CHAPTER 1

TURKISH RUSSIAN RELATIONS IN THE SOVIET AND POST SOVIET PERIOD

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ABSTRACT

The first official meeting between the Ottoman Empire and Grand Principality of Moscow was established in 1492. Ottoman Empire had continued the relations with Tsardom of Russia via Crimean Khans in the Crimea and its surroundings, which are the vassal states of the Ottoman Empire. However, when the Tsardom of Russia 18th and 19th centuries progressed and had power in Eastern Europe and Asia, it struggled with Ottoman Empire and gradually invaded most of the Ottoman territories. Russia suppressed the Ottoman Empire by defeating the Ottoman armies in the wars, especially in the 19th century, consecutively, and controlling the Black Sea and Balkans. The great states in Europe such as England, France, Germany protected Ottoman Empire against Russia. Ottoman Empire was defeated heavily against Russia in the Ottoman-Russian War in 1877-1878, and the empire had to give its lands in East Anatolia and Balkans to Russia after the war. In the World War One, Ottoman Empire and Russia have been in the opposite blocks. Since Russia was experiencing the Bolshevik Revolution during the war, Russia retreated from the war and focused on its internal issues. As Germany was defeated in World War One, Ottoman Empire had also been defeated, therefore withdrew from the war by signing the Armistice of Mudros. Afterwards, Ottoman Empire had been broken down, and Kuva-yi Milliye (meaning National Forces) in Anatolia has established the Republic of Turkey (29 September 1922) by winning the War of Independence. Soviet Government that was established on 7 November 1917, supported the War of Independence in Anatolia. In Soviet times, Turkish-Russian relations often negatively but rarely positively continued. As threats against the Republic of Turkey increased in Stalin period, Turkey has joined the NATO, so that Turkey has guaranteed itself against Russia. After this date, Turkish-Russian relations have been established focusing on economic interests, and Turkey reconfigured its security and geopolitical strategies as a part of NATO.

Keywords: Russian-Turkish relations, Ottoman Empire, Soviet - Turkish relations

Ottoman Empire (also known as Ottoman State) was a Turkestan state which ruled in the Eastern Europe, Balkans, Caucasus, Anatolia, Middle East and Northern Africa between 1299-1922. Osman Gazi, who is the founder of the Ottoman Empire and the ancestor of the Ottoman Dynasty, was descendant of Kayı tribe of the Bozok sub-branch of the Oghuz Turks. The state was established in Söğüt district of Bilecik Province. The date of establishment of Ottoman Empire is widely accepted as 1299. However, according to some historians like Halil İnalcık, Ottoman Empire achieved its characteristics and qualities of state after the Battle of Bapheus in Yalova in 1302, not in 1299.

Although we mention the date of 1492, when the Moscow Principality and the Ottoman State contacted each other through their envoys, as the beginning of the historical process of Turkish–Russian relations, relations -between these two nations date back earlier. The northern wing of the Turkic migrations from east to west, which goes back to the era in B.C., always forced the Slavs and Turks to coexist, especially in the sub-forest areas of the Ukrainian steppes. For this reason, Lev Nikolayevich Gumilyev mentions the similarities of these two co-existing people in his work *Ancient Turks*, especially in the Ukrainian region.¹ The existence of the Turkic states in the region that began with the Huns in the 4th century AD, continued with the Avars² (AD 558-619), Khazars (AD 558-965), Pechenegs (AD 860-1091), Cumans (Kipchaks), and Ogurs (Bulgars; AD 630-864), which were formed after the breakup of the Gokturks³ (AD 552-745). This political structure continued its dominance in the region with the Turkish Mongol emperor Genghis Khan (1162-1227) and his sons.

The Ottoman State emerged as a social, political and economic power in Anatolia and the Balkans. The state had its most powerful period in the 15th and 16th centuries. The Russians began to gain strength in the 16th century, and in the 17th and 18th centuries they gained a political advantage over the Ottoman state. In addition, as the Russians aimed to expand their borders to Caucasus in the south, they fought with the Ottoman State continuously.

Russia's aim was to dominate the Black Sea, the straits, and the Mediterranean trade zone in order to be effective politically and economically. In the meantime, the Ottoman Empire had to defend these areas. It is also known that the Ottoman Empire helped the Turkistan khanates in Central Asia in order to prevent Russia progressing to the Caucasus and the Black

1 For detailed information see; Nev Nikolayevič Gumilyef Eski Türkler, (Translated by Ahsen Batur), Selenge, İstanbul 2002.

2 In 558, Avars settled along the Danube River and became neighbor to Slavs. They raided in Central Europe. In 619, they surrounded the İstanbul and failed, then the state weakened and was broke down.

3 Gokturks was the first state which Turks' name was used in history. It has been established by Bumin Qaghan in 552 and collapsed by Karluks and Uyghurs in 745.

Sea. This is why the powerful Grand Vizier Sokullu came to Astrakhan in 1568 to stop Russia, and wanted to realize the goal of facilitating logistical transportation to the Caspian Sea by joining the Volga and Don Rivers with the Or Canal.

Figure 1: Ottoman Empire in the 15-16-17 centuries⁴.

The first diplomatic relations between the Ottoman State and the Russians was established during the reign of Sultan Bayezid II, who ruled from 1481 to 1512, when Ivan III Vasilyevich – also known as Ivan the Great, who reigned from 1462 to 1505 – sent his ambassador, Alexis Golovkastof, to Istanbul to liberalize the trade of Russian trade ships in the Black Sea, the Aegean Sea and the Mediterranean (İnalçık, 1992). Connected to this, and considering their power and status, the Ottomans did not accept the Duchy of Moscow as their direct respondent but notified them that they would conduct their relations through the Crimean Khanate, which was subject to Ottoman rule. Especially with the weakening and collapse of the Golden Horde State (Saray, 1989), and the collapse of its successor khanates in the

4 <http://www.iranpoliticsclub.net/maps/maps09/index.htm> date accessed: 14.01.2017.

fifteenth century, first the Khazan Khanate in 1552 and then the Astrakhan Khanate in 1556 (Saray, 1991) were defeated by the Russians. Based on these events, the Russians began to dominate Western Turkistan. By the end of the sixteenth century, Russian Tsardom became a great state threatening Sweden and Poland in the west with the wealth and power it gained in the east. The Astrakhan campaign and the Or Canal project launched by Sokullu Mehmet Pasha in 1568 failed due to the negligence of the Crimean Khan and logistical impossibility, and the expansion of Russia to the east and south could not be prevented by the Ottoman Empire (İnalçık, 1992).⁵

It can be considered that the project of joining the Don and Volga Rivers, which is planned by Sokullu Mehmet Pasha and opening a door to Turkistan, was intended to stop the Russians who were emerging as a new power and could be a future threat to the Ottoman Empire's sovereignty in the north. According to Inalcik, this project was planned at the time of the Kanuni era and aimed at stopping the Russians, who came from the north (İnalçık, 1948). The pressures on Muslim peoples in Astrakhan⁶ and its surroundings during the Kanuni period (reigned 1520-1566) continued in the era of Ottoman ruler Selim II (reigned 1566-1574) (Fig.2). Continuing to fight the Portuguese in the Indian Ocean for pilgrimage and trade routes, the Ottomans returned to the north in early 1568 and launched the Astrakhan campaign in order to prevent threats from Russia. After these preparations, which continued throughout the winter, they came to the area, a little north of Astrakhan, in August 1569. This area was discovered by the ancient Greeks to be the mostshallow ground that the Don and Volga Rivers cross over before they flow into two separate seas (Özcan, 2013). The excavation of the canal started at the area between the Ilovlya branch of the Don River and the Kamsyshinka branch of Volga (now called the town of Petroval). The excavations continued for three months continuously and one-third of the channel was opened. About 30,000 Nogay Tatars were hired to work on the canal works. The historian Pechevi⁷ says that, although there was no lack of security, food and equipment, the Tatars had spread a rumor among soldiers that winter comes to the region three months earlier, and that it would not be possible to work in the unbearable cold; therefore, the soldiers returned. Despite the edict of the Ottoman ruler Selim II, which ordered the army to spend the winter in Astrakhan, the army disobeyed the order and withdrew.

