

Analysis of Current Relations between NATO and Russia

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Bachelor's thesis
2020



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Ústav krizového řízení

Akademický rok: 2019/2020

ZADÁNÍ BAKALÁŘSKÉ PRÁCE
(projektu, uměleckého díla, uměleckého výkonu)

Jméno a příjmení: **Jan Strnad**
Osobní číslo: **L18403**
Studijní program: **B3909 Procesní inženýrství**
Studijní obor: **Ovládání rizik**
Forma studia: **Prezenční**
Téma práce: **Analýza současných vztahů NATO a Ruska**

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1. HUNTINGTON, Samuel P. Sřet civilizací: boj kultur a proměna světového řádu. Praha: Rybka, 2001. 447 s. ISBN 80-86182-49-5.
2. DRULÁK, Petr. Teorie mezinárodních vztahů. Praha: Portál, 2003. 220 s. ISBN 80-7178-725-6.
3. KEOHANE, Robert O. After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005. 290 s. ISBN 0691122482.

Další odborná literatura dle doporučení vedoucího bakalářské práce.

Vedoucí bakalářské práce: **Mgr. Marek Tomařtik, Ph.D.**
Ústav krizového řízení

Datum zadání bakalářské práce: **1. listopadu 2019**
Termín odevzdání bakalářské práce: **15. května 2020**

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ABSTRAKT

Dynamice mezinárodního prostředí se někteří aktéři nedokáží přizpůsobit, popřípadě jejich chování vykazuje prvky, které často nejsou typické pro jejich vzorce chování a způsobují na mezinárodním poli neočekávané situace a zvraty. Tato práce se zabývá změnou postoje Turecka k Ruské Federaci po anexi Krymského poloostrova a analyzuje význam současného tureckého členství v NATO, jeho další možný vývoj a směřování.

Klíčová slova: NATO, Rusko, Turecko, Krym, spolupráce, vzájemné vztahy

ABSTRACT

Some actors in the international environment cannot keep up with ongoing changes, or their behavior and policy are represented by unusual patterns of behavior, which lead to unexpected situations and twists. This thesis deals with the change of Turkey's approach towards the Russian Federation after the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula. Furthermore, it analyses the importance of current Turkish membership in NATO, and its possible further development and direction.

Keywords: NATO, Russia, Turkey, Crimea, cooperation, mutual relations

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Here I wish to express my sincere thanks to the supervisor of my thesis Mgr. Marek Tomašík Ph.D. for providing guidance and feedback throughout this thesis. Thanks also to Mgr. et Mgr. Kateřina Pitrová Ph.D. for her thoughtful comments and recommendations on this thesis.

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INTRODUCTION

Personal security of every citizen in each country is always partly affected by the state security in an international environment. All states perform their own security policy towards other states or actors. Some states with similar goals, cultures or geographic location form international organizations, which help them reach their goals easily or are more beneficial for them regarding the membership in such an organization. Countries of Europe and North America, called also “The West”, formed such security organization called North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) shortly after World War II (WWII). In that time, the mutual goal of all members was to face The Soviet Union (USSR), which was in the end fulfilled by the dissolution of the USSR.

With no reason for their existence, organizations either dissolve or transform itself into a new form. The latter was the case of NATO. In the post-Cold War era, NATO changed its purpose and some of its members changed their policy. With the Russian annexation of the Crimean Peninsula, mutual relations between NATO and Russia fell back by decades. This crisis showed also unusual changes in the policy of some states, when the most discussed country was Turkey. Despite the fact, that it is one of the oldest NATO members, Turkish policy appeared dramatically different in the comparison to NATO’s official policy. Turkey, being the only Muslim country in NATO for a long time, was repeatedly discussed before. Samuel P. Huntington, especially, made bold statements about Turkish evolvement in the future in his book *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*.

This thesis focuses on Samuel P. Huntington’s statements, using a method of qualitative analysis for analyzing events and statistics in a given time period with the final purpose of providing an answer to the set research question. The analysis is divided into three parts according to particular fields and each part is wrapped up with a partial conclusion. The solution providing an answer to the research question can be found in the conclusion at the end of this thesis.

