

HOW IS TURKEY POSITIONED IN RUSSIAN ANTI-WESTERN POLICIES?

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Abstract:

The article discusses how the Russian Federation, in the context of 'anti-Western' approach and the multipolar world order' seeking, wants to position Turkey. Looking from the Russian Federation to Turkey, Turkey's relations with primarily USA, the West, and especially NATO are one of the most influential variables in the relations between Turkey and the Russian Federation. 'Eurasianist ideocracy', which had significantly marked the foreign policy of the Russian Federation, has evaluated Turkey, due to its NATO membership, as a 'Rimland' or 'coastal zone' country which affiliated to rival Atlanticist bloc. In the article is sought the answer to the question of what are Russia's possible strategies in the scope of the multipolar world order project and in an effort to become a global player, to make Turkey own ally and to mitigate threats can come through Turkey.

Keywords: Russia, Turkey, multipolar world order, anti-westernism, Eurasianism, cooperation, competition.

Introduction

When considering the relationship between Turkey and the Russian Federation from the perspective of the Russian Federation, excluding Turkey's relations with USA, the West, and especially NATO from the scope means eliminating an important variable. Doing so can also lead to incomplete or misleading studies on the relationship between Turkey and Russia. "Eurasian ideocracy", which leaves its own significant mark on the foreign policy of the Russian Federation, perceives Turkey as a "Rimland" or "coastal zone" country depending on the rival Atlanticist bloc, primarily because Turkey is a member of NATO.

Through this understanding, from the point of the Russian Federation, the purpose and effect of bilateral relations between the Russian Federation, which is striving to become a global player, and Turkey are the creation of 'anti-Western' and 'multi-polar world order' stance. However, in the last fifteen years, in addition to the development of bilateral relations, particularly in the fields of economics and energy, the presence of some notable areas of competition cannot be ignored. The lines of transportation of natural gas and oil of the Caspian Sea coastal countries to world markets, the NATO missile shield project, the occupation of Azerbaijani lands by Armenia with clear military and political support of Russia, Central Asian Turkish Republics, the Balkans, the internal-colonial and discriminatory policies being implemented against indigenous Turks (Tatar, Chuvash, Bashkir, Khakas, Buryat, etc.) in the Russian Federation, and so on have created areas of competition and conflicting positions.

The aim of this article is to evaluate how, in the context of its 'anti-Western' approach and 'multi-polar world order' quest, the Russian Federation's foreign policy has positioned Turkey in terms of Russia's strategic interests, while also keeping in mind the strategic interests of Turkey. After briefly providing the historical background of the present relations between the Republic of Turkey and the Russian Federation, the following questions are discussed:

- What are the basic principles of the Russian Federation's foreign policy?
- What are the position and function of the 'anti-Western' approach and quest for a 'multi-polar world order' in the Russian Federation's foreign policy?
- How is Turkey positioned in the 'anti-Western' approach and quest for 'multi-polar world order' of the Russian Federation?

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1. A Brief Historical Background of Bilateral Relations

The history of diplomatic relations between Turkey and the Russian Federation corresponds to a period of 500 years. In the year 1492, Tsar Ivan III of Russia conveyed a written request to send a delegation to Istanbul. This event is considered the starting point of diplomatic relations between the two countries (Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Dışişleri Bakanlığı).

1.1. *The Period of the Ottoman and Russian Empires*

In the 500-year history of bilateral relations, periods of peace and cooperation did not last long. Approximately every thirty years during this period, a war occurred between the two countries, and eight major peace treaties were signed. In the history of bilateral relations, wars, diplomatic struggles, and political issues draw attention. Research on the bilateral relations has focused on political issues and security concerns, rather than the economic, cultural and social dimensions (Büyükkakıncı 2004).

The geographical expansion of the territory of Tsarist Russia, namely from Moscow Khanate to the south and east, included the occupation of lands dominated by various Turkish states—the Ottoman Empire, the Golden Horde Tatarstan, and other Turkish states in Siberia and Central Asia. In fact, according to the famous words of Tsar Peter I (1672-1725), the following conditions are necessary for achieving a powerful Russian state (Grushevskiy): being in constant war, setting at odds and dropping seeds of hostility between rival countries, using the political interests of intermarriage with foreigners, possessing advanced shipping technology and a powerful state administration system, reaching warm seas when expanding the boundaries of Russia, and possessing Istanbul and being in constant war with the Turks. According to Turan (2009), having the Istanbul and Chanakkale straits (Bosphorus and Dardanelles) under control to reach the warm seas was among the fundamental objectives of Russian foreign policy.

That the Russian Tsardom provoked segments of the population with Orthodox faith in the territory of the Ottoman Empire and used the above-mentioned problems to create attrition in the Ottoman Empire should be considered significant in determining the form and content of bilateral relations. In the Russian-Ottoman wars of 1787-1792 and 1877-1878, the Russians' main goal was to break off the areas densely populated by Christians in the Ottoman Empire from Ottoman domination. Putin recently said that this 300-year mission has been accomplished in a way, especially in the context of Armenians (Erevanlive 2011).

Between the years 1665 and 1917, the northern regions of the Black Sea and the Balkans gradually entered the realm of Russian domination, often as a result of losses by the Turks in wars between the Ottoman Turks and Russians. Following periods of war, the Turkish populations in the Balkans have often been expelled to approximately the territory of today's Turkey under various discriminatory policies implemented by the relevant political authorities. Since the beginning of 20th century, the Turks' control in the Balkans has further decreased, and Turks have been forced to flee from the Balkans en masse.

2.1. *The Period of the Republic of Turkey and the Soviet Union: The Period between the Two World Wars*

After World War I, the Russian Empire and Ottoman Empire began to collapse. The foundations of the USSR began to be established in conjunction with the October Revolution of 1917. In 1923, the Republic of Turkey was established as a result of the War of Independence launched in 1919. Dating back to the Second World War, in light of the new conditions during this period, the relations between the two countries were more of the nature of cooperation and solidarity than competition. Given the war of independence against Western forces, it can be said that Moscow's intention to see Turkey as near to Russia was effective. In addition, both countries focused more on internal developments than in participating in international struggles and resisted outside pressures.