5 Also see: detailed information on Astarkhan campaign; See Kamalov (2011) and Kurat (2011).

6 Astrakhan is a city in southern Russia. The city lies on 2 banks of the Volga River, close to where it discharges into the Caspian Sea. Today, there are 5 big cities in the region. These are: Akhtubinsk, Kamyzyak, Kharabali, Narimanov, and Znamensk.

7 See Bayka (1981).

Figure 2: Astrakhan Region, Russian Federation

After the Ottomans left the Astrakhan region, they were not interested in the region for about a century. However, during this time, the Crimea Khanate, under the aegis of the Ottomans, continued to control Russia and to receive taxes on behalf of the Ottoman State from Russia in accordance with existing agreements. In fact, Crimean horsemen burnt down Moscow completely in 1571 to prevent Russia gaining strength. In 1552, Russia attacked the Khazan Khanate, in the east and captured the capital Kazan; there was a great massacre. The main purpose of the Russian expansion of their territory to the south, which was a threat to the Ottomans, was to acquire land for agriculture and to make it possible for poor Russian villagers to have access to fertile lands. In 1502, the Crimean Khanate broke the power of the Great Horde by conquering Saray – the last fortress of the Golden Horde – and gained control over Khazan and the territory around it. The people affected by this turmoil were placed in Perskop city (Safargaliyev, 1960). Therefore, the lands between Ryazan and the Crimean khanate remained empty and these lands not owned by anyone; they were called Dikoye Pole (wild field). Kazakhs and peasants from Russia started to settle in these empty lands. Before

long, the Kazakhs started to settle in Dnepr at the borders of the Crimean Khanate (Oreshkova, 2005). Hoping to protect itself from the pressure of the Crimean Khanate, Moscow built “ostrogs”⁸ and fortresses. The Russians completed building Belgorod, the most important southern defense line – some 800-km long – in 1653. This border line not only secured the south but it also expanded the Russian border about 100 km down to the land of the Crimean Khanate. This process caused the Russians to learn about the surrounding region along the Ukrainian lands. In addition, the Russians settled these lands by building ostrogs. Even if the Russian armies lost the wars against the Ottoman armies, they became the true owner of the region because they settled in this area. Based on these events, Ukraine became one of the most important migration areas for Russians. Nonetheless, the Turks did not see the Russians as a serious threat in the sixteenth and for most of the seventeenth centuries; therefore, did not plan to conquer the Russian territories to keep it under control (Oreshkova, 2005).

From 1654 onwards, under the influence of the Cossacks⁹, the Russians captured most of Ukraine and seized places with strategic importance from both the Crimean Khanate and the Ottomans. In the meantime, Hetman Doroshenko, the king of Ukraine, abandoned Ottoman patronage and began to be under the patronage of Russian. This caused the Ottoman army under the command of Mustafa Pasha, including the forces of the Crimean Khanate, to march into Ukraine’s capital, Cyhyryn city, in 1678. It was the beginning of a new era in the history of the two neighboring states when they began to fight directly (Kurat, 2011). According to the Bahcesaray Agreement¹⁰ (3 January 1681) signed between the Crimean Khanate and the Russians after this war, which ended with an absolute victory of the Ottoman army in 1681, the Russians agreed that they would continue to pay taxes to Crimea. The Ottoman State continued to refuse to accept the Russians as their direct interlocutor in this period, and conducted their relations through the Crimean Khanate (Saray, 2014).

However, the Ottoman raids into Poland and Russia did not have the potential to fix the distorted economic order (the taxation system; timar¹¹ and iltizam¹²). For this reason, according to the general opinion of the Russian historians, despite the victories between 1676-

8 Ostrog is a term (Russian) for a small fort, commonly wooden and generally non-permanently manned.

9 Cossacks had been a group of predominantly East Slavic-speaking people who became called as individuals of democratic, self-governing, semi-military communities, preponderantly located in Ukraine.

10 Bahcesaray Aggrement was signed in Bahcesaray, which ended the Russian-Ottoman War (1676–1681), on 3 January 1681 by Russia, the Ottoman Empire, and the Crimean Khanate. This is the first agreement signed between the Ottoman State and Russia.

11 A timar was land, granted by the Ottoman sultans, between the 14th and 16th centuries, with a tax revenue annual value of fewer than 20 000 akces.

12 An iltizam was a form of tax farm in the fifteenth century in the Ottoman Empire.

1681, the Ottoman state gave up its interest in Ukraine and Russia and turned its attention to Central Europe, leaving the region to the governance of the Crimean Khanates. A. L. Nordin-Nayokin, who was the foreign relations officer of Tsar Aleksey Mikhailovich, believed that the peace achieved with Poland had to also be reached with the Ottomans, and he warned the Russian Tsar accordingly (Oreshkova, 2005).

When the Ottoman Empire was defeated at the apex of its power in Vienna in 1683 – with the encouragement of the Pope – Austria, Poland, Russia, Venice and Malta formed the Holy League. The battles against the Holy League, which lasted for 16 years, severely damaged the Ottoman Empire and weakened its power. In 1699, with the Treaty of Karlowitz, the Ottoman Empire admitted defeat and withdrew from the war. Poland also signed an agreement that it accepted Russian sovereignty over the territory of Kiev and Smolensk in return for Russia joining the Holy League.¹³ For the Holy League, Russia launched two campaigns in Crimea under the command of Prince Golitsin between 1687 and 1689, but could not succeed in capturing Crimea, and had to retreat after suffering major defeats (Kurat, 2011). This alliance against the Ottoman Empire was a new foreign policy by Russia. Russia would continue to advance into Ottoman Black Sea ports.

Since Tsar Peter I (reigned 1682-1725) attached great importance to maritime trade, he besieged the Castle of Azak located at a key point on the Black Sea with a large Russian army in the spring of 1695. Although the Ottoman troops repelled the Russian attacks at first with the strong resistance of soldiers and the support they received from the sea, Peter I took over the castle on 19 July 1696 (Gürsel, 1968). In doing so, the Russians gained direct access to the sea trade, the importance of which they had previously noticed. The Castle of Azak, invaded by Russians, was also important for transporting the possessions that Russians obtained in the 17th century to various places of the world via the Black Sea, Aegean Sea, and Mediterranean Sea. Now, Russian merchants would be able to carry their fur and valuable chemical materials from Siberia to the important ports of the world.