I. THEORY

1 NATO

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is one of the most important international organizations of the 21st century. In the face of globalization, importance and power of sovereign states are being weakened by the rising economic power of nongovernmental organizations (NGO's) and transnational corporations (TNC's), which has led to the transfer of power to higher organizational units called international organizations. NATO defines itself as a political-military alliance.¹ It can be also referred to as a regional organization, owing to the location of its 29 members in 2019 (for the complete list of members, see Appendix A). Most of them are located in Europe, except three – the United States, Canada and Turkey. The United States and Canada are two of the founding states when Turkey joined the alliance three years later in 1952 and for a long time was the only Muslim country in the alliance. However, with the expansion of NATO and its new members, Turkey is accompanied by Albania since 2009, as a second Muslim member of the alliance. A similar situation was with Greece, as an Orthodox country. Following the case of Turkey – Greece is not the only Orthodox country in NATO anymore, since the entrance of Bulgaria in 2004 and Montenegro in 2017. With the spread of its member base, NATO also spread its own function and activities when compared to its original purpose.

Besides its defense function, Alliance participates in peacemaking and peacekeeping missions in compliance with resolutions of OSCE and the UN. In the course of these missions, cooperation with other international actors is necessary. Most frequent partners are states, which are members of one in four NATO's programs. The first one is the Partnership for peace (PfP). It is the biggest program for partner countries, participant of this program is even Russia from 1994 when became the first member of this program². The other three programs are Mediterranean Dialogue, Istanbul Cooperation Initiative and Global partners (for the complete list of all partner countries, see Appendix B). None of these partner countries has rights equal to member countries. Decision-making in the Alliance is made by consensus of all member countries in the North Atlantic Council (NAC), which is the highest

¹ *NATO handbook: partnership and cooperation* [online]. Brussels: Nato office of information and press, 1992 [cit. 2020-01-11]. ISBN 92-845-0178-4.

² NATO-Russia Relations: The Background. In: *NATO Press Fact Sheets and Backgrounders* [online]. Brussels: Public Diplomacy Division (PDD) – Press & Media Section, 2018, s. 2 [cit. 2020-01-29]. Dostupné z: https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2018_04/20180426_1805-NATO-Russia_en.pdf

agency in NATO. The only agency in NATO having equal rights as NAC is the Nuclear Planning Group, but only in cases connected to nuclear policy. Each member is represented with a permanent mission and common meetings are held on the level of Ambassadors. Regular meetings are also held on the level of Defense Ministers and Foreign Ministers. Summits of heads of member states are also common on a regular basis.