However, the short-term conditions of solidarity and cooperation between the two countries simply displaced the areas of competition rooted on cognition and perception from the past, with new contents, formats, and dimensions of competition manifesting. In the 1930s, the legal status of the Turkish Straits as a result of the Treaty of Lausanne was the subject of discussion between the two countries. This discussion was resolved with the possibility of international law for the period within the scope of multilateral negotiations and concluded on the basis of the Montreux Straits Convention in 1936 (Büyükkakıncı 2012: 785). During the Second World War, the resistance of Turkey to enter the war despite the insistence of the allied countries resulted in the reestablishment of its competitive position with Russia.

In March 1945, the Soviet Union (1) made territorial claims for eastern Turkey, (2) requested the right to manage the Straits and (3) sought a reconsideration of the Montreux Convention, abandoning the renewal of the

treaty of friendship, which was signed in 1925 as a symbol of friendly relations (Büyükkakıncı 2012: 786). “In the post-war period, Turkey has sought its security in the Western Alliance. During the Cold War Turkish-Russian relations largely followed by cruise depending on the relations between Russia [USSR] and the Western alliance, especially the alliance leader the United States” (Turan 2009). Towards the end of the Second World War, indigenous Turks within the boundaries of the Soviet Union were also subjected to widespread ethnic cleansing –for example, in 1944, exile projects on Crimean Tatar and Ahıska Turks–, which is one of the reasons for the cooling relations between Turkey and the USSR.

1.3. *Period of the Republic of Turkey and the Soviet Union: the Cold War Era*

In terms of the foreign policy of the Soviet Union, following Stalin's death, during the Khrushchev period, the principle of “live together in peace” seemed to gain traction, with the country partly setting aside its approach of expansionism and political influence and especially its aggressive policies towards Turkey. During the Cold War, although there were some differences of opinion and conflicts in the realm of foreign policy and security, there were also a number of examples of cooperation in economic relations (Büyükkakıncı 2004: 10). In particular, the fact that the industrialization of Turkey benefited from the technology of the Soviet Union, particularly in heavy industries, such as iron casting, aluminum, petroleum refinement, cement, flour, sugar, cotton, and textiles, cannot be ignored.

In Turkey, since the early 1980s, initiatives to reach the Soviet market have gained momentum within the scope of development and growth efforts based on the principles of a neo-liberal economy. In 1986, during Turkish Prime Minister Ozal's visit to Moscow, joint decisions were made on Turkish contractors' participation in projects within the construction sector in the USSR, industrial initiatives to produce products consumed in the USSR markets, and the export of the Soviet natural gas to Turkey. In 1991, during Ozal's second visit to Moscow as President, in the context of expanding bilateral relations, intergovernmental cooperation agreements were signed on the basis of trade, economy, science, technology, the removal of double taxation, good neighborliness, and initiatives to provide integration among the Black Sea coastal countries (Büyükkakıncı 2004: 11).

1.4. *The Period of the Republic of Turkey and the Russian Federation: After the Collapse of the USSR*

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union on 25 December 1991, Russia's global and even regional spheres of influence began to decline significantly as a result of radical changes occurring in the balance of international power relations. By contrast, new opportunities to increase the strength of the influence of Turkey in the space of the former Soviet Union were created. This process, within the framework of its conditions, provided for the reestablishment of relations among the Turkish Republics of Central Asia and the Caucasus, the autonomous Turkish Republics within the borders of the Russian Federation, and the Balkans, which share common cultural elements with Turkey. Relations between these regions were severed from each other for a long time.

Periodically taking into account the process of bilateral relations between Turkey and the Russian Federation, following the fall of the Soviet Union, there were three notable periods with different characteristics:

1. 1992-1999: a period of uncertainty and competition,
2. 2000-2008: a period of searching for opportunity and convergence,
3. 2009 onwards: increasing and distinctive areas of cooperation and competition.

In the process corresponding to the *first period* (1992-1999), attempts to leave the conditions of uncertainty prevailing in the domestic and foreign policies of the Russian Federation and restore the stability were at the forefront of the policies pursued by all effective power centers. With prescriptions including different manifestations of Russian nationalism on the basis of new conditions, the former communist powers, the liberals, and the Eurasianists sought a way out of this difficult situation and competed to put strategies into effect to raise themselves to a superpower position.

During this period, while many fields of social relations were dominated by insecurity, lawlessness, uncertain conditions, and the mafia, competition and the search for a position between Eurasianists and Atlanticists in foreign policy continued. During this process, it is said that the formal decisions often went in the direction of liberal economic principles and Atlanticist tendencies.

The end of bipolar international power relations created the perception that Turkey's geostrategic importance had decreased. To circumvent this process with the least damage to its own interests and evaluate new opportunities as much as possible, Turkey began to develop a foreign policy discourse that was versatile, flexible, and entrepreneurial.

Considering that between 1990 and 2001, Turkey was governed by eleven multi-party coalition governments, which included seven political parties in these coalition governments, the country's political instability and imbalance are obvious. That the power constantly changed hands was one of the major obstacles to the stable execution of foreign policy. Considering that this situation occurred not only under internal dynamics but also under the influence of external dynamics, it seems that talking about Turkey means including it in a circle of complex power relations.

The period of bilateral relations covering 1992-1999 can be referred to as the period of uncertainty and competition. During this period, the events and variables that characterized relations between the two countries were as follows:

1. In the foreign policy understanding of the Russian Federation, Turkey was perceived as a rival country because of Turkey's attempts to increase economic and political influence through its cultural similarities with Central Asia, the Caucasus, the Balkans, the Middle East, and the indigenous Turkish populations in the Russian Federation.
2. Russia supported the PKK, which sought to undermine the territorial integrity of Turkey, and Turkey supported the war of independence of the Chechens against Russia.
3. The *Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe*, which was signed in November 1990 and covered Ukraine, Moldova, Romania, Bulgaria, Greece, Turkey, the southern regions of the Russian Federation, and the Caucasus countries, envisaged to reduce the number of weapons and soldiers deployed in these regions, which included Europe's southern flank, to a certain quota. In a unilateral note to all relevant parties in September 1993, Russia reported that it would not comply with the decision and not reduce its weapons and military presence in the Caucasus in accordance with the established quotas. This situation led to Turkey's reaction.
4. That Russia had military bases in Georgia and Armenia beginning in 1993 and 1994 and then moved the 58th Army to the North Caucasus in June 1995 to protect the common border of Turkey and Armenia with soldiers worried Turkey.
5. The *Wing Agreement*, which came into effect in May 1997 and provided Russia with an increase in the ceiling for military equipment and weapons possession in North Caucasus, was a concern for Turkey.
6. According to *Adjustment Agreement* which was adopted at the OSCE summit in Istanbul in 1999, the member states were seen as having the right to create stand-alone national ceilings, which provided many advantages to the Russian Federation. Turkey's particular sensitivity to this was related to ensuring the sovereignty of the recently independent countries in the South Caucasus, especially Azerbaijan and Georgia.
7. The occupation of Azerbaijani territories by Armenia through Russians' military aid constituted another disagreement between the two countries.
8. The deployment of S-300 missiles produced by Russian martial technology to Southern Cyprus led to tense relations between the two countries. The Greek Cypriot administration's abandoning this demand led to elimination of tension related to the issue.
9. Russia's monopolist tendencies towards the transportation of Caspian oil to world markets constituted an obstacle to the desire of Turkey to be the functional corridor for transferring the region's oil and natural gas energy to world markets.
10. *The Straits and the Marmara Sea Charter*, which came into effect on July 1994 and was abolished in 1998 by the Turkish government, led to the objection of Russia.

Following the resignation of Boris Yeltsin on 31 December 1999, Putin undertook the office of the President in accordance with the Constitution of the Russian Federation. Then, in the years 2000 with 52.9% of the votes and 2004 with more than 71% of the votes, Putin was elected President. The period of governance of Putin and the United Russia has given rise to a new era in the country's domestic and foreign policies.

As Putin and his colleagues came into power, a positive process was undertaken, the mechanisms of which began to repair the damage and uncertainty caused following the collapse of the country's system. In the process corresponding to the *second period* (2000-2008), the central authority was strengthened against local governments, corruption and financial indiscipline were significantly controlled, foreign influences in the energy sector began to decrease, focus turned to the process of economic growth, the armed forces were modernized, Russia's influence on countries formerly in the Soviet Union increased again, the country's influence in the international balance of power increased, and the country began developing strategies to become a global power.

Following the largest economic crisis in the history of the Republic of Turkey in 2001, the tripartite coalition government (DSP, MHP, and ANAP) fell, and early elections took place. The AKP government, which took over the government on 19 November 2002, significantly repaired the damage of the economic crisis; facilitated the entry of foreign capital; opened the way for growth through policies to increase the foreign trade volume and production,

which provided economic stability; put an end to the ongoing coalition governments, which existed since the 1990s, acting as the single ruling party; made political and legal arrangements to meet the demands of the religiously conservatives and minorities; developed a foreign policy strategy based on zero problems with neighbors; and searched for alternative areas of influence and cooperation to become a regional power.

During the period of concern, bilateral relations began to develop on the basis of a more functionalist approach. The basic characteristics of the bilateral relations of the period in question are as follows: promoting mutual trust, avoiding harsh reactions in cases of dispute, evaluating potential opportunities to provide mutual interest, focusing more on projects of cooperation than on issues of disagreement requiring competition, increasing trade between the countries to a record level, and strengthening the approach of not interfering the other's internal affairs.

Although Torbakov (2007: 15) argues that Turkish-Russian relations occur indirectly through the West rather than directly between two countries, it can be said that this indirectness began to decrease through intensifying bilateral relations after the 2000s and an increased focus on bilateral relations. Economic cooperation is shown by many researchers to be the most fundamental reason of rapprochement between the two countries.

Moreover, focusing on the role of the neo-Eurasianism ideology in the Turkish-Russian rapprochement, Laruelle (2008: 3) states that Eurasianism is a Russian ideology that came into being in the 1920s and 30s and reformulated after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The ideology lays down the purpose and mission of Russia in Asia. In the 1990s, there was no direct connection between Turkish Eurasianism and Russian Eurasianism. However, in the 1990s, Turkish Eurasianism criticized the Russian Eurasianism. In the 2000s, Turkish Eurasianism converged towards Russian Eurasianism (Laruelle 2008: 6). However, Torbakov (2007: 19) states that in Turkey, the historical and theoretical foundations of Eurasianism are very weak and compete with neo-Ottomanism.

The processes occurring during the years 2000-2008 fill within a period of seeking the evaluation of opportunities and convergences. In this period, the following events and variables marked the relations between the two countries:

1. Turkey, in Central Asia and the Caucasus, kept track of rational policies based not on being competitive but on being cooperative.
2. Turkey regards the Independence Movement of Chechnya as an internal problem for Russia.
3. During the invasion of Iraq by the US, the memorandum of March 1 seeking Turkey's support was rejected by the Turkish Grand National Assembly.
4. To avoid making the Black Sea a new combat area among global powers, in the five-day war between Russia and Georgia beginning on 8 August 2008, Turkey, on the basis of the Montreux Convention, allowed not with high priority but with low priority the passage of NATO and US ships on request to enter the Black Sea carrying aid to Georgia.
5. As related to Iran's nuclear program, Turkey showed an attitude not of oppression but of preference for diplomacy based on international law.
6. In 2004, serving as President, Putin became Russia's first high-level competent authority to pay an official visit to Turkey since 1966.
7. Russia, following a policy of extreme caution towards Turkey, endeavored to retain priority in disputes on mutual political expectations.
8. Russia's negative attitude towards Turkey has decreased slightly, and there has been less hesitancy to meet some of the expectations of Ankara. Under this approach, there is likely a policy to remove Turkey from the West and link it to the Eurasia Project. In this context, Turkey gains the respect of Russia as it diverges from the West and the United States.
9. Russia, as a result of policies pursued by the United States in the Middle East, has been disturbed by increasing losses in its domain of impact and wants to see nearby Turkey increase its weight.
10. Following September 11, 2001, the US's aggressive, hegemonic and hostile policies have led to a loss of sympathy from the Muslim world. Russia has sought to turn this situation into an opportunity. For Russia, it is of vital importance that Turkey has an influential position in the Islamic world.
11. In terms of the following issues, Russia has not met the expectations of and has disappointed Turkey:
 - 11.1. In the fight against terrorism, Russia has not put the PKK on its list of terrorist organizations and even maintains support for the PKK.
 - 11.2. After voting 'no' on a referendum to the Annan Plan presented in Southern Cyprus, Russia vetoed the call by the UN in the direction of easing the embargo on Northern Cyprus.
 - 11.3. Russia has not provided an effective positive contribution, to the extent that it has capacity, to the process of normalization in Turkey-Armenia relations.
 - 11.4. Russia continues to have a reluctant attitude towards the discharging of the territories of Azerbaijan occupied by Armenia.