The Ottoman State signed the Treaty of Karlowitz with the Austrian, Venetian, Polish, and Russian states of the Holy League on 23 January 1699 (Özcan, 2001). One year later, with the arrival of the Russian representatives to Istanbul, the “Istanbul Treaty” – as a continuation of the Treaty of Karlowitz – was signed with Russia on 13 July 1700. As a result of this agreement, the Russians, who had previously contacted with the Ottoman State through the Crimea Khanate, made a bilateral agreement with the Ottoman Empire, and succeeded

13 Polnoe sobraniye zakonov rossiskoy imperii, Vol. II, No: 864, Snp. 1830.

in holding the important Azak Castle (Kurat, 2011). In addition, by holding a strategic commercial center that would lead to the warm seas of the Mediterranean, Russian Tsar Peter I made a move that could be influential in international politics. It was also important for Russia to make this agreement at a time when the Holy League was weakened. Russia had also acquired land by benefitting from this weakness.

The Ottoman Empire gathered an army under the command of Baltacı Mehmet Pasha¹⁴ in 1711 in order to stop Russia's movement along the Caucasus and the Black Sea. The Ottoman army besieged the Russian army on the edge of the Prut River. However, no war began between them, and Baltacı Mehmet Pasha lifted the siege by accepting the offer of Tsar Peter I (reigned 1682-1725), and the Prut Agreement was signed on 21 July 1711.¹⁵

According to the agreement, Azak Castle, previously held by Russia, would be returned to the Ottoman State. Moreover, all castles on Ottoman-Russian border constructed by Russia would be destroyed, and the Russians would stop interfering with the affairs of Poland and the Cossacks of the Crimea. In addition, Charles XII of Sweden would be able to return to his country and Russia would not prevent it. Apart from Russian merchants, there would be no Russian ambassador in Turkey, the prisoners of war would be returned to the Ottoman State, and Russia would pay taxes to Crimean Khanate as it had done in the past (Kocabaş, 1989). The Prut treaty can be considered as official proof that the Turks were still militarily strong; however, Turkish army was mentioned as a disorganized army in the resources at that time. Again, the agreement was even more important to the Russians, as Russian diplomacy had succeeded in making an agreement with the least loss and without fighting (Saray, 1998). Peter I prevented the possible destruction of the Russian army by maneuvering when he was trapped by the Prut River (Kocabaş, 1989).¹⁶ Although Turkish historians consider this agreement to be an important event due to the success of the Russians in their dealings, Russian historians are not convinced that their country signed a very successful treaty, because all of the previous achievements of the Russians were taken back through this agreement, and

14 Baltacı Mehmet Pasha was an Ottoman statesman who served as grand vizier of the Ottoman Empire from 1704 to 1706, and as Kaptan-ı Derya (grand admiral of the Ottoman Navy) in 1704.

15 For detailed information on Prut war and peace, see: Akdes Nimet Kurat, *İsveç Kralı XII. Karl'ın Türkiye'de kaldığı zamana ait Metinler ve Vesikalar*, Rıza Coşkun Matbaası, İstanbul, 1943; Akdes Nimet Kurat, *Pрут Seferi ve Barışı*, II Vol., TTK Basımevi, Ankara 1953.

16 There are few different views on why Baltacı Mehmet Pasha signed this treaty. Although some resources argue that Catherine, the spouse of Peter, visited Baltacı Mehmet Pasha's camp with jewelries and that Baltacı showed weakness to Catherine and the jewelries (Samiha Ayverdi, *Türk-Rus Münasebetleri ve Muharebeleri*, Kubbealtı, İstanbul, 2012, p. 203), some other important studies state that Catherine never visited Baltacı Mehmet Pasha's camp but she sent jewelry as presents and those jewelries were recorded and taken as state treasury. For detailed information see: Afyoncu (2015).

they had to evacuate the Zaporizhia¹⁷ region; thus Peter I could not realize his goal of reaching the Black Sea coast. Moreover, with the border agreements made with the Russians – first in 1720 and then in 1724 – the border lines of both sides remained the same (Nikiforov, 1952).

The Ottoman State sent Nishli Mehmet Aga to Russia as a middle-ambassador to discuss the issue of Iran and the pressures on the Muslims living in Russia, who are under the patronage of the Ottoman State. Kapıcıbaşlı Nishli Mehmet Aga was the first among ambassadors to Russia who wrote a *sefaretname*¹⁸ (recounting the journeys and experiences of an Ottoman ambassador in a foreign country). He left Istanbul in October 1722 and returned on 17 February 1723. The ambassador conveyed a proposal regarding the attack on Iran and the partition of Iran. He also demanded that legal rights be given to Muslims living in the region and an end to their persecution (Unat, 2008). After the Vienna defeat, the Ottoman State had to compromise on the Russian project of placing a Russian population on the Caucasus and Ottoman border. However, the Ottoman State recovered in a short time and managed to stop its losses temporarily by establishing a balance in foreign policy. The psychological superiority due to Prut victory in 1711 had an important place in this success.

The peaceful period between the Ottoman State and the Russian Tsardom ended in the period of Russian Czarina Anna Ivanovna (1730-40). The Russian Czarina, making an agreement with Austrian emperor Karl VI, waged war against the Ottoman Empire in 1736 when they attacked the Castles of Crimea, Özi, Azak, and Khotyn. In the same year, the Austrian state declared war against the Ottoman Empire based on the agreement with Russia (Uzunçarşılı, 2011). The Ottoman army succeeded in this struggle against the two great countries in the course of almost three years, centering primarily on the Austrian front. With the Treaty of Belgrade¹⁹ (18 September 1739) signed with Austria, the Ottoman State took back the lands it had previously lost. The agreement with the Russians consisted of fifteen articles and one conclusion part (Uzunçarşılı, 2011). According to this agreement, Russia was to withdraw from the territories it had invaded previously and the Castle of Azak was to be destroyed and the land was made neutral. The independence of the Kabardins²⁰ territories was recognized.

17 Today corresponds to Ukraine's Dnipropetrovsk Oblast, as well as large part of Zaporizhia and Oblasts and a certain part of Kherson and Donetsk Oblast.

18 *Sefaretname*, the book of embassy, was a type in the Turkish literature which was closely related to *seyahatname* (the book of travels), but was specific to the recounting of journeys and experiences of an Ottoman ambassador in a foreign, usually in Europe.

19 Treaty of Belgrade achieved by the Ottoman Empire that ended a four-year war with Russia and a two-year war with Austria. According to the Treaty of Belgrade, Russia won back Azak Castle, also was prohibited from maintaining a fleet on the Black Sea, and trade on the Black Sea could be conducted only in Turkish vessels. Russia returned Wallachia and Moldavia to the Ottoman control.

20 Kabardins are the largest one of the twelve Adyghe (Circassian) tribes (sub-ethnic groups).

It was decided that the Russians would stop attacks on Cossacks and that the Crimean Tatars (İnalçık, 2008) would stop their raids on Russia. The Russians were not allowed to have naval vessels and merchant ships in the Black Sea (Afyoncu, 2010). The Belgrade Agreement in 1739 was made at the request of Austria and its ally Russia. In these wars, the Ottoman State defeated the Austrian army in Niš and took back Belgrade, however, it was not very successful against the Russian army, so it had to retreat from Khotyn and Bender. When Austria withdrew from the war, Russia was alone and had to retreat from the war against the Ottomans. As a result of these wars, the Ottoman Empire had been successful militarily; however, its financial health deteriorated because of debts to Europe, especially to France. Moreover, the Belgrade Agreement marked the beginning of the process in which Europe would have a role as an important factor in the relations between Russia and the Ottoman State.