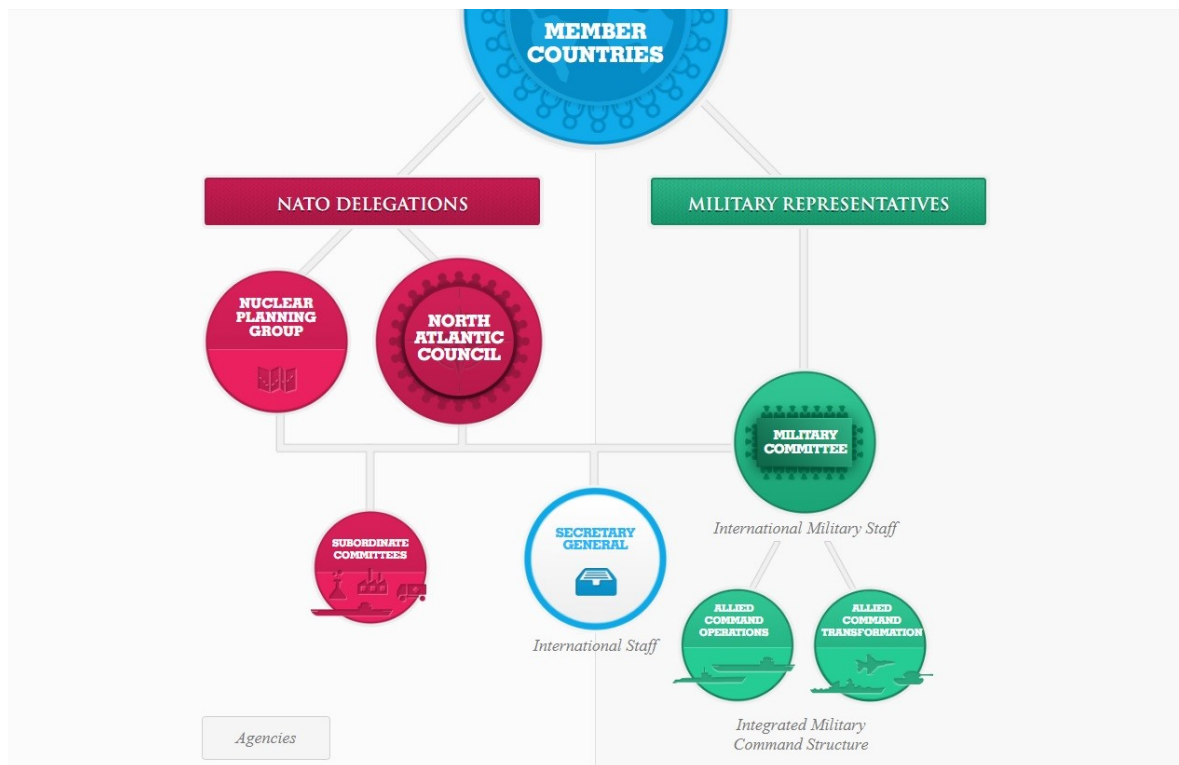


Figure 1 Structure of NATO

1.1 Origins and Development

The formation of NATO is due to the date of the 4th April 1949, when the Washington treaty was signed by founding states – Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the United Kingdom and the United States. The organization itself is the result of the Second World War and events, which followed after its end.

1.1.1 From Yalta Conference to Washington Treaty

Post-war development in Europe was pleasing everybody, which just reflected results from the Yalta Conference, especially The Declaration of Liberated Europe. Despite that, warning voices were louder and louder. Strongest warnings were coming especially from Winston Churchill and the US Embassy in Moscow. Here can be found the first idea of alliance uniting the US, Canada and Europe, but already without countries from Eastern Europe. The whole situation was expressed just in one sentence by the author of this thought, charge d' affairs from US Embassy in Moscow – George F. Kennan: “*Where Russia rules, there ends our world.*”³ Over time, these rumors were made true by concrete actions of the USSR – Soviet pressure on Turkish government because of Turkish Straits, taking advantage of UN mechanism, absence of the USSR in international trade activities, such as the establishment of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

The year of 1947 became turning when the democratic opposition was destroyed in Bulgaria and Romania. A similar situation was in Hungary. In the same year, as a reaction to USSR's policy, the Truman Doctrine was introduced as an American help to Greece and Turkey, countries which were in danger of communism. Afterward was presented so-called the Marshall Plan, which should have helped Europe in post-war reconstruction. During a vote in Europe over acceptance of Marshall Plan became evident division into West-East. All countries in the sphere of influence of the USSR refused the help, the last was Czechoslovakia on the 10th of July in 1947⁴. The last straw was a communistic coup in Czechoslovakia in February of 1948. Shortly after that was signed the Treaty of Brussels, founding the

³ FIDLER, Jiří a Petr MAREŠ. *Dějiny NATO*. Praha: Paseka, 1997. ISBN 80-718-5145-0.

⁴ VESELÝ, Zdeněk. *Mezinárodní vztahy 20. století v datech*. Praha: Epocha, 2003. ISBN 80-863-2814-7.

Western Union. It was only Europe–member alliance consisting of 5 states: the United Kingdom, France, Netherlands, Luxembourg and Belgium. At the same time in the US came public opinion to radical change and President Truman began to negotiate with Western Union about cooperation. The Berlin Crisis was a major factor, which expedited negotiations and united all sides. In consideration of impossibility about joining the US and Canada into the Western Union and also the demand of the US to invite more states, negotiations turned into the way of founding a new alliance. After a series of negotiations, the whole process was concluded with signing already mentioned the Washington Treaty.

1.1.2 Awakening to Reality and Cold War

Signing of the Washington Treaty was considered as a great political achievement and clear signal to USSR. But reality spoke differently, USSR was in that time more powerful than Europe. The Soviet army numbered in 1949 to 6 million soldiers, Soviet Air Force underwent modernization and the first nuclear experiment was made⁵. European countries could not afford to invest great amounts into their defense budgets, so it was again on shoulders of the US to consider helping European countries financially and materially to such an extent. European countries were de facto defenseless against Soviet aggression, but it was once again USSR which helped with their nuclear experiment to scare the US, unite political parties and help to Europe was granted. After this injection, work of the Alliance finally started up, it came to the creation of the North Atlantic Council (NAC) as the most important authority. Subsequently were created other parts of the organization, for example Defense Committee. Mutual disagreements were taken away by the outbroken Korean War, which reminded the danger of communism to everybody. NATO was gradually increasing its combat capability, in that field was important year 1950, when the NAC meeting in London was held. There was introduced the concept of *shield and sword* for the first time. Following that concept, European members should have stopped or at least decelerated potential Soviet attack with conventional weapons while the US Air Force would have undertaken a nuclear attack to eliminate enemy forces. The only problem of this strategy was the imbalance of conventional forces at the borders. One year after the introduction of shield and sword concept had NATO only 15 divisions deployed in the Federal Republic of Germany (known as

⁵ FIDLER, Jiří a Petr MAREŠ. *Dějiny NATO*. Praha: Paseka, 1997. ISBN 80-718-5145-0.