- 11.5. Russia carefully watches Central Asia, particularly Beijing, but has perceived Ankara's support for cultural activities negatively (for example, in Russia, negative attitudes towards the schools of Nurcu movement).

In the *third period*, from 2009 to present day, the United Russia Party in Russia came into power for the fourth time in succession, and the Justice and Development Party in Turkey came into power for the third time in succession. These events indicate the solidification of political stability and choice in both countries. In the period in question, the issues of convergence and divergence on various matters and processes of interest to both countries have been made more explicit by the two parties. The parties have consciously tried to bracket factors escalating tension in bilateral relations as much as possible and preferred to emphasize the processes and projects of cooperation.

The ongoing processes since 2009 fall into a period of growing and clarified areas of cooperation and competition. In this period, the following events and variables have marked relations between the two countries:

1. After being the Foreign Affairs Minister of Turkey on 1 May 2009, Ahmet Davutoglu's 'multiaxial' foreign policy approach gained traction.
2. A concept of Russian foreign policy based on the motive of 'multi-polar world' was declared on 12 February 2013.
3. There have been attempts to create the 'perception of trust' as a result of mutual visits conducted at the levels of the President and the Prime Minister by both countries.
4. In economic relations, there have been efforts 'to increase the volume of trade exchange' (the volume of trade exchange which was 1.5-2 billion U.S. dollars in the 1990s, has increased to 38 billion U.S. dollars).
5. There has been 'the removal of visas' between the two countries, and facilities have been provided to increase capacity in the tourism sector.
6. As agreed upon on 13 January 2010, Turkey's first 'nuclear energy' power plant will be made by Russia.
7. Russia has positively met with Turkey to participate as a 'dialogue partner' in SCO.
8. 'The terrorist organization PKK' is still not recognized as a terrorist organization by Russian officials.
9. In the customs of the Russian Federation, there are restrictions imposed on the importation of Turkish goods and the circulation of Turkish transportation vehicles in the territory.
10. Russia does not have a positive perception of the projects delivering the oil and natural gas of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Iran to world markets via Turkey.
11. Russia sees the former Soviet geography as its own 'natural influence domain' and still perceives the fact that Turkey has not developed relations with the countries in the region as threatening. However, there are common cultural ties between Turkey and the countries of the region, and Turkey has expressed with words and actions that its purpose is not to exclude Russia. Cooperation is even possible in the region.
12. Russia does not want Turkey to support 'NATO's expansion policy'.
13. There is a difference of opinion between the two countries regarding 'the events in Syria'.

In addition to the above-mentioned issues, the issues expressed in items 1, 5, 6, and 7 as related to the first period (1992-1999) and items 5 and 7 as related to the second period (2000-2008) remain valid in terms of relations between Turkey and Russia following the collapse of the Soviet Union.

2. The Fundamental Principles of Russian Foreign Policy and Efforts towards a Multipolar World Order in the Last Period

On 12 February 2013, a new foreign policy for the Russian Federation was approved by Russian President Vladimir Putin. This concept emphasizes the *absolute independence* of Russia's foreign policy (Ministerstvo Inostrannykh Del Rossiyskoy Federatsii 2013; Lavrov 2013).

Lavrov (2013) says that this independence arises from the country's geographical size, unique geopolitical position, long historical past, and culture and the identity of the people. The *basic principles* of the foreign policy of the Russian Federation are framed as continuum, pragmatism, openness, and multi-vector orientation without opposition to Russian national interests. The *main objectives* of Russia's international activities are to spur innovation and create the appropriate external conditions for the economy to raise the standards of living. Lavrov (2013) says that the Russian foreign policy is not conservative in its search for international security and aims for further peace, equality, and representation to secure the collective leadership necessary for effective global governance.

Concerned by the renewed conception of foreign policy, today, it can be said that the *main aim* of the Russian Federation is to create *a pole outside the West* to combat the West's (especially the United States) unipolar world sovereignty; however, the polar aim is not directly and completely anti-Western.

Moscow, especially in regard to ultimate targets rather than tactical approaches, believes that there are more commonalities than differences in the views of international players on the decisive problems of our time (Lavrov 2013).

Starting from the understanding that no one could claim to have a monopoly on truth, Lavrov (2013) asserts that Russia is ready for serious dialogue with all parties and that Russia's growing appeal is linked to the vast potential of its 'soft power'.

Lukyanov (2013) states that the focus of recent debates on Russia's foreign policy has been on its 'soft power' and argues that the concept of soft power of Russia is radically different from that of the West. Lukyanov (2013) also states that observers claim Moscow, which still believes in the decisive role of weapons and other traditional elements of power, is losing the battle of information and image.

Lukyanov (2013) states that Russian authorities put forward three objectives in the field of foreign policy: The *first* is to promote Russian culture, the Russian language, and the Russian education system as attractive and competitive; the *second* is to counter the negative image of the foreign media towards the country's policies and the Russian way of life; and the *third* is to create a group of 'Russia's friends' around the world. In other words, Russia plans to revive Soviet-era practices, which had been very effective.

Russia likes its prestige among the former 'third world' countries. There, people still see Russia as a counter-balance –if not a real alternative to the West's cultural and political monopoly. However, this perception of Russia is decreasing for various reasons. First, Russia does not represent a real challenge to the West, as it stubbornly refuses all new models and formulas and protects its own interests and positions at the expense of being a leader. Second, the anti-colonial slogans of the Soviet Union were popular in collapsed empires in the second half of the 20th century, but Russia is now trying to sort out its own post-imperial heritage. The anti-westernism that has developed in various parts of the world does not necessarily turn into greater closeness and adherence to Moscow. Russia still appears to be more of a reactive country than a developmental one (Lukyanov 2013).