After the Belgrade Agreement with the Russians, it was decided to reciprocally send ambassadors. In this respect, Mehmet Emni Efendi was sent to Petersburg with the title of Governor of Anatolia (Unat, 1989). Emni Efendi, who set out in 1741, was responsible for resolving the issues on the implementation of the provisions of the Belgrade Agreement. Emni Efendi, who was a successful diplomat, also discussed issues such as the exchange of captives and referring to the Russian tsars as emperors in protocols. Emni Efendi returned to Istanbul in 1742 and wrote a *sefaretnâme* on this travel (Turan, 2012).

In the period of Czarina Yelizaveta Petrovna (reigned 1741-1762), there was no war between Russia and Turkey and relations were peaceful. Relations between the Ottoman State and the Russian Tsardom continued at the diplomatic level. In the meantime, Dervish Mehmet Efendi, who travelled from Istanbul to St. Petersburg in 1754, conveyed the edict of the Sultan to Czarina Elizabeth to inform her of the Ottoman ruler Osman III's (1754-1757) accession to Ottoman throne. Mehmet Efendi, who wrote his journey as a *sefaretnâme*, returned with the letters of the empress in 1755 (Unat, 1989). When Mustafa III (1757-1774) ascended to the Ottoman throne, he sent Shehdi Osman Efendi in 1757, who had previously traveled to Russia as part of Mehmet Emni Efendi's entourage, with the title of *Şikk-ı Sani Defterdarlığı* (a title of high-ranking finance officer) to inform the Russian state of his accession to throne. Returning from St. Petersburg in 1758, Shehdi Efendi gave information and detailed descriptions on the state of Russia by writing a *sefaretnâme* (Unat, 1989).

Russian Czarina Catherine II (reigned 1762-1796) had elected Stanisław Poniatowski as the king of Poland to succeed King August III (Uzunçarşılı, 2011). With Polish refugees taking refuge in the Ottoman lands, the Russians chased after them and massacred both the refugees and the Muslims. As a result, Ottoman ruler Mustafa III declared war on Russia in 1768

(Kurat, 2011). The chancellor of Catherina II, M. I. Vorontsov, stated in his report dated 1762 (Oreshkova, 2005) that Russia could not be safe if the Crimea remained as part of the Ottoman State. Crimea was the most important way for Russians to reach the Mediterranean through the Black Sea. Therefore, after the Russian intervention in Poland and Sweden, it was also very important strategically for the Russians to keep Crimea under their patronage. In 1769, the Russian State Council took the first step to have the territory of Crimea by recognizing the independence of Crimea. Russian historians interpret this event as a political decision taken in terms of the balance of power in the world and emphasize that it was very accurate. Because, according to Russian historians, the annexation of the Crimean territory could have stirred the reaction of other Western states. Russia would be forced to go into a war that she was unprepared for and could lose completely the land gains against the Ottomans. The Russian-Turkish war began in 1768 and lasted until 1774. The Turks, defeated both on land and at sea, had to enter peace negotiations with the Russians. Peace negotiations were started in Focshani and Bucharest, but no agreement could be reached due to the excessive demands of the Russians. However, as a result of the increase in Turkish defeats, a truce was concluded on 10-21 July 1774 in Küçük Kaynarca (today Kaynardzha) (Muahedat Mecmuası, 2008).

Figure 3: Ottoman Empire in 19th and 20th centuries²¹.

21 Website of Harvard University <http://dighist.fas.harvard.edu/courses/2015/HUM54/exhibits/show/suleymaniye/item/1357> date accessed: 14.01.2018.

The Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca is one of the most burdensome treaties in the history of the Ottoman Empire in terms of its conditions.²² A turning point for the Ottoman Empire, this agreement consists of twenty eight articles and two separate provisions. It allowed the Russians to take vast lands between the Dnepr and Dniester rivers and set the Kuban River as the border. The Russians, who separated the Crimea from the Ottomans and ensured its independence, had the right to control the Crimea and the Kerch Strait (Kurat, 2011). The Russians, who controlled the Crimea, had the right to control the Kerch Strait, the most important place on the Black Sea. A history of Crimea (Russian Sefaretname 1771-1775), written by Necati Efendi – part of the entourage of Silahtar İbrahim Pasha – deals with the wars of Russia against Crimea and narrates the Ottoman–Russian war between 1768-1774, especially on the Crimean front. It was decided to send an envoy from the Ottoman State to Russia, and Russia to the Ottoman State, to discuss the problems arising out of the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca. For this purpose, the Babıali (literally “sublime porte” or Ottoman government) sent Çavuşbaşlı Abdülkerim Efendi to Russia in 1775 as an ambassador with the title of Governor of Rumelia. Mehmet Emin Nahifi Efendi, the poet and high-ranking military officer (müşir), served as an emissary of Abdülkerim Pasha and explained in his sefaretname the struggles regarding the settlement of the problems arising after this agreement (Bay, 2014).²³

The Russians increased their activities towards Crimea after Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca. With respect to the Crimea issue, the Aynalıkavak bond of arbitration (Aynalıkavak tenkilnamesi in Turkish) was signed between the Ottoman Empire and Russia, with the mediation of France and England, on 21 March 1779 (Saray, 1998). The treaty emphasized that the Crimea was independent and the dominance of the Ottoman State over the Crimea was reduced gradually (Uzunçarşılı, 2011). The Crimea issue between the Ottomans and the Russians continued to be important, and finally Catherine II invaded Crimea in 1783 with an army of seventy thousand soldiers led by Potemkin. The Ottoman State, however, failed to respond to this situation due to its economic and military inadequacy and accepted the situation implicitly (Uzunçarşılı, 2011; Solovyev, 1830).

22 The Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca was a peace treaty signed on 21 July 1774, in Küçük Kaynarca between the Russian Empire and the Ottoman Empire. According to the treaty, Turkey abandoned control of the northern coast of the Black Sea. Russia gained the right to keep a fleet on the Black Sea and rights of protection over the Christian people of European countries under Turkish rule. The Crimean Khanate was declared to be independent of Turkey except for religious matters.

23 Also see: Turan (2012), p.43.

The lands of the Crimea and its surrounding region were one of the main resources of the Ottoman Empire, not only in terms of population, but also for strategic and logistic reasons.²⁴ In addition, the settlement of Russia in the region would bring about a total loss of activity in the area for Ottoman Turkey in the future. For this reason, the Ottomans fought for years against Russia (1787-1792, 1807-1812, 1853-1866). The Ottomans declared war against the Russians again in August 1787 as a result of the increasing desire of the Russians towards the warm seas, especially the Black Sea. Austria also became a party to this war, and the Ottoman State had to fight two major states in two fronts (Kurat, 2011). The main purpose of the Ottoman State in entering the war was to take the Crimea back and to push the Russians to the borders that existed before the signing of the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca. The aim of Czarina Catherine II was to eradicate the Ottoman Empire and become the sole sovereign of the Black Sea, to make the Balkans Russian subjects, and to establish a Greek state (supported by her) in Istanbul (Aksan, 2011). The Russians, who cooperated with Austria, achieved great victories in the battles against the Ottoman State. The interpretations of Russian historians also overlap with those of Turkish historians. According to both groups of scholars, the Orthodox subjects in the Ottoman State, and Muslims and Turkish subjects in Russia, were the most important factor in the relations between the two states. While the two states were fighting out with the opposing party outside their borders, they were also mainstreaming this struggle among the people involved with religious institutions and clerics within their borders. In this context, the Russian state used the Orthodox church and clerics, and the Ottoman state used the caliphate and imams, as part of the war.