West Germany) compared to 50 divisions of the USSR deployed in Czechoslovakia, Poland and German Democratic Republic (known as East Germany)⁶. Lack of NATO conventional forces was lowered by accepting Greece and Turkey to Alliance in 1952. Especially geographic location of Turkey helped NATO to close the Mediterranean Sea for Soviet troops. Another enlargement followed soon with acceptance of West Germany to Alliance on the 5th May 1955. This situation led to big displeasure of the USSR and came to a head with the creation of the Warsaw Pact on the 14th May 1955.

The first big disagreement among NATO members came to a light during the Suez Crisis when Egypt nationalized international company managing Suez Canal. Israel with support from the UK and France started armed retaliation, whereas the UN Security Council was trying to solve the situation peacefully. The most surprising was the stance of the US to its own allies when the US was strictly against the UK and France. For the first and also last time appeared situation when the US and the USSR voted unanimously in UN Security Council. It is believed that this vote was a reason, why the US stood alone in the Vietnam War.⁷ During the year following the Suez Crisis was made a decision about shield nuclearization, which should have led to bigger power at the expense of personnel numbers. Cuban Missile Crisis left the whole world stunned, but above all it brought two surprises – the US for the first time in history faced immediate missile attack, and despite the support of all NATO members, negotiations were held only on the bilateral way between US and USSR. The big shock came in 1966 from one of the most important members of Alliance – France. Through the mouth of President Charles de Gaulle, France announced leaving all military structures of NATO, but still keeping its membership. This announcement was a result of many years of effort in reaching nuclear and military independence. Afterward, all NATO institutions were moved out of France, mostly to Brussel.

At the same time, following suggestions of the so-called Harmel Doctrine, NATO began with the policy of détente. At first, it did not meet with reaction from the USSR, nevertheless turned into the mainstream of next twenty years. Symbols of this policy were Henry Kissinger and Willy Brandt with his Ostpolitik. An important step in the spirit of détente was signing the Strategic and Limitation Talk bilateral treaty (SALT I) between the US and the USSR, which was shortly after followed with SALT II. Even though SALT II

⁶ FIDLER, Jiří a Petr MAREŠ. *Dějiny NATO*. Praha: Paseka, 1997. ISBN 80-718-5145-0.

⁷ *Ibidem*

was not ratified, its limitations were abided by both sides within the bounds of possibility. While the international situation was improving, internal relationships between NATO members experienced two crises. As first crisis is considered the unwillingness of European countries to help the US in the Middle East conflict, which led to tension between European members and the United States. The second crisis arose between Greece and Turkey over Cyprus, but the whole conflict declined on account of the domestic crisis in Greece. The time of crises was again followed with a period of growth, when Spain joined the Alliance in 1982 and conventional forces of NATO and the USSR in Europe became equal, especially because of a new combat conception of NATO⁸. After Mikhail Gorbachev took over the lead of the USSR, NATO gained dominance especially in the field of propaganda and international situation started to be ruled by NATO's requirements. Combined with economic problems, the USSR had no other choice, than accepting demands of NATO. This whole period was finished with events of 1989 and resulting in the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

1.1.3 Transformation and New Challenges

NATO carried the question of its new purpose on its shoulders, after the reason for its creation and existence fell apart. NATO unequivocally decided to continue in its purpose as a defense alliance and moreover to spread its activities into peacemaking and peacekeeping missions in cooperation with OSCE and the UN. This new activity came to practice sooner, than anyone has expected. Outbroken war in the former Yugoslavia convinced NATO to military intervention, which was considered as necessary. But it was this intervention, which showed different interests of NATO members in the new era. These interests were mostly determined with the religious affiliation of each state⁹. Because of that, the majority of NATO members supported Croatia in the bond of Christianity, whereas Greece as an Orthodox country supported Serbia. Turkey, only Muslim member of the Alliance that time, strongly supported Bosnian Muslims. As anomaly called Samuel P. Huntington role of the US in the whole conflict, which at first supported Croatia, but later moved its support to Bosnian Muslims. Except for the intervention into the Former Yugoslavia, NATO spent the rest of that decade creating and strengthening relations with states of the former Soviet Union

⁸ FIDLER, Jiří a Petr MAREŠ. *Dějiny NATO*. Praha: Paseka, 1997. ISBN 80-718-5145-0.