In the new foreign policy, the integration of Eurasia has an important place. With the continuous development of the Eurasia integration project—for example, CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States)—Russia has aimed to provide a significant contribution to the creation of new international architecture, building blocks of regional integration. With the strategic objective of creating a single economic and humanitarian space from the Atlantic to the Pacific, Russia has worked to ensure its active participation in the processes of integration in the Asia-Pacific region (Lavrov 2013).

Politolog Sergey Markov asserts that those who are against Eurasian integration are enemies of democracy. Markov states that the successful integration of Eurasia must deal not only with political problems but also with issues such as drug addiction and the declaration of the religion as a foundation of society and culture and that the Eurasian Union would be an appropriate term (Edinaya Rossiya 2012a).

On the basis of Eurasianism, Putin said that one of the most important priorities is strengthening the position of Russia in the world within the framework of Eurasian integration (Edinaya Rossiya 2012b).

In his opening speech to the parliamentary session related to Eurasian Economic Integration on 18 April 2013, Sergey Naryshkin, a member of the United Russia party and Chairman of the Parliament, expressed the following: "... Europe is a part of Eurasia. This means that the European vector of development in historical perspective will be an integral part of the Eurasian integration process" (Edinaya Rossiya 2013).

Moreover, addressing the role of the ideology of neo-Eurasianism in Turkish-Russian rapprochement, Laruelle (2008: 3) states that Eurasianism is a Russian ideology born in the 1920s and 30s and re-formulated after the collapse of the Soviet Union that sets out the mission of Russia in Asia.

In short, the following indicators shows that Russian foreign policy is being executed outside the West (especially the United States) and in an Eurasian context: the prevailing conception in the Russian foreign ministry of foreign policy processed by experts, the opinions and views expressed by senior officials, the comprehensive support of opposition parties, and the support and contributions of various power groups—such as academics and some circles of the capital—across the country.

Russian Eurasianism, one of the main assertions of which is anti-Westernism, is a rooted stance with a long historical background that goes back to Soviet Russia and Tsarist Russia. It seems that Russia, both in the present-day and in the recent past, has been one of the most intense anti-Western countries. Anti-Western discourses, which reflect powers resisting the colonialist West and appear in the various ideological patterns, such as socialism and Eurasianism as hanging from the periodic conditions, appear to a large extent in Russian art and literature and area also reflected in the cognitive and behavioral activities of ordinary citizens.

Russia's anti-westernism can also be interpreted in the balance of power and sharing of wars in international relations. In this context, it can be said that Russia's struggle be a rival to the West may be regarded as one of the basic pillars of its national interest and strategy, which is based on its own historical, geographic, economic, technological, cultural, and political dynamics.

The understanding of Eurasianism is based on the main assumptions (1) that the Russian culture is an original civilization not part of Western culture, rather gathering the experiences of both Eastern and Western culture; (2) that for Russia, Asian resources are more important than Western resources; (3) that the West has a negative impact on Russia, but the East has a positive impact; (4) that Russia stands apart from European liberal-democratic patterns and rejects the West; (5) that Russia adopts nationalist and conservative tendencies; (6) that, rejecting such approaches as 'universal progressive' and 'the world history', Russia puts forward 'the bed of development' and 'geographical determinism'; and (7) that, accepting 'the plurality state of being' supported by a current or potential strategic bloc of Eurasia, Russia stands against the unipolar globalization processes supported by a strategic block of the Atlantic (Dugin 2007: 17, 20, 22, 30, 40-41, 44-45). In this regard, considering the structural characteristics of the current international balances of power, the understanding that Eurasianism that is a functional tool that affects ideological, practical, and objective conditions makes the concept suitable for supporting Russia's efforts to become a global power.

In recent history, the anti-Western position of Russia has manifested itself in the following events: discussions of Iran, Syria, and North Korea problematized by the West; rapprochement with China; the missile shield project by NATO situated in Turkey; and responses in the international arena by Russia in the face of convergence trends to the West for countries of the Caucasus and Central Asia. That many NGOs across the country have been evaluated as a 'foreign agent' and were subject to criminal sanctions and a variety of warnings (Civic Solidarity 2013) can be characterized as an extension of its anti-Western position in domestic politics.

Attractive and Repulsive Characteristics of Turkey in the Strategy of Russia's Multipolar World Order

With the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the full sovereignty of the Russian presence in the areas of Central Asia, the Caucasus, the Baltics, and Eastern Europe dwindled significantly. This loss could not be adopted by the Russian presence's power foci. Understanding that it is not possible to return to being one of the superpowers of a bipolar world, the Russian Federation has begun to follow the strategy of a multipolar world order within the realm of competition for the redistribution of resources in the earth. In this regard, challenges against the Western Bloc, of which Turkey is, to some degree, a member, can be understood within the framework of the protection of power sources in hand and efforts to regain lost power sources.

Parsons (1971: 134) evaluates Russia and the United States as the two countries that basically have European cultural traditions. According to Torbakov (2007: 3), the Turks and the Russians, in the construction of a European identity, were perceived as 'significant others', and both countries' relations with the West remained largely obscure, albeit in different planes. While Turkey does not have strong and intertwined ties with the European—generally Western—in terms of cultural traditions to the extent that Russia does, it is *an ally of the West*; although Russia has strong cultural ties with the West, it has made efforts to be a *global anti-Western and outside-Western power*. At first glance, it may seem like a contradictory situation logically.

However, considering (1) the formation of the two countries' relations in the past together with the factor of territorial proximity, (2) their positions within the equations of international power relations, and (3) their priorities with regard to strategic interests and geopolitical security, there is not a disconnect in the logical nature of the situation. The historical course of growth of the Russian presence distinctly arose from attacks made on the areas and resources under Turkish control in the Ottoman region, the Caucasus, and Central Asia.

Protecting its territorial integrity and ensuring its security, one of the main reasons Turkey joined the Western camp was socialist Russia's territorial demands and threats to take over management of the Turkish Straits. Currently, challenging the unipolar world order and seeking global power, the Russian Federation has taken into account the importance of Turkey's geostrategic and geopolitical position and exhibited positive attitudes toward the development of relations with the country.