At the beginning of the war, the Ottoman State requested support from Sweden and Prussia against Russia and signed an alliance with these states.²⁵ However, these alliances were not successful due to the French Revolution, and the Ottoman State was left without allies in its war against Russia (Kocabaş, 1989). With the French Revolution, which shook Europe and the world and marked the beginning of a new age of nationalism, the Russians declared that they wanted to negotiate with the Ottomans but the defeated Ottomans did not accept the request for these negotiations. After Koca Yusuf Pasha's appointment as Grand Vizier²⁶, the Ottoman State, which could not get the support expected from Prussia, sent the delegation that had

24 Historically, the Crimean Khans had been power that ruled Russia (both Caucasus and Ukrainian steppes) for centuries. With the loss of Crimea, Ottomans had lost this power. In addition, Kerch Strait, as a natural port, is the most important commercial route for the north of the Black Sea.

25 For Ottoman-Prussia alliance see: Beydilli (1790).

26 In the Ottoman State, the Grand Vizier (Sadrazam) was the prime minister, with the absolute power of attorney and, in principle dismissible only by sultan himself.

previously signed the Sistova Agreement to Iași (Jassy)²⁷ to conduct peace negotiations. The negotiations started in November 1791 but would not be completed until January 1792; the Treaty of Jassy (Muahedat Mecmuası, 2008), consisting of thirteen articles and a conclusion, was then signed. According to this treaty, the Ottoman State accepted all treaties in force: namely the 1774 Treaty of Kaynarca, the 1779 Aynalıkavak Tenkihnamesi, the 1783 Trade Agreement, and the annexation of the Crimea and Taman in 1784. The land on the left side of Dniester River²⁸ would be given to the Russians together with Ochakov Castle, while Ismail, Bender, Akkerman, and Kili Castles would be given to the Ottomans. The tax debts of the Bogdan Voivodeship²⁹ would be cancelled, taxes would not be collected for two years, and public amnesty for the captives of both sides would be announced. Kuban³⁰ would be the border between the two states in the Caucasus. To assure the peaceful relations between Russia and the Ottoman State, the governors of Cildir would not attack Tbilisi, the Georgian Prince. Russian merchant ships would be protected by the Ottoman Navy against the pirates of Garp Ocakları (pirates from Algeria), and Garp Ocakları would compensate any damages to such ships; the Ottomans would provide such compensation if the pirates did not pay (Uzunçarşılı, 2010).³¹

Long-standing Russian-Ottoman wars have helped the Russian army to improve its technological capabilities and renew its military system. The same battles had weakened the Ottoman army, and deteriorated overall financial stability by bringing extra costs to the state treasury, which was already in poor condition. As a result of the defeat in the Ottoman-Russian wars, Selim III understood the necessity of reforming the Ottoman military and wanted to create a new and modern army (Aksan, 2011).

During the Peloponnese and Greek revolts (1821-1829) against the Ottoman government, Russia, England, and France formed a triple alliance and transformed the Ottoman State's

27 Iași (Jassy or lassy) is the second largest city in Romania. Iași is located in the historical region of Moldavia, and had traditionally been one of the leading centers of Romanian Social, cultural, academic and artistic life. The city was the capital of the Principality of Moldavia from 1564 to 1859, then of the United Principalities from 1859 to 1862, and the capital of Romania from 1916 to 1918.

28 The Dniester is a river in Eastern Europe. It runs through Ukraine and then through Moldova, finally discharging into the Black Sea on Ukrainian territory again.

29 Bogdan is a Slavic name that also appears in Ukraine, Romania and Moldova. Voivode is an Eastern European title that initially denoted the principal commander of a military force. During Ottoman times, voivode was the title borne by the ruler of a province, whose powers included the administration, security and tax collection under a special regime. The territory ruled or administered by a voivode is known as a voivodeship. In English, the title is often called as "duke" or "prince".

30 The Kuban River is a river within the Northwest Caucasus region of European Russia. It flows mostly through Krasnodar Krai, but also in the Karachay Cherkess Republic, Stavropol Krai and the Republic of Adygea.

31 Also see: Kuzucu (2013), p. 233–236.

domestic affairs into a European problem. In addition to incitement activities organized in Balkans against the Ottoman government through Orthodox churches, the Russians burned the Ottoman Navy in Navarino (1828-1829) (Muahedat Mecmuası, 2008). Despite the request of the Ottoman Empire for compensation, the Russians declared war in 1828³², and taking advantage of the weakness of the Ottoman Empire with no navy, they crossed the Black Sea and landed at Edirne³³. Ibrahim Pasha, the son of the Governor of Egypt Mehmet Ali Pasha, had been waiting for help from the Ottoman army but had to abandon the Peloponnese³⁴ when the necessary aid did not reach him. The Ottoman Empire had lost the Ottoman-Russian War in 1828-1829, and accepted the independence of Greece through the Treaty of Edirne signed with Russia in 1829. The Russians occupied Ahiska, Kars, and Erzurum under the command of General Paskiyevic. The war ended with the Treaty of Edirne (1829) (Kurat, 2011). In the Central Balkans, the border between Europe and the Ottoman Empire would again be the Prut River, but the rights given earlier in international agreements to Moldavia-Wallachia and Serbia would be increased. In addition to granting full independence to Greece, Russia would be paid a substantial amount of compensation by the Ottoman Empire. Moreover, following Treaty of Edirne, Serbia declared its independence from the Ottoman Empire in 1830 with the support of Russia (Armaoğlu, 2014). In short, the Ottoman Empire had admitted the defeat against Russia with the treaties of Küçük Kaynarca, Jassy and Edirne. Especially after the Treaty of Edirne, the balance between Russia and the Ottoman Empire was ensured by the help and support of England and France to the Ottoman Empire.

The Turkish state, which had survived the Russian threat through the Treaty of Edirne with severe losses, had to deal with the revolt of Mehmet Ali Pasha, the rebellious governor of Egypt. M. Ali Pasha, who was not recognized as the governor of Syria, came to Kütahya³⁵ after defeating the Ottoman armies. Ottoman ruler Mahmut II (reigned 1808-1839) had to make an alliance with the Russians on 8 July 1833 to suppress the revolt of M. Ali Pasha. According to this alliance, which was known as the Treaty of Hünkâr İskelesi (Muahedat Mecmuası, 2008), the Russian army would help to the untrained and technologically inferior Ottoman army, and

32 Russian-Turkish War of 1828–1829 was begun in consequence of the Greek Revolution regarding the announcing an autonomous state against the Ottoman Empire. When the empire did not accept this, Russia declared war against the empire in 1828. When the Ottoman army had to withdraw, the Treaty of Adrianople (the Treaty of Edirne) was signed in 1829, between Russia and the Ottoman Empire. Greece won independence from the Ottoman Empire and Serbia achieved autonomy.

33 Edirne is a city in the region of East Thrace in the northwestern of Turkey, close to Turkey's borders with Greece and Bulgaria. Edirne had been the third capital city of the Ottoman Empire from 1363 to 1453.

34 The Peloponnese, known as Morea in the Ottoman era, is a peninsula in southern Greece. It is separated from the central part of the country by Gulf of Corinth and the Isthmus.