⁹ HUNTINGTON, Samuel P. *Střet civilizací: boj kultur a proměna světového řádu*. V Praze: Rybka Publishers, 2001. ISBN 80-861-8249-5.

through its program Partnership for Peace. These efforts led to the first big wave of spreading member base when the first three states were accepted into the Alliance – the Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary. One of the biggest milestones followed on the 11th September 2001, when the US were struck by terrorist attacks. In response, NATO for the first time in history activated Article V.

1.2 NATO – Russia Council

NATO – Russia Council was created on the basis of the Roman Declaration from the 28th May 2002. It was an act of confirmation about improving relationships between NATO and Russia, particularly after Russia joined as a first country Partnership for Peace program and signed The Founding Act with NATO in 1997 about reciprocal cooperation. Russia was also the only country, with which NATO created such bilateral mechanism. The structure itself was divided into particular committees according to the field of cooperation (for complete structure see picture no. 2). Meetings were held on the level of Ambassadors from member countries and Russia, but in need was also possible meeting on the level of Foreign Ministers or Defense Ministers. The first time, when the Council's activities were suspended, was after Russian military action in Georgia in 2008. One year later, activities were restored, but with a statement of disagreement with Russia's policy towards Georgia. Due to the Russian annexation of the Crimean Peninsula in 2014, all practical cooperation throughout Council was ended, but the Council itself was left functioning as a place for meetings and discussions with Russia.



Figure 2 NATO - Russia Council before 2014

2 RUSSIA

Russia, full name the Russian Federation, became with its formation on 25. 12. 1991 main successional state of the former USSR. Under the rule of its first democratically elected President Boris Yeltsin, Russia experienced years of decay and chaos¹⁰. Yeltsin's efforts of modernization and change of the Russian system into democratic one met with mixed reactions, which evolved into a blood-suppressed coup. It was for the first time in history, when Russians got to know something, that at least imitated democracy, which just supported Russian identity crisis after dissolution of the USSR¹¹. A kind of relief for Russian difficult situation was caused by the President's love for alcohol and scandals because of that, which were always highly discussed in media. These scandals provoked fears in the eyes of Western politics, because alcohol made Yeltsin more unpredictable than he already was.¹² Despite that, Russia signed a treaty about cooperation with NATO in 1997 and therethrough became the first member of NATO's program PfP with a prospect of creation NATO – Russia Council in the future.

The biggest change, which determined the country's future development, faced Russia on 31. 12. 1999 when President Yeltsin handed over his function to Prime Minister, Vladimir Putin. He was believed to be weak, with little chance of keeping his position. This underestimation led his opponents to see him as just a puppet of former President.¹³ Putin made use of that underestimation and turned it into a huge win in early presidential elections in March following year, which appeared as a big shock to his enemies. Once he was officially elected, he dealt with his opponents and media, forced oligarchs to obey and started series of economic reforms, which made the country closer to the West.¹⁴ As a proof of warmhearted relations between West and Russia after Putin became President can be seen a situation when President Putin was the first foreign politician, who called President Bush after 9/11 attacks

¹⁰ KURFÜRST, Jaroslav. Ruský svět a neoeurasianismus: dvě strany jedné mince. *Mezinárodní vztahy* [online]. 2017, 52(3), 23-46 [cit. 2020-02-11]. Dostupné z: <https://mv.iir.cz/issue/view/125>

¹¹ HUNTINGTON, Samuel P. *Střet civilizací: boj kultur a proměna světového řádu*. V Praze: Rybka Publishers, 2001. ISBN 80-861-8249-5.

¹² *RUSSIA. UK/Russian relations: internal situation; policy towards the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS); part 16*. England: The National Archives, 1995.

¹³ SHEVŤSOVA, Liliia. *Putin's Russia*. Rev. and expanded ed. Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, c2005. ISBN 978-0870032134.

¹⁴ SHEVŤSOVA, Liliia. *Putin's Russia*. Rev. and expanded ed. Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, c2005. ISBN 978-0870032134.

and expressed Russia's support with the sentence "*Americans, we are with you!*"¹⁵ Russia then became US main ally in The War on Terror. In 2002 was established NATO – Russia Council, which was another proof of good relations and privilege for Russia, as the only state outside NATO, with whom was developed cooperation on such level.

