism has become the focus of academic controversy.

In the eyes of TKP liberal lefts believe that the era of imperialism has come to an end, and they advocate for a “globalized” system of international non-hierarchical interdependence, replacing imperialism. In addition, some on the left also have misconceptions about current capitalist-imperialism.

They argue that countries that have recently entered the global system or play important roles within it can, to a certain extent, resist American imperialism, at least by restraining the influence of American imperialism through their declarations and policies. These countries are held in high regard by the left movement for their role in anti-imperialist struggles. Another part of the left believes that the view of a single (globalized) system is mistaken, as each member integrated into the system, regardless of their level of capitalist development, military capabilities, or regional influence on other countries, are “imperialist” and are in a competitive relationship, far from being a monolithic entity.

Clearly, liberalism and the left have very different views on the current world order and the imperialist system. The Communist Party of Turkey has conducted an in-depth analysis on this issue. The party believes that, in relation to the first view of the left, even if the important countries that have recently entered this system can successfully resist American imperialism and their actions are recognized by other countries, it is important to recognize the other hidden motives of these countries.

Firstly, even if these countries with an anti-American stance have played a practical role in specific circumstances, it is difficult to consider their positions as a consistent and unwavering “anti-imperialist front.” These countries are motivated by providing support for their capitalist forces in the world market, strengthening their regional influence, and ultimately gaining a larger share of global labor exploitation.

Secondly, to gain a competitive advantage, these countries often exploit workers, reduce wages, and even suppress economic organizations in other countries to consolidate their position within the global system. These countries have many problems themselves and are far behind “old imperialist countries” in labor conditions, freedom of assembly, and human rights. However, the latter are depicted as “innovative” and “progressive.”

Thirdly, to break the monopoly position of the United States, these countries collaborate closely, implement policies to “contain the United States,” seek compromise with imperialist countries outside the United States, and seek to transfer cheap labor to these imperialist countries. The “containment of American imperialism” policy also aligns with domestic conservatism, nationalism, and even blind patriotism, and is highly praised. In these countries, under the banner of “containing the United States” and “anti-imperialism,” the people have turned to fully support the ruling authorities or, under the guise of the “left,” support the foreign policies of their own government, which is actually a new form of “social chauvinism” and a new way of pacifying the class.

The Communist Party of Turkey believes in using the concept of “imperialism” cautiously. The party does not see today’s world as a so-called “imperialist” structural system where countries are interwoven into a single entity. Just as certain specific concepts within the communist movement should be used correctly and not exaggerated, it is not feasible to describe imperialism by selecting one or two parts from a continuous, inseparable whole and presenting these parts as representing the entire “imperialism.” The Communist Party of Turkey opposes this method, and its viewpoint can be summarized as follows:

1. The Communist Party of Turkey analyzes the current world system structure from a historical perspective rather than a structural perspective. The current structure is not fundamentally different from the old structure before 1991. On the contrary, it is a continuation of the same phenomenon and the same hierarchical structure that emerged in the early 20th century, following World War II.
2. The conflicts and tensions between imperialist countries within the global system (including newly integrated emerging powers) are not the characteristic of today’s era in the global system. Although the hierarchical system has been shown to no longer have legitimacy within the global system, today’s characteristic is that a small number of imperialist countries are striving to re-establish a hierarchical system, just as in the first half of the 20th century.
3. In some cases, the international communist movement has mistakenly supported certain domestic regimes and forces that superficially oppose imperialism. This is actually a consequence of using the methods of the imperialist system or structure. This method allows for loopholes in evaluating the “imperial” issue and leads to erroneous conclusions, similar to Kautskyism’s “super-imperialism.”
4. This method of structure or system will lead to “dependence” or, more accurately, “dependence on imperialism.” In the current global system, controlling this dependence is a one-way street from the imperialist core.
5. Analyzing imperialism from a perspective of historical continuity and understanding the current process as a process in which a small number of imperialist core, mainly the ambitious United States, are trying to re-establish a hierarchical hegemony. This is a revolutionary viewpoint. Overthrowing the rule of imperialism guided by this method will inevitably lead to a political revolution, and even the establishment of socialism in a country. This method is clearly different from the method of structure or system.
6. **Imperialism is the historical result of the comprehensive expansion of capitalism, and contemporary emerging powers are not imperialist countries, they only have imperialist tendencies.**

The Communist Party of Turkey believes that imperialism originates from the continuous expansion movement of the political, ideological, cultural, and military hegemony of capital, which is an inseparable aspect of the movement of capital. The development of capitalism at a certain level, nationalism, expansion policies, or military capabilities of a country within a global or regional perspective are not sufficient to define that country as an imperialist country. Emerging powers such as Russia, India, and even Turkey need to be evaluated with a broader perspective due to their ambitions to become regional powers within a globalized context. Like the United States, ruling classes in these countries have ambitions and aggressiveness, and they exploit every opportunity to deepen the exploitation of the working class, and they can fully utilize military, political, and social resources to expand their overseas investments, seeking to establish new markets and sources of raw materials. However, the Communist Party of Turkey believes that these countries are not like the core imperialist countries competing for hegemony such as the United States or the European Union led by Germany, but only have a tendency to move towards imperialism.