35 Kütahya, lying on the Porsuk river, is a province in the Aegean region of Turkey, and 11,889 km² in size.

subsidize the Ottoman treasury (which was having difficulties with repayment). In the case of war with other states except Russia, the Ottoman State would help Russia by closing the straits to all other states. With this change in strategy³⁶, the Egypt issue was now on the agenda as an international topic that was of interest of France, England, and Russia because Egypt and its surroundings was a very important strategic location. France, England, and Italy had desired to be ascendant in North Africa. As a result of the negotiations on the Egypt issue with the European States, the Strait of Istanbul (Bosporus), the Strait of Çanakkale (Dardanelles), which were under control of the Ottoman Empire, gained an international status. Moreover, the privileges given to Russia by the Ottoman Empire in the straits had been removed with the Treaty of Hünkâr İskelesi (1833) (Ayverdi, 2012).

After the Treaty of Hünkâr İskelesi (1833), Ottoman-Russian relations witnessed a peaceful period. The Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca (1774) provided the Russians protection of Orthodox Christians living in the Balkans as vassals of the Ottoman Empire. Using this advantage, the Russian Tsardom had incited the Orthodox people in the Balkans against the Ottomans, and the Ottoman-Russian wars began again in 1853. Britain and France joined the Ottoman Empire in these wars – called the Crimean wars – which continued until 1856. Becoming one of the most important forces among the European states after the Vienna Congress of 1815, Russia suffered a heavy defeat in the Crimean Wars, because the Russian Navy in the Black Sea was quite weak. even though the Russian Ground Army was strong. After Russia was defeated, it had to sign the Treaty of Paris. According to this treaty, the winning countries – namely France, England, and the Ottoman Empire – demanded that Russia abolish the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca, and the terms of that treaty were (Muahedat Mecmuası, 2008) cancelled. The Black Sea had been made neutral and unarmed by making new arrangements concerning the Strait of Istanbul and the Strait of Çanakkale). The patronage of the Russians on the Memleketeyn³⁷ since 1774 (the two cities, Moldavia and Wallachia) was terminated (Kurat, 2011). The Turkish-Russian struggle, which had been continuing with Ottoman defeats for about 150 years, was stopped with the support that the European allies had given to the Ottomans. However, the political, social, and economic concessions given in return for this support caused irreparable consequences for the Ottoman State.

36 Ottoman-Russian relations continued with wars until the Treaty of Hünkâr İskelesi, however, they became military and commercial partners after this agreement.

37 Memleketeyn that means "two countries" in Turkish, was the lands known as Moldavia (today's Romania) and Wallachia in Ottoman period. Until the 1821 Greek Revolution, in which Greeks had been suspended from the administration, Memleketeyn was ruled by Greeks from Fener, also known as Feneriots.

Russia could not get what it wanted from the Balkans and the Caucasus against England and France, which supported the Ottoman Empire, and started to act by using its power with Orthodox people in the Balkans. In 1857, Wallachia and Moldavia were united to form the Romanian state with Russia's efforts. Russia had increased its effectiveness in the Balkans by intervening in the turmoil that started in Herzegovina in 1875, received the support of the community and weakened the Ottoman government thoroughly (Kurat, 2011).

Russia regained the prestige that it had lost in the Balkans and the Caucasus during the Crimea War, and grew stronger; this situation was the reason for a new Russian-Ottoman War (1877-1878), known as the "War of 93". During these wars, which had become the biggest defeats for the Ottoman State in its history, the Russians massacred hundreds of thousands of Muslims, came to close to Istanbul (the capital of Ottoman Empire), and invaded the Balkans (Beydilli, 2008). On the Caucasian front, Kars and Erzurum – which are on the eastern border of the Ottoman Empire – fell to the Russians. With the Treaty of San Stefano (Armaoğlu, 2014) signed between the two states on 3 March 1878, it was acknowledged that the Ottoman Empire had lost all territories in Europe and the Caucasus. However, Britain and Austria, opposed to sole Russian ownership of the Ottoman lands, were not willing to let Russia establish its rule in the Balkans and Central Europe, and they organized the Berlin Congress (13 June-13 July 1878). The states in the Balkans were recognized as independent at this conference (Burçak, 1946).

In 1905, the Russians, defeated by Japan during the Russian-Japanese War, turned their attention back to the Balkans. Balkan countries – namely Albania, Crete, Macedonia, Montenegro, Greece, and Bulgaria – wanted to leave the Ottoman Empire. Russia provided all possible help to the Balkan countries in their desire to leave. This support led to the start of the Ottoman-Balkan Wars (1912-1913). The rebellious Balkan countries entered into their wars of independence against the Ottoman Empire forming Serb-Bulgarian, Bulgarian-Greek, Montenegro-Serbian, and Montenegro-Bulgarian alliances. The Serb-Bulgarian, Bulgarian-Greek, Montenegro-Serbia and Montenegro-Bulgaria alliances, which fought for independence against Ottoman Empire in 1912, achieved great success and defeated the Ottomans. They occupied the west of Thrace³⁸ and all the Balkan lands extending to Edirne, and shared the lands amongst themselves. The Balkan countries, which were separated from the Ottoman Empire and declared their independence, then began fighting, as they could not agree to share the lands that they gained. Soon after these events in the Balkans, the Russians

38 Thrace is an area in southeast Europe, now separates Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey, comprises southeastern Bulgaria, northeastern Greece and the European part of Turkey. It is bordered by the Black Sea to the east, the Aegean Sea to the south and Balkan Mountains to the north.

had another conflict with the Ottoman State over Armenian politics. With a document dated 8 February 1914, two large autonomous Armenian provinces based in Van and Erzurum were founded in Eastern Anatolia under foreign governorate inspectors (Beydilli, 2008).

Turkish-Russian Relations in Soviet Times

When World War I broke out in 1914, the Ottoman State tried to remain impartial, but England and France, which the Ottoman State had wanted to make alliances with, refused to join an alliance with the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman State then began negotiations with Germany for an alliance. While negotiations were ongoing, the German Navy bombed Odessa and Sevastopol on the Black Sea Coast of Russia, and Russia declared war against the Ottoman State on 2 November 1914 (Gürsel, 1968).

The Ottoman Empire fought with Russia only in the Caucasus during the First World War. After the failure of Enver Pasha in the Sarikamis campaign³⁹, the Russians occupied Erzurum, Trabzon, Erzincan, and Mush in 1916. After the February 1917 Revolution in Russia, an armistice was signed between the Ottoman State and Russia in December 1917, which ended the war. With the February Revolution on 23 February 1917, the Romanov family, who ruled Russia, had to hand over power to the Petrograd Soviet under the presidency of Nikolay Chkhaidze, and the Bolshevik leader Vladimir Lenin – who was in exile in Switzerland – returned to Russia on 3 April 1917. While Russia was tackling these revolutions, the Ottoman army under the control of Enver Pasha – which was reinforced by Azerbaijani and Daghestani volunteers – captured Baku in April 1918. Even though Russia had domestic problems, the Ottoman army could not achieve the success they had expected. Thus, the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, a peace treaty signed between the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic and the German Empire, the Austro-Hungarian Kingdom of Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire, was then agreed to. According to the Brest-Litovsk Peace Agreement, Kars, Artvin, Batum, and Ardahan⁴⁰ were left to the Ottoman Empire. However, the Ottoman Empire's allies – Germany, Austria-Hungary and Bulgaria – retreated from World War One by admitting defeat in September 1918. Although the Ottoman Empire had succeeded in Canakkale and the Caucasus, it had to admit defeat as it was left without allies, and signed the Armistice of Mudros with the Entente States (the French Republic, the British Empire and the Russian Empire). The Ottoman Empire fell with this armistice, and Istanbul (Constantinople), the

39 The Battle of Sarikamish (December 22, 1914 - January 17, 1915) was a conflict between the Russian and Ottoman empires during World War I, in Sarikamish as part of the Caucasus Campaign. It resulted in the Russian victory.