Meanwhile, Vladimir Putin continued in strengthening of his power on the domestic scene and was elected for his second term. After that, as his successor was elected Dmitry Medvedev, former Prime Minister, but Putin replaced him in his position. Russian army intervention in Georgia in 2008 caused cooling of relations between Russia and the West, when the function of NATO – Russia Council was stopped and Russia was heavily criticized for its actions. Restoration of relations in the form as they were before Russian intervention came soon in the following year. During his term as a President, Dmitry Medvedev made significant changes in the Russian constitution, which allowed Vladimir Putin to be elected again in presidential function in 2012 and turned Medvedev back to the chair of Prime Minister. After the overthrow of Ukrainian President Victor Yanukovych, Russia refused to validate the new Ukrainian Government and granted asylum to former President Yanukovych. Following the Ukrainian revolution, the Crimean Peninsula was occupied by unmarked Russian forces, and according to results of plebiscite was annexed to the Russian Federation. This unilateral Russian action determined lead of international relations for next years, led to economic sanctions imposed on Russia, suspension of all practical cooperation within the framework of NATO – Russia Council and increase of NATO forces in Europe.

¹⁵ SHEVTSOVA, Liliia. Putin's Russia. Rev. and expanded ed. Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, c2005. ISBN 978-0870032134.

3 TURKEY

Modern Turkish history is dated from 1923 when Mustafa Kemal took charge over Turkey. Later, he accepted surname Atatürk (= The father of Turks). Mustafa Kemal tried to settle the new Turkish identity and turned its back away from the heritage of the Ottoman Empire and Islam. By using dynamic reforms – turning from Arabic script to the Latin alphabet, restriction of the Islamic sphere of influence and its subordination to state and changing the calendar to Gregorian one, tried to change Turkish course towards Europe. This new approach has started to be called *Kemalism*. Six main pillars of this new approach, also known as *Six arrows of Kemalism* are: populism, republicanism, nationalism, laicism, statism and reformism. The symbol of this modernization turned to be westernization¹⁶, despite that country kept neutrality during the Second World War.

After the end of WWII, Turkey had to face pressure from the USSR, because of the Turkish Straits, where the USSR made territorial claims and expressed interest in building a war base there. Top off with that pressure was the deployment of 200 000 Soviet troops along Bulgarian – Turkish border.¹⁷ The whole situation resulted in a different way than USSR could have expected and had a strong impact on bringing Turkey and the US together. Turkey received a huge amount of help through Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan, which started economic growth such needed for a poor country, which Turkey was. After Turkey joined simultaneously with Greece NATO in 1952, relations with western countries got even stronger, which was confirmed with the deployment of nuclear missiles on Turkish territory and establishing Izmir, as a main base of NATO's Mediterranean forces¹⁸. But on the other hand, it had a negative impact on relations with other Muslim countries. Joining NATO with its long-term rival helped both states to improve mutual relations at the bilateral level, until the Cyprus crisis arose. Escalation was averted only because of the internal policy crisis in Greece, but the whole situation led to the creation of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus which has been validated only by Turkey. In 1987 Turkey applied for the accession to European Union when its own membership in NATO saw as a first step into the EU. Even

¹⁶ PIRICKÝ, Gabriel. *Turecko*. Praha: Libri, 2006. Stručná historie států. ISBN 80-727-7323-2.

¹⁷ Ibidem

¹⁸ Ibidem

though Turkey has not been accepted into the EU until these days, which makes it the longest applicant ever.

During the last decade of 20th century Turkey underwent a strong identity crisis. This whole crisis was a result of a combination of several factors. The first main factor was the dissolution of the USSR. USSR and its threat have not existed anymore, which led to a decline of importance in Turkey geographic location¹⁹. As a result, or perhaps because of that decided Turkey to support against–Hussein coalition in the Gulf War. With closing pipeline with Iraq's oil and providing their air bases to US Air Force Turkey declared its important role to the West. But in the eyes of Turkish citizens, the situation seemed different. One of the reasons was ongoing conflict, but more important for Turkey was the continuing blockade of Iraq which had a strong impact on the Turkish economy. With the second reason came NATO itself when Turkish territory was stroke with Iraq's missiles and NATO denied activation of Article V of the Washington Treaty. Even more shocking was for Turkey German statement, which was one of the strongest voices denying activation, despite the fact, that Germany was seen as one of the strongest partners of Turkey²⁰. After that arose in Turkey question, if it can rely on its allies in case of an attack from other Islamic countries.