Firstly, since imperialism first appeared in history and became a phenomenon, the relationship, conflicts, and the rise of major imperialist countries have become more complex. However, they have common characteristics. The experiences of Germany and the United States replacing Britain as the world hegemonic countries between the two world wars have the following commonalities: the replacement of hegemony is due to the rise of emerging countries with strong pursuit of “change” that do not accept the existing global order, especially economically. Therefore, the leading imperialist countries have a characteristic of being content with the status quo, and the rising countries that propose more demands have revisionist characteristics. However, in today’s world, emerging powers frequently avoid the possibility of challenging this hegemony. In this context, Russia and the United States, maintain a low profile in military and political aspects; India and Brazil also do not seek competition in political and military fields, and competition only occurs in the economic domain. This single competition that only occurs in the economic domain is not the only requirement for the emergence of imperialism.

Secondly, although Russia and Brazil tend to establish an economic-political group around a specific geographical area, they have not established a sustained hegemonic buffer zone. Russia’s efforts to counter American expansion over a vast area starting from Ukraine, reaching the Caucasus and the various republics of Central Asia have not been absolutely successful, and the Moscow government has only taken a defensive stance against NATO or US expansion. On the other hand, even though Brazil has a prominent reputation in the liberal movement in Latin America, it still lacks a political tool to shape Latin America according to its own will. China is entering Latin America, a region in conflict with imperialist countries such as the United States, through extensive investment, and is preparing for a struggle outside the African continent with the United States. However, in the short term, China seems unlikely to change its policy of postponing confrontation with the United States.

Thirdly, imperialism is a capability to control other countries economically, politically, and culturally. In order to achieve this, all capitalist countries tend to fully utilize their powers and interfere in other countries according to their interests. However, only a few countries can turn this into a real hierarchical order. Among these so-called “emerging powers,” only Russia has the ability, inheriting and using the relative advantage left by the former Soviet Union. However, Russia is still considered to lack stability in establishing regional hegemony and has not established reliable alliances.

Fourthly, these countries have difficulty establishing a new center and becoming a third force outside of the United States and the European Union, including some other smaller economies, such as the BRICS countries. The United States and Germany exert different influences on each of these countries, and there are also contradictions among these countries. On the other hand, the leaders of these countries, Russia and China, are unwilling to accept each other’s leadership of this axis.

Fifthly, these countries also have significant shortcomings in the attractiveness of consolidating regional hegemony due to their rapid economic growth being based on strong labor exploitation. For example, Brazilian capitalists have exploited the prestige of the Workers’ Party. However, these countries cannot form a model of power beyond the “limitations of the United States” in the international region.

However, this does not mean that the aforementioned countries have not made efforts to become imperialist countries, and when all conditions are ripe, they will transform into comprehensive imperialist countries in political, economic, and cultural domains. Turkey is a typical example. The Communist Party of Turkey believes that in 2002, the Justice and Development Party came to power and clearly stated in its manifesto that it is a pro-capitalist party that is religious and promptly announced its unlimited pro-market and pro-American policies. The United States government provided economic protection to Turkey, allowing it to overcome the crisis, and also provided intellectual, institutional, and political support to the Justice and Development Party in pursuit of the “Second Republic” goal. The Justice and Development Party government ignored its structural limitations but fantasized about establishing a new Ottoman Empire in the region. According to its manifesto, in its foreign policy, it formally entered the former Ottoman territories economically, politically, and ideologically, as the United States’ defeat in Islamic territories provided Turkey with an opportunity. Turkey is increasingly becoming a medium-sized bourgeoisie country that is blindly self-confident in economic and political terms under the leadership of the Justice and Development Party, and is more actively involved in interfering in the Middle East and North Africa. However, the empire constructed by the Justice and Development Party only serves the interests of the United States, in exchange for the latter’s recognition of Turkey’s regional leadership. In order to achieve this goal, the Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan has continuously exploited the hatred of the Israeli government in the region, sternly criticizing Israel to gain a moral leadership position in the Middle East or the Islamic world, despite not taking any specific measures against Israel. At the same time, on the other hand, the Erdogan government actively calls for direct intervention by the United States in Syria. In this regard, the Communist Party of Turkey sharply pointed out, "The veil covering the imperialist attempt to shape our region using the new Ottoman ideology has been lifted. The Second Republic has clearly shown its militaristic and aggressive characteristics in Syria. A possible war not only means an irreversible tragedy for Turkey and its neighboring countries, but it will also inevitably lead to the downfall of the Justice and Development Party government."