40 Kars, Ardahan, and Batum were known as "Elviye-i Selase" in Ottomans, which were three cities in Ottoman lands. Today, Kars and Ardahan are in the northeast region of Turkey, while Batum is in the territory of Georgia.

capital of the Ottoman Empire, was occupied by British, French and Italian forces on 16 March 1920. Against the background of these developments, the members of the last term of the Ottoman Parliament, which was convened in Anatolia, began their national movement for independence by declaring the Misak-ı Milli⁴¹ (National Pact) (Burçak, 1946).

Many negotiations were held between the Bolshevik government and the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (TBMM), which ruled during the War of Independence⁴². Russia was supporting the TBMM and its president Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, even covertly supplying weapons. In return for this support, they tried to promulgate Bolshevik propaganda in Anatolia. While the Russians were promising to support the ongoing national independence war of Turkey, they did not fulfill their commitments; they were also supporting the Greeks who were fighting with Turks.

Russia supported the new Republic of Turkey by contributing to preventing the usage of the Straits by all countries during the discussion on the issue of the Straits in the Treaty of Lausanne, which was signed in Lausanne on 24 July 1923 between Turkey and United Kingdom, France, Italy, Japan, Greece, Romania, Bulgaria, Portugal, Belgium, and Yugoslavia. However, other states did not accept this offer (Gürsel, 1968).⁴³

The Soviet-Georgian War took place between 15 February and 17 March 1921, and the Soviet army occupied and subjugated Georgia by dividing the southern Caucasus into three autonomous regions (Georgian, Azerbaijani, Armenian). In addition to these events, Russian and Turkish delegations held talks in Moscow in March 1921 to determine the borders in the Caucasus region. With the Treaty of Moscow that was signed between the Ottoman Empire and the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic on 16 March 1921, the borders between Turkey, Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan were determined (Miller, 1948).

In the early years, the Soviets adopted policies of good neighborliness, non-aggression, and neutrality to minimize the risks of the formation of new blocs by the European states against

41 Misak-ı Milli (National Pact) is the set of six terms made by the members of the last term of the Ottoman Parliament. The parliament published the terms on 12 February 1920.

42 The Turkish War of Independence (also known as Kurtuluş Savaşı, or İstiklâl Harbi, or Milli Mücadele) was the war in order to protect the unity and territorial integrity of the state after the allies occupied the lands of Ottoman Empire. It was fought between the Turkish National Movement and France on the Southern, Armenia on the Eastern, Greece on the Western front, and the United Kingdom and Italy in Istanbul. The lands of the Ottoman Empire were occupied and partitioned following the Ottomans' defeat in World War I. The Turkish National Movement in Anatolia resulted in the formation of a new Grand National Assembly by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and his colleagues. After the end of the Southern Front, Eastern Front, and the Western Front of the war, the Treaty of Sevres was removed, and the Treaties of Kars and Lausanne were signed. Anatolia and Eastern Thrace were left by the Allies, and the Grand National Assembly of Turkey declared the establishment of a Republic in Turkey on October 29, 1923.

43 For detailed information see: Kolesnikov (2010).

it. The first agreement with the Soviets involving mutual friendship and non-aggression with Turkey was signed in Paris on 17 December 1925. According to this agreement, if one of the two states were attacked, the other would remain impartial; the two sides would not attack each other and also would not join a hostile alliance against each other. However, the Turkish Republic's trade relations with the West in the post-Lausanne period was not well received by the Russians, and they were cautious about the new Turkish state, as they considered it as part of the Western bloc (Armaoğlu, 2014) In the Montreux Convention on the Straits, Russia strongly supported Turkish control over the Straits (the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles), because Russia preferred Turkish control of the Straits rather than the other states (United Kingdom, France, USA, Italy, et cetera) in case of war or peace. Friendly relations between Turkey and Russia continued until World War II (Gürsel, 1968).⁴⁴

Soviet-Turkish relations were revived at the beginning of the World War II, and negotiations to form an alliance between the two countries began. For this purpose, Turkey's Foreign Minister Şükrü Saraçoğlu started to negotiate with Russia's Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov on 21 September 1939. The Soviets, however, surprised Turkey by announcing a non-aggression pact they concluded with Germany. In addition, Molotov presented an offer including the demands of Russia and the arrangement of the Straits regime. The offer was rejected by Saraçoğlu. The rejection of the offer made Stalin angry, and he threatened Saracoğlu, who had not left Russia, by expressing the impossibility of an alliance with Turkey. Turkey and Soviet Russia froze their ties after these events. In order to guarantee the Straits, Turkey signed an alliance agreement with the United Kingdom and France on 19 October 1939 (Gürsel, 1968).

The Soviet Union and Germany did not reach a consensus during the Berlin talks; therefore, Russia desired once again to be allied with Turkey. Turkey, meanwhile, signed a non-aggression pact with Germany on 18 June 1941. Before the war with the Soviet Union, Germany had aimed to secure the Balkan front (Gürsel, 1968).⁴⁵

In the Battle of Stalingrad (23 August 1942 - 2 February 1943)⁴⁶, the allied states, including the Soviet Union, asked Turkey to act against the Germans. At the conferences in Tehran and Cairo in 1943, England and the Soviets decided that Turkey should enter the war against Germany. Turkey, unable to resist the pressure, cut off diplomatic relations with Germany on

44 For detailed information see: Atatürk'ten Soğuk Savaş Dönemine Türk-Rus ilişkileri: Atatürk'ten Soğuk Savaş Dönemine Türk-Rus İlişkileri Çalıştayı, eds. Kamalov (2011).

45 For detailed information see; Karadağ (2008).

46 The Battle of Stalingrad (23 August 1942 – 2 February 1943) was a conflict of World War II in which Germany and its allies fought with the Soviet Union to control the city of Stalingrad in Southern Russia.

2 August 1944. Although Churchill did not agree with Russia's intentions on Kars, Ardahan, and Straits, he did not take up any clear position against Russia. Turkey declared war on Germany and Japan on 23 February 1945 in order to get rid of the threats from Russia and to join the United Nations Conference. Turkey's participation in the United Nations Conference was approved on 15 August 1945. However, requests by Soviet Russia from Turkey were not completed, and Soviet Russia demanded again that it be able to seize and rule Kars and Ardahan by canceling the 1925 Paris Non-Aggression Pact.⁴⁷ Soviet Russia had increased its political efficacy in the Balkans and Central Europe with bilateral agreements signed with Czechoslovakia (1943), Poland (1945), Bulgaria, Hungary, and Romania (1948). This situation became a threat to the homeland and border security of Turkey. In the meantime, the Second World War ended with the atomic bomb that the US had dropped on Japan (Gürsel, 1968).

After the end of World War II, the Soviet Union kept pursuing expansionist policies. At the same time, it sought to dominate Turkey and the Turkish straits. On 7 August 1946, Russia sent a memorandum to Turkey explicitly announcing its ambitions on the Turkish Straits. Ankara strongly condemned the claims through a memorandum resisting the Soviet demands. After that, the Soviets issued a second memorandum on 24 September 1946 on the same issue, which caused the US and Britain to announce that they supported Turkey. This process contributed to Turkey's becoming a member of NATO (on 18 February 1952), which had been founded in 1949 under the leadership of the US as a way to defend Western Europe against the Soviet Union. Before long, Turkey, Yugoslavia, and Greece signed the Balkan Pact against potential Soviet expansionism. In 1953, the USSR declared that they had abandoned their demands on Turkey, which signaled its changing foreign policy.