With the dissolution of the USSR, many new states were created, but Turkey turned its interest on 4 Turkish speaking countries: Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. Turkey has dreamed of the creation of so-called *Turkish pact* which of course would be led by Turkey. Because of that, Turkey made an effort to economically help these countries and gain influence in that area. Unfortunately, due to Turkish limited economic resources and Russian power and impact, all four states turned back to Moscow. The shift with application to the EU was getting more complicated rather than improving when the official problem was believed to be human rights. In contrary to official reasons published by the European Union, President Özal expressed opinion, that it has more to do with cultural differences than human rights.²¹ All these factors caused that Turkey has turned back to Islam, religion abandoned in the era of Atatürk. This change led to the army's dissatisfaction, which

¹⁹ HUNTINGTON, Samuel P. *Sřet civilizací: boj kultur a proměna světového řádu*. V Praze: Rybka Publishers, 2001. ISBN 80-861-8249-5.

²⁰ Ibidem

²¹ LAÇINER, Sedat. TURGUT ÖZAL PERIOD IN TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY: ÖZALISM. In: *USAK Yearbook* [online]. Turkey: International Strategic Research Organization, 2009, s. 153-205 [cit. 2020-02-03]. ISSN 1308-0334.

was keeping Kemalist principles for decades. The solution to get out from this situation turned to be in the election of formal Istanbul mayor Recep Tayyip Erdoğan as a Prime Minister. He was able to connect Islam with pro-European policy in his election campaign and because Turkish citizens were tired of old political matadors²², without any problems turned his candidacy into success. As a Prime Minister, Erdoğan started series of successful economic reforms, whose results felt Turkey as a state, but also individual Turkish citizens. It was considered as a significant success when accession negotiations with the EU had started in 2005. Since the Customs Union agreement that had covered only industrial and processed agricultural products in 1996 was that clear signal of getting closer to the West.

Step, which has helped Erdoğan in dealing with later demonstrations and political crises, was jailing his opponents and critics by use of fabricated political processes²³. These purges involved also soldiers and commanders, which has occurred to weaken army power. Since the death of Atatürk, the army was keeping principals of Kemalism and when the army considered appropriate, performed military coup and after that give the power back to civilian institutions. Erdoğan with his steps had weakened the power of the army and consolidated his own. Combination with economic success led to his re-election, despite warning signals from army commanders. After his re-election, Erdoğan continued in the consolidation of his power and influence.

²² PIRICKÝ, Gabriel. *Turecko*. Praha: Libri, 2006. Stručná historie států. ISBN 80-727-7323-2.

²³ ZENKNER, P. Analytici o situaci v Turecku. *Mezinárodní politika* [online]. 2013 [cit. 2020-02-03]. Dostupné z: <https://www.iir.cz/article/anketa-o-situaci-v-turecku>

4 RESEARCH QUESTION AND STARTING POINTS FOR PRACTICAL PART

“Turkey is, however, likely to remain in NATO unless the Welfare Party scores a resounding electoral victory or Turkey otherwise consciously rejects its Ataturk heritage and redefines itself as a leader of Islam. This is conceivable and might be desirable for Turkey but also is unlikely in the near future. Whatever its role in NATO, Turkey will increasingly pursue its own distinctive interests with respect to the Balkans, the Arab world, and Central Asia.”²⁴

This prediction was made by Samuel P. Huntington in his book *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* in 1996. Can his prediction be seen fulfilled or the situation is diagonally different after 23 years? Does Turkey still play the role of NATO's Eastern shield against Russia or should Western countries be worried about the alliance with Turkey? In the age of globalization, when barriers are diminished, power is given to higher organizational units and differences between rich and poor are becoming more evident than used to be, confidence in your allies is crucial. After the Russian annexation of the Crimean Peninsula, NATO's policy towards Russia underwent major changes, such as the rise of NATO's forces in Europe or the reduction of NATO – Russia Council functionality. Despite Turkish membership in NATO and unity in the alliance's policy towards the Russian Federation, after the election of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan as President of Turkey, obvious situations arose when Turkish policy was questioned. In the view of the fact that Islam has a rising impact on the Turkish policy, also its foreign policy is facing changes, when we can see Turkish attempts of becoming regional hegemon and sometimes being condemned for that from its own allies in NATO. During these actions, Turkey often comes across Russian intentions in this region, even that Russia usually participates only as a secondary actor. It can be said that Turkey is being confronted with Russia more often than other NATO members. Nevertheless, it is possible to notice comradely relations at the bilateral level between Turkey and Russia, to the dislike of other NATO members. Therefore, it is applicable to ask a question: *Is it convenient for NATO to keep Turkey as its member nowadays or is Turkish membership a burden for the Alliance?*

²⁴ HUNTINGTON, Samuel P. *Střet civilizací: boj kultur a proměna světového řádu*. V Praze: Rybka Publishers, 2001. ISBN 80-861-8249-5.