1. **the essence of the turmoil in the Middle East and North Africa is the result of the contemporary imperialist’s new aggressive expansion.**

Influenced by the laws of capitalist movement and deepening capitalist crises, the central imperialist-capitalist countries have engaged in competition, leading to the outbreak of destructive regional wars. As conflicts intensify, the possibility of wars breaking out on a larger scale increases. The imperialist core countries direct the possibility of war towards subordinate countries. Making the laborers bear the consequences of the crisis, and increasing the possibility of war on the territories of subordinate countries, brings about another issue - stimulating religious extremism, conservative nationalism, oppressed, and inseparable military dictatorship. This is also the inevitable result of contemporary imperialist aggression and expansion.

In fact, since the end of 2010, the Middle East and North Africa have been in rare political and social upheaval in over 30 years, with people going on strike, protesting, and even clashing with the military and police, resulting in the overthrow of leaders and changes in governments in multiple countries. Libya even attracted military strikes from countries such as France and the UK, and Yemen, Bahrain, Jordan, Algeria, Saudi Arabia, Iran, and others have all experienced varying degrees of social unrest. The wave of upheaval sweeping through the Arab world has been termed the “Arab Spring” by Western media.

The Communist Party of Turkey believes that the so-called “Arab Spring” is the result of imperialist aggression and expansion, but it has been covered up by a new form of imperialist invasion. This new form of invasion does not rely on direct military invasion as in the cases of Afghanistan and Iraq. Typically, through financial support from imperialist powers and trained small factions, an initial rebellion is launched, or a movement of disobedience against the ruling authorities is initiated. In addition to the covert support for these factions, the imperialists also exert external pressure on the government, forcing them to surrender. This change also aligns with the current situation and interests of the United States. Due to the deep entanglement of the US military in Afghanistan and Iraq, to maintain this occupation, the US has allocated a huge budget, and US decision-makers have gradually realized the need to send out fewer American soldiers and spend fewer US dollars. Furthermore, the US is more willing to distance itself from the political and social chaos caused by military invasions and the instability resulting from interference.

Even before the “Arab Spring,” the new imperialism’s aggression had been implemented in some former socialist countries, fabricating the so-called “color revolutions.” The political structures of the countries experiencing color revolutions were changed to better align with the interests of imperialist regimes. Unlike the “color revolutions” in former socialist countries, which recruited small groups of hundreds of young people as agents to execute imperialist plans, in the Middle East and North Africa, the movement’s strategy is restricted to these small groups and is not feasible. The reasons for this are multifaceted. The brutal rule of dictators and the anger accumulated over decades of oppression have led to uncontrolled protests by the people in this region. Once the people stand up to express their anger towards the dictators and oppressors, it is impossible for the agents of imperialism to unite them or to make them back down. On the other hand, without a large, unrelenting uprising, it is impossible to overthrow the dictators, as seen in Egypt, for example.

In this sense, the massive demonstrations in Tunisia and Egypt were initially the people’s angry response to oppressive systems. However, from the moment the people rose up against the dictatorial rule, they did not direct their struggle against imperialism. The covert support of imperialism for the dictators is crucial for maintaining their rule in the face of various threats. Ultimately, although the dictators have been replaced, the changes have been manipulated, and imperialism has always controlled the process of change and designed new political structures.

The situation in Libya and Syria is clearer, as US imperialism has successfully packaged a model of “people opposing dictators” in the Arab world. Imperialism seizes upon the structural features of tribes, multiple ethnicities, and multiple religions in these two countries, supports certain groups, and encourages them to engage in armed struggles against the government. The Communist Party of Turkey emphasizes, “We cannot deny the role played by some so-called leftists and intellectuals in this imperialist propaganda war. They often confuse the nature of the conflicts in these countries. They incite ‘revolutions’ among armed tribes and religious groups under the auspices of imperialism, without realizing that they are acting as pawns in the imperialist propaganda machinery.” In essence, intellectuals have lost their own position and have not prioritized or have ignored the struggle against imperialism and liberalism.