The foreign policy of the Russian Federation, which pragmatically approaches the changing balances of power in the field of international relations with the aim of becoming a global power, seems to have engaged the *soft power* variable in the case of Turkey, without completely abandoning the use of brute force when deemed appropriate. Turkey, however, implicitly follows a policy of multipolar world order and exhibits a multi-axis approach to foreign policy based on *soft power*, particularly in the direction of diversifying resources and not being bound to a single block or country.

Despite the many areas of competition in recent years, that economic cooperation has increased between the two countries proves the matter set forth in above. Although a number of interpretations put forward by experts in the field of international relations have addressed 'neo-Ottomanism' and 'Eurasianism' theses as conflicting approaches and strategies, the practical processes occurring in the relations between the two countries shows an opposite trend.

According to Dugin (2012), who is a leading name in the Russian 'Eurasianism' project, "the Eurasian Union to Turkey is more attractive than Europe in every respect". However, the current 'neo-Ottomanism' project and 'Eurasianism'¹ project oppose each other. According to Dugin, 'Neo-Ottomanism' will drag Turkey into a state of confusion and chaos and is not in the best interest of Turkey. Dugin assesses 'the Ergenekon case' in Turkey as an anti-Eurasianism project (Dugin 2013).

Dugin (2010) previously stated the following, associating Russian Eurasianism with Turkey:

In a way virtually unnoticed by outside observers accustomed to accept Turkey as a "pro-Western, eager for the European Union, fully subservient to Washington", the general mood of the Turkish elite has changed qualitatively. When remained outside the hard framework of "cold war", Turkey grasped that it is an Eurasian state. This formula was a savior for the main political forces in Turkey: Eurasianism, which rejects the Western model to be followed closely, was satisfactory for traditionalists (Erbakan and subsequently Erdogan); Eurasianism be interpreted as "tend to the West, while maintaining the national and cultural identity" were attracted to the military circles and the Kemalists. Eurasianism in Turkish society became the ideal worldview tool in unifying the two opposite poles, i.e the poles of the Islamic and laic.

In a similar manner, Avatkov and Ivanova (2012) commented that Turkey's foreign policy ideology regarding the Russian Federation is based on the principles of Euro-atlanticism, good neighborliness, and the assesment of economic opportunities. According to Avatkov and Ivanova, in this context, Turkey's efforts to be effective in the space of the former Soviet Union seem to manifest as a competitor to Russia and the United States, supporting geopolitical pluralism in the relevant region and giving Turkey an effective role in that space. Avatkov (2012b) states that with Davutoglu, the basic principles of Turkey's foreign policy have not changed; rather, Turkey has succeeded by being flexible and cunning.

According to Imanov (2012), in Turkey today, the neo-Ottomanist understanding, which has been in power since November 2002, has grasped that following anti-Russian scenarios and one-way Atlanticist strategy is useless and inadequate for the interests of the state. Seeing internal contradictions from the Atlanticist flow, Turkey has begun to see the necessity of working in multiaxial politics and, in principle, the need for new ways to establish cooperation with Russia.

Emphasizing the common features and interests of Russian and Turkish civilizations, Imanov (2012) attracts attention to a number of plans in bilateral relations, including in the military-political and cultural-humanitarian fields, recently arising from the trade and energy fields. It is not possible to describe this process with pragmatic interests. Today, it alludes to the very planned strategic partnership between the two sides. Imanov states that religion (Orthodoxy and Islam) in the territories of Russia and Turkey is a founding element of life and indicates that throughout history. Furthermore, the powers that created wars and artificially positioned the two countries as opposing forces are the same powers that want to weaken and to exploit Eurasia.

Turkey plays a special role in the Turkish and Muslim worlds. The cultural similarities and sectarian and ethnic kinship to the Caucasus, Central Asia, and Turkey strengthen both the integration of the Eurasian Union and also the bond between Russia and the Islamic world as a whole (Imanov 2012).

Avatkov (2012a) evaluates the course of relations between the two countries in the following way:

According to some experts formerly Russia and Turkey were 'irreconcilable friends'. Today they may not have similar views on some issues. In the 21st century, however, those who collaborate and respect each other's interests win. Considering the dynamics of the last ten years, while the region of Asia is on the rise, the future of the West is questionable. Those who capture the trend will win. Russia and Turkey geopolitically increasingly are close to each other and if we want we can shape the future together.

The capacity of growing economic and trade relations between the two countries affects mutual dependence in the same direction. However, the area of security relations falls outside the scope of this process. Taking steps forward in the area of security in the near future does not seem possible because the area has not provided the conditions for a

¹ The Eurasianism being referred to here is the 'Russian Eurasianism'.

change in perception. Furthermore, mutually reassuring concrete steps will need to be taken because of the structural properties of the area of security.

From the perspective of the political history and the expansionist strategy of Russia, the anti-imperialistic, rescuer, and reconciler image of Russia trying to be created by experts and thinkers, such as Imanov, Dugin, and Avatkov, may not have had a convincing effect. Here, Russian nationalism is consciously denying its oppressive, imperious, and occupying attitudes, which have been implemented throughout the history of Russia in a tangible forms, in general against Turkish presences and in particular against Turkey.

In international relations, the *compulsory condition* of a real strategic partnership and acting together means concrete steps and initiatives that mutually meet concrete interests and requirements and solving problems between the countries but not through incentives or threatening rhetorics. The *sufficient condition* is that the alternative option provides more opportunities than that in hand. In this context, the first question that comes to mind is how, in the process of striving to become a global power, the Federation of Russia will choose to perceive Turkey, which could give assurance to Turkey that Russia can provide more opportunities in all areas than its existing opponent, the Atlanticist pole.

The sum of all of the current internal and external power capacity of Russia incomparably remains weak in the face of the current strategic and structural relations that Turkey continues to experience with Western countries in the realms of finance, commerce, politics, security, and defense. Looking at the numerical data on the current relations between Turkey and the relevant countries, the situation becomes even more pronounced. Therefore, Turkey becoming a satellite state of Russia that breaks with the Atlanticist block, as desired by Russians, especially Russian Eurasianists, is a utopian, unrealistic, imperial expectation. It is an undeniable fact that the end of this type of scenario would be Turkey being swallowed up by Russia, effective suicide—even if historically conflictual relations between the two countries are ignored—such as in the cases of Armenia and Georgia.

Taking into account the variables of historical background and territorial proximity, relations between two countries can be evaluated in the categories of ‘ongoing competition’ and ‘conflict-prone bilateral relations’.