Turkey-Soviet Russia relations revolved around the issue of Cyprus⁴⁸ in the 1960s. Since the Kremlin thought that a strong unitary Turkish state established in Cyprus could cooperate with NATO, it opposed Turkey's role in the Cyprus issue. Although the Soviets continued to develop their trade relations with Turkey in this period, they maintained their pressure on Turkey regarding the Cyprus issue and its NATO membership. In 1964-1965, high-level talks were held between Turkey and the Soviet Union with the intention of enhancing bilateral relations. Turkey's Foreign Minister Feridun Cemal Erkin (at the end of 1964) and the Prime Minister Suat Hayri Ürgüplü (in 1965) visited the Soviet Union. Soviet Prime Minister Alexei Kosygin visited Turkey between 20-27 December 1966. In the joint declaration issued after

47 It had reinforced its military elements by establishing Warsaw Pact in Warsaw on 14 May 1955.

48 There has been a period of political and violent conflict in Cyprus, also referred to as the Cyprus crisis between the Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots between 1955 and 1964.

Kosygin's visit, it was emphasized that improving political and economic relations between the two countries was central. Suleyman Demirel, the Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey – on the invitation of the USSR – paid official visits to Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, Tashkent, and Baku between 19-29 September 1967. In these negotiations, good neighborliness, trade relations, disarmament, issues regarding the Near and Middle East, the issue of Vietnam, the issue of Cyprus and the security of Europe were discussed. Demirel also met with the president of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union, Nikolai Podgorny, and both of them gave messages of goodwill and friendship (Gençalp, 2014). The President of the Republic of Turkey paid an official visit to the USSR to establish good relations between the two countries on 12-21 November 1969. President Podgorny and Prime Minister Kosygin in Moscow welcomed Cevdet Sunay, the first Turkish president to visit the USSR. Cevdet Sunay stated that bilateral relations between the two countries had been developing rapidly during his talks in Moscow (Armaoğlu, 2014). They also agreed on a peaceful solution to the issue of Cyprus (Gençalp, 2014).

Turkey's Cyprus operation was the issue that led Turkish-Russian relations to worsen in the 1970s. Since 1964, the Russians had expressed on every level that they would not accept that Turkey establish a single state in Cyprus. Turkey landed troops on the island on 20 July 1974, invoking its right as a guarantor. Negotiations regarding the withdrawal of the Turkish army from the island were held in Geneva on 22 July 1974, but no agreement was reached. On 14 August 1974, the Turkish army continued its operations when the negotiations failed. In response to this, NATO did not interfere in Turkey's military operation, and Greece exited from the military wing of NATO on 16 August 1974 (Çakmakçı, 2003). This led the Soviet Union to begin to support Greece against Turkey after the Greeks exited NATO (Armaoğlu, 2014). However, in response to Turkey's Cyprus operation, the US imposed an arms embargo on Turkey in 1975-1978, and Ankara's relations with NATO and the US declined. Therefore, the USSR, in changing its policy, wanted to strengthen the opposite bloc against the US by incorporating a Turkey that is at odds with the US into the Warsaw Pact. Especially after 1975, in accordance with improved relations between Turkey and USSR, the Soviet Union contributed to the strengthening of NGOs and left-wing parties in Turkey by providing financial and logistical support. During these years, the armed groups of leftist organizations were efficient and gained significant power in Turkish political system. Therefore, the military coup that was carried out with the 12 September 1980 Revolution had defined leftist and separatist organizations as the reason for the revolution. With the revolutionary government, Turkey re-established good relations with NATO and the US (Armaoğlu, 2014).

Arab – Israeli relations and the Iran – Iraq Wars in the Middle East between 1980 and 1990 reshaped relations between Turkey and Russia. US military intervention in Iraq (17 January-28 February 1991) re-determined the relations between Turkey and the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union emerged as the most important power supporting the regime of the Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party in this period. Turkey, with the US and other allies within the NATO alliance, sided against the Soviet Union. However, when the Soviet Union suffered economic difficulties and collapsed in 1991, it led to a process that put an end to the bipolar system. Despite Russia's economic hardships, the conflict between the US and Russia over the Middle East has never ended.

Conclusion

Undoubtedly, Russia and Ottoman Empire competed with each other because they were neighboring countries, and they were also part of the history of the world with their socio-cultural life outside of their battles. The Turkish tribes began to flow westward for many reasons – steadily and without interruption – even in the years Before Common Era (BCE). This migration always brought about new dynamism in the political, economic, and cultural lives of the settled Slavs and Germans in the region.

From the 5th Century AD, Eastern and Central European Huns, Bulgarians, Avars, Pecenegs, and Khazars governed the region politically. Slavs, the ancestors of the Russians, were located in the same region, and they were living in the states that are mentioned above as vassals. The administrative experience of the Turkish tribes in this region was crowned with the latest Golden Horde Khanate (1242-1502)⁴⁹, established by Batu Khan in 1242. This administrative transformation should not be considered only as a power transfer from Genghis Khan's sons to the Russians, but also the administration of Eastern Europe, which caused social and cultural change. After this process, the dominant power that substituted for the Muslim Golden Horde Khanate has been Orthodox Russia. Orthodox Christianity and Islam did not struggle in the period of Golden Horde Khanate and other Turkic states; but with Orthodox Russia, the two religions clashed with each other in this region.

This is a short story of the historical process of relations between Russia and the Northern Turks. The Ottoman Turks, who established a powerful state in the second half of the 11th century initially in Iran and then expanded to Anatolia and in the lands extending from the Balkans to Central Europe from the middle of the 15th century, represented the mission of protection of Islam by carrying the caliphate⁵⁰ to Istanbul in the 16th century.

49 For detailed information see: A.Y. Yakubovskiy, "Altın Ordu ve Çöküşü", Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2002, İlyas Kemalöğlu, Altın Orda ve Rusya, Ötüken Yayınları, İstanbul 2015.

50 Caliphate is a political-religious state under the Islamic domination and a successor to the Islamic prophet Muhammad and a leader of the whole Muslim community called as a "caliph".

Having grown and strengthened rapidly from the beginning of the 14th century, the Ottoman Turks established relations with Russia through the Crimean Khans in the early 16th century. Thus Turkish – Russian relations can roughly be divided into three periods. The first period is the 16th-17th century, which can be characterized as the period of Ottoman domination; and we can say that the Crimean Khans were quite active in the relations of this period. The second period is the 18th century, when Turkish-Russian relations continued through building a state of balance. In the following centuries, Russia defeated the Ottoman army and seized all the territory extending to the Black Sea. More importantly, the survival of the Ottoman State was only possible with the help of the Western states. Again, the support provided by Russia for the establishment of the Republic of Turkey clearly shows the fragility of the relations between the two countries. Especially in the 1990s, with the increasing influences of an open society and free market economy in Russia, Ankara and Moscow started to cooperate on many joint projects. The relations that started first with exchanging qualified personnel have turned into significant partnerships over time in various realms, including energy and nuclear technology. The developments have not been painless; they have been especially complex in the last two years. Although the relations are strained occasionally and then restored to normal, the partnerships of these two nations living in a region where new changes take place within hours will no longer be flawless and steady. Rather, Russian – Turkish relations are likely to continue on a delicate course. Ostensibly, more infrastructure and adaptation programs are needed for developing and sustaining the strategic cooperation between Russia and Turkey.

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