Historically, the new changes in imperialist strategies are not recent innovations. The United States’ policy stance in the so-called “Arab Spring,” especially in Libya and Syria, is still based on the strategic framework of indirect interference in the Third World established after the Vietnam War. Affected by the Vietnam War, the United States abandoned its strategy of direct military intervention until the end of the Cold War. Since the 1970s, the world has entered an era of emerging workers’ movements and revolutionary storms in the Third World, and the US government has realized that it cannot stop imperialist interference. Consequently, the US government started supporting certain local factions financially and with weapons or colluded with the military officials of those countries to suppress revolutionary movements. Therefore, a detailed and specific analysis can explain how American imperialism has strategically adjusted its domestic members and groups based on different periods and regional characteristics.

**4. Combining the struggle against imperialism with socialist revolution to promote new developments in the international communist movement.**

The Communist Party of Turkey points out that the struggle against imperialism is not based on the political strategy of class compromise, capitalism, and reformism. The main social process of socialist revolution, establishing the working-class power, is primarily aimed at opposing imperialism, patriotism, and independence, and is the ideological focal point for carrying out a socialist revolution. Any non-socialist pursuit and choice within the imperialist-capitalist system will be defeated. The economic, social, and political problems of Turkey can only be resolved through socialism, and there is no other alternative. “Only a socialist revolution can achieve victory in the struggle against imperialism, and the process of socialist revolution can only deepen through the struggle against imperialism.” “Socialism is a prerequisite for accelerating Turkish society, advancing the enlightenment process, gaining economic, social, military, and cultural independence, ensuring equal rights for the Kurdish people, and establishing a democratic political structure.” To break free from the economic, political, and cultural encirclement of imperialism and to rid themselves of US interference within the global capitalist system, the strategic importance of the communist movement is crucial. To achieve this, the Communist Party of Turkey has proposed several suggestions:

Firstly, the Communist Party of Turkey believes that all agendas that delay socialism, and all compassionate evaluations of capitalism as “good” or “bad,” should be abandoned, and a strategy that combines the struggle against imperialism with the overthrow of the national bourgeoisie should be established.

Secondly, the communist movement should place a strong emphasis on the demands for the state’s “independence” and “sovereignty” and should not leave room for class compromise and narrow nationalism. It should re-establish patriotism within the context of a socialist revolution. This challenging task should be redefined based on the specific history and current situation of each country.

Thirdly, due to the complex situations in certain regions and the international environment, the tasks of the communist movement may be more difficult at certain times. For example, in countries occupied by imperialism, the balance of power and the relations between classes may undergo significant changes due to the intervention of the aggressor. Communists not only need to struggle against the capitalist class but also need to fight against the imperialist forces of the occupier. Whether one can become a leader in the struggle and reflect the proletarian nature of the struggle is beyond the control of subjective will, and it cannot be achieved overnight. However, under any circumstances, one must maintain intellectual and political independence and be cautious not to forget the goal of social liberation.

Lastly, those countries that attempt to limit or prevent imperialism sometimes make choices to invade or interfere militarily for their own interests. In such cases, communist movements should not adhere to the principle of “equidistance” towards imperialist countries and “blocking countries,” but rather should focus their struggle on those imperialist countries that support international capital and threaten revolutionary forces. Communists cannot give up protecting the interests and rights of the working class; the interests of the revolution are the compass for communists. Actions such as NATO’s expansion and the United States’ subversion of governments in different countries through manipulation should be considered as “threats” by communists, as they limit the potential for revolution and cause a regression of the working class in politics and ideology. In this sense, when evaluating the aggression of imperialism, one should not only focus on its “national” level but should also not overlook the class roots and consequences of the invasion.

In conclusion, the Turkish government has played the role of a regional power closely following the footsteps of the United States in many major international issues in recent years and has acted as the vanguard for the US and Europe in seeking dominance in the Middle East. In this kind of “fertile ground,” the analysis of contemporary imperialism by the Communist Party of Turkey undoubtedly carries strong persuasive power. In fact, the Communist Party of Turkey’s profound analysis of the misconceptions of liberalism and the left about imperialism and the aggression of imperialism against the Middle East and North Africa has important implications for the correct understanding of contemporary capitalism and imperialism and the formulation of the correct policies for socialist struggles. However, it must be pointed out that the Communist Party of Turkey is generally a conservative traditional leftist party, and some of its theoretical understandings still remain at the level of classical Marxism. The party’s assessment of emerging powers is certainly open to debate, and there are certain biases in its understanding of the development paths and methods of developing countries.