In this respect, ensuring *peace* and *cooperation* between the two countries means achieve a difficult thing and making exceptional circumstances constant (Büyükkıncı 2012: 782-784 –quoted from Small ve Singer).

It can be said that the current point in relations between two countries is a process pursued in the knitted way of ‘the obligation of cooperation’ and ‘supervised competition’. In the context of these conditions, the concrete expectations of Turkey about Russia and the responses provided by Turkey (and vice versa) can be considered processual factors determining the balance of bilateral relations.

The Dynamics and Areas of Convergence and Cooperation

Following the 2000s, in the trade of consumer goods, exchanges between the countries in the sectors of investment and service have increased exponentially. This process has activated potential opportunities between the two countries, changed perceptions in a positive way, opened channels of dialogue channels, and made political relations functional.

In this context, the issues itemized in the following list can be considered the main factors enabling convergence between the two countries:

1. In the context of ‘leadership’, the extraordinary approaches and initiatives positively exhibited by Erdogan and Putin;
2. The multi-axis foreign policy approach of Turkey, which is empowered by Davutoğlu on the basis of neo-Ottomanism;
3. Russia's new foreign policy developed by Putin on the basis of Russian neo-Eurasianism and a multipolar world order;
4. The concentration of geo-economic opportunities, for now maintaining control and setting aside the geopolitical issues that will increase the tension in the bilateral relations;
5. The US’s aggressive maverick behavior from the G.W. Bush period, which has harmed the interests of Turkey and Russia;
6. The degrading and exclusionary attitudes of the EU towards the two countries;
7. The development of bilateral relations, which can be, to some extent, a balance to the imperious attitudes of Western powers against the countries. In this context, according to Aktürk (2013), from a macro level, both countries are opposed to a unipolar world.

According to what was expressed in the report of RSMD (2012: 23), Turkey, one of the big purchasers of Russian military techniques, is an economic and political partner of Russia. In this context, examples include the increase in

the amount of trade between the two countries in 2011 to \$US 36 billion (Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Ekonomi Bakanlığı 2013), the decision to build a Joint Strategic Planning Group and High Level Cooperation Council (Büyükkakıncı 2012: 834), the mutual abolition of visa applications, and expressions like Mikhail Petukhov's to Interfax: "Turkey is a very promising market and a promising partner. I believe that we will reach the total trade volume of \$1 billion including the defense industry. There is also possibility to climb over it" (Akkan 2013).

Turkey is an attractive market for Russia's natural gas, oil and petro-chemical products, nuclear energy technology, defense, iron-steel and other metals, coal and forest products, fertilizer, and rawhides. Likewise, in recent years, Turkey has become a conducive market for Russian investors in the information, tourism and other business sectors. With over \$26 billion provided to Turkey, Russia has become Turkey's largest importer. 65% of Russia's total export volume goes through the Istanbul and Çanakkale Straits (Bosporus and Dardanelles).

According to data from the year 2012, Russia is in sixth place among Turkey's top exporting countries, amounting to \$6,683,100 million (T.C. Başbakanlık Kamu Diplomasisi Koordinatörlüğü), and accounts for more than 60% of Turkey's natural gas imports. In addition, considering that the Akkuyu nuclear power plant project, which has an estimated cost of more than \$20 billion, will be made and managed by Russia, and a number of other variables, the position of Russia in bilateral relations can be considered to more advantageous than that of Turkey.

Increasingly restricting the activities of Gülen schools and related organizations forwarding the understanding of Islam as compatible with the dominant capitalist system, Russia has found that Turkey's model of Islam is a more appropriate model than other radical models of Islam for the Muslim population within its own borders. In addition, by supporting the admittance of the Russian Federation as an observer country to the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, Turkey can contribute to enhancing the interests of Russia before other related countries, particularly in the Middle East. This condition can provide stabilizing effects in favor of Russia in the realm of competition between Russia and the Western powers in related areas. In addition, both countries believe that the subject of Iran's nuclear program should be handled via diplomacy based on international law, not oppression, as discussed by the West.

Within the economic and political sphere, on the one hand, within the scope of the Organization of Black Sea Economic Cooperation, which has the conditional support of Russia,² and Turkey's dialogue partnership with the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, increased cooperation and convergence between both countries coincide with the interests of Russia through Turkey, which is entering the domain of Russia and gradually moving away from the West. On the other hand, the mentioned processes are consistent with Turkey's search for an enrichment of resources and alternative partners outside the West in the international arena. When needed, Turkey's gaining of power in these areas can also provide the possibility for Russia to penetrate and impact countries and organizations through Turkey to the West, including the US.

The Dynamics and Areas of Divergent Relationship and Rivalry

Developments in economic relations and, in some cases, the signing of agreements of a political nature between the two countries do not mean that the causes of entrenched structural problems and the perception of threat have ended or diminished. In particular, it does not mean that Russia is no longer expansionist or does not possess neo-colonial tendencies. In fact, these are pillars of Russia's foreign policy, upon which the country is challenging the unipolar global power of the West, particularly USA, and becoming a global power in its own right, especially on the basis of Russian Eurasianism and the use of soft power. When the variables of 'territorial proximity' and 'historical background' are taken into account, as given under the previous titles, the relationship between the two countries would be more appropriately characterized as in a state of 'ongoing competition' and 'conflict-prone bilateral relations'.

In this context, the issues itemized in the following can be considered the main factors affecting divergence or constant vigilance between the two countries:

1. The arrogant views and expansionist attitudes of the Russian side in ongoing bilateral relations against Turks in general, who are positioned as the 'bad other', and Turkey in particular, which Russia has dealt with in a demanding, imperious, and aggressive nature;
2. Turkey's NATO membership, particularly as it pertains to socialist Russia's territorial claims for eastern Turkey and the right to share in the management of the Istanbul and Çanakkale Straits;
3. The conflictual historical past and territorial proximity;

² Because Turkey is a member of NATO as well as a Turkish and Islamic country, Russia, due to its reservations about the increased influence of Turkey in the mentioned organization, did not react favorably to the idea of full membership or observer membership for Turkey. Only Kazakhstan supported Turkey being an observer member.

4. The ongoing scuffle to penetrate and influence Central Asia, the Middle East, the Caucasus, and the Balkans;
5. The problematic status of ethnic minorities within the other's borders and, from time to time, the discrimination incited against these minorities;
6. The conflicts of interests raised through the interests of the close allies of both countries.

Throughout history, the expansion of lands under Russian political and cultural domination largely occurred through the occupation and invasion of the lands and cultural areas of Turks, including Ottoman areas, the Caucasus, and Central Asia. In the interests of Russia, attempts to get Turkey under the influence of Russian foreign policy have taken the form of ongoing attitudes and behaviors, sometimes with the threat of brute force and sometimes with the encouragement of soft power, during the periods of Tsarist Russia, Socialist Russia, and the Russian Federation.

The means of this approach were as follows: the Russian military force, advanced technology, and economic capacity; Russia playing the role of 'rescuer' of the oppressed; and various organizations implementing policies of cultural imperialism. In addition, the 'bad other' perception of Turks can be found from time to time in Russian literature and cinema, some virtual communication networks, and everyday life (for example, "an uninvited guest is worse than a Tatar").

According to Avatkov and Ivanova (2012), Turkish foreign policy is based on the principles of Euro-Atlanticism, good-neighborliness, and the development of economic ties. The means of Turkish foreign policy are the EU; NATO; the Organization of Black Sea Economic Cooperation; the Turkish International Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA); the International Organization of Turkic Culture (TURKSOY); sects, especially the Nurcu community; the Mavi Marmara; mediation; and peace actions. Its ideological understandings are as follows: to be a bridge between Europe and Asia, panturkism, nationalism, renovated Islam, democracy, and European ideas. Through the projects of Eurasia integration in the post-Soviet area, Russia and Turkey are each other's main competitor. The US is trying to be influential using Turkey's hand in the region. The United States supports geopolitical pluralism in the realm of the former Soviet Union. As a result, the liberal Western powers, especially Turkey, which is a satellite of the US, are being protected in the area.

According to Turan (2009), "Russia is a country which is big, has nuclear power, wide range of the military opportunities, and very ready to use force in the external and internal conflicts. Thus, in spite of good relations with Russia, Turkey must be included in respect to security in the NATO defense system which is anticipated to check Russia. In the same sorts of motives Turkey should support NATO's enlargement, despite of the objections of Russia. Turkey does not have any other type of ability to balance Russia's strategic power."

In Central Asia, Russia wants to protect its sovereignty and have privileged entrance to energy resources. The United States wants to limit Russian dominance and work to increase the power of states in the region. Turkey is working to limit the impact of Russia on energy resources in Central Asia, develop its own relations and increase trade ties with the region. However, Turkey has limited capacity and limited commitments (CSIS 2012: 1-2).

According to Russian and foreign researchers, the Turkish army has always played the role of protecting the Kemalist line in Turkey's domestic and foreign policies and the secular basis of the state. However, the political role of the Turkish army has changed. Turkey's membership in NATO and policies have done more to destabilize the region than bring peace, making it difficult to create positive Turkish-Russian relations. For this reason, it is important for Russia to enter into dialogue with Turkey and avoid military intervention in Syria (Avatkov and Tomilova 2013).

During the period from Tsarist Russia to the Soviet Union, Russia historically supported the anti-Turkish Kurdish separatist movements (including the PKK). In 1999, a turning point occurred when Russia refused to grant asylum to Abdullah Öcalan in Moscow (Aktürk 2013: 3). However, Russia still insists on not recognizing the PKK as a terrorist organization and has preferred to keep Kurdist terrorism in its political arsenal as a tool of oppression against Turkey.

Turkey has been unable to put forward systematic, scheduled, and ongoing effective projects to strengthen its ties with other Turkish countries and the Turkish populations in minority positions, which share a common language, history, and cultural elements both within the boundaries of the Russian Federation and in Central Asia, the Caucasus, and the Balkans. However, in this context, it also cannot be said there have been no situational, scattered, or loose attempts to strengthen ties.

Georgia's membership in NATO is supported by Turkey but is clearly and obviously opposed by Russia. Russia's bases in Armenia and the fact that the Armenia-Turkey border is still protected by the Russian army have drawn Turkey's reaction. The transferring of natural gas and oil from Azerbaijan and other Caspian Sea coast countries through the territories of Georgia and Turkey in the world markets disrupts Russia's monopoly in this area.

The occupation of Azerbaijani territories by Armenia with the help of the Russian military has given rise to competition and opposition between Turkey and Russia.

In addition, Russia's strategic partnerships with Iran and Armenia can be characterized as attempts to create an alliance against Turkey's convergence with the Caucasus and Central Asian countries. When Greece, Southern Cyprus, Syria, China, and, to some extent, India are also added to the mentioned triangle, an undeclared 'Extended Eurasia' project comes to mind.

Conclusion

Turkey's position and value as a determining variable in the foreign policy relations of the Russian Federation, which is trying to create an alternative global power focus against the unipolar global power of the West, is measured and determined to a significant extent by the degrees of compliance between Turkey and the policies implemented under the fundamental interests of the Western camp. Meanwhile Russia, not simply passively observing, has effectively followed the course of development of Turkey's relations with the West at close range.

Russia, in terms of its own interests, has tried to control Turkey's relations with the West with various threatening and encouraging³ tools in hand. In this context, the first priority of the strategy followed by Russia is to prevent the strengthening of relations between Turkey and the West. The second priority is to encourage the weakening of relations between Turkey and the West. The ultimate goal is to involve Turkey in Russia's domain, plucking it from the West. For the purpose of becoming a global player, the planned realization of which is based on the Russian Eurasia project, the orbit of an important satellite player—a rimland country— must be changed.

However, considering the variables that make up the existing power relation equations on a global scale (as much as they are known), it does not seem possible that the needs and expectations of Turkey, which are met via the West, can be met by Russia and its allies. Whether with regard to Russia or the West, the fact is Turkey wants to remain a satellite country. In this context, the value and function of Turkey come to fruition as a device to be used in opposition and competition relations between Russia and the West in accordance with their own interests.

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³ Dugin and Zhirinovskiy, who previously used the anti-Turkishness discourses, also displays 'Turkophile' attitudes and behaviors with changing discourse in recent years. This situation is also reflected to state policy in most cases.

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