Aim of practical part is to find answer to this question by using qualitative analysis in following fields: the importance of Turkish army for NATO, current importance of Turkish geographic location and bilateral relations between Turkey and the Russian Federation. Given the fact of impact, which have actions from past years, all fields are analyzed in the period from the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula to 31. 12. 2019. The final result is the unification of all three partial analyses conducted in three given fields with answer to set research question.

II. ANALYSIS

5 IMPORTANCE OF TURKISH ARMY FOR NATO

5.1 Turkish military personnel and equipment

As an Eastern shield of the Alliance, Turkey had to keep high numbers of soldiers, not only because of danger from the former USSR, but also to face other Muslim countries. In combination with the Turkish big area, the big army is necessary. All of that has been supported by the army's importance in Turkish policy, even though restriction of its power by current President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. Turkey does not dispose of a nuclear arsenal, thus tries to compensate with conventional forces. This can be done only in two ways – high numbers of soldiers and modern equipment. For Turkey is easy keeping numbers high, because of its population, which reaches 82 319 724²⁵ (in 2018) people and high natality, which is decreasing in total numbers, but reaches higher values than European countries. Turkey's demographic curve is copying the European one with delay, so we can expect population stability in the near future, whereas there will be still enough men for the army. This all are reasons, why Turkey has the second highest numbers of soldiers in NATO, after the US. In 2014, when the Crimean Peninsula crisis has begun, Turkey employed 426 600 soldiers, however in the next two years numbers fell throughout 384 800 in 2015 to 359 300 in 2016. Since then, numbers of soldiers are still rising back to above 400 000, respectively 416 700 in 2017, 444 300 in 2018 and with little fall to 435 500 in 2019 as can be seen in Figure no. 3.

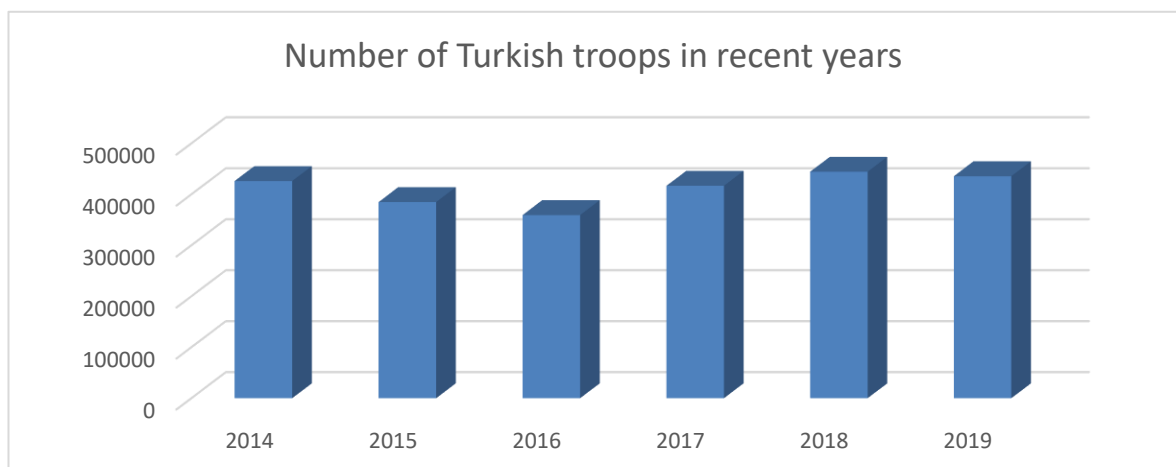


Figure 3 Number of Turkish troops in recent years

²⁵ Total Population - Turkey. *The World Bank* [online]. The World Bank Group, ©2019 [cit. 2020-05-18].
Dostupné z: https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL?locations=TR&most_recent_year_desc=true

However, a much bigger difference is obvious when only European troops are analyzed, excluding US and Canadian troops. In the conclusion, Turkish troops account for almost a quarter of all European troops, which makes the Turkish army the biggest in Europe in terms of soldiers, as is illustrated in Figure no. 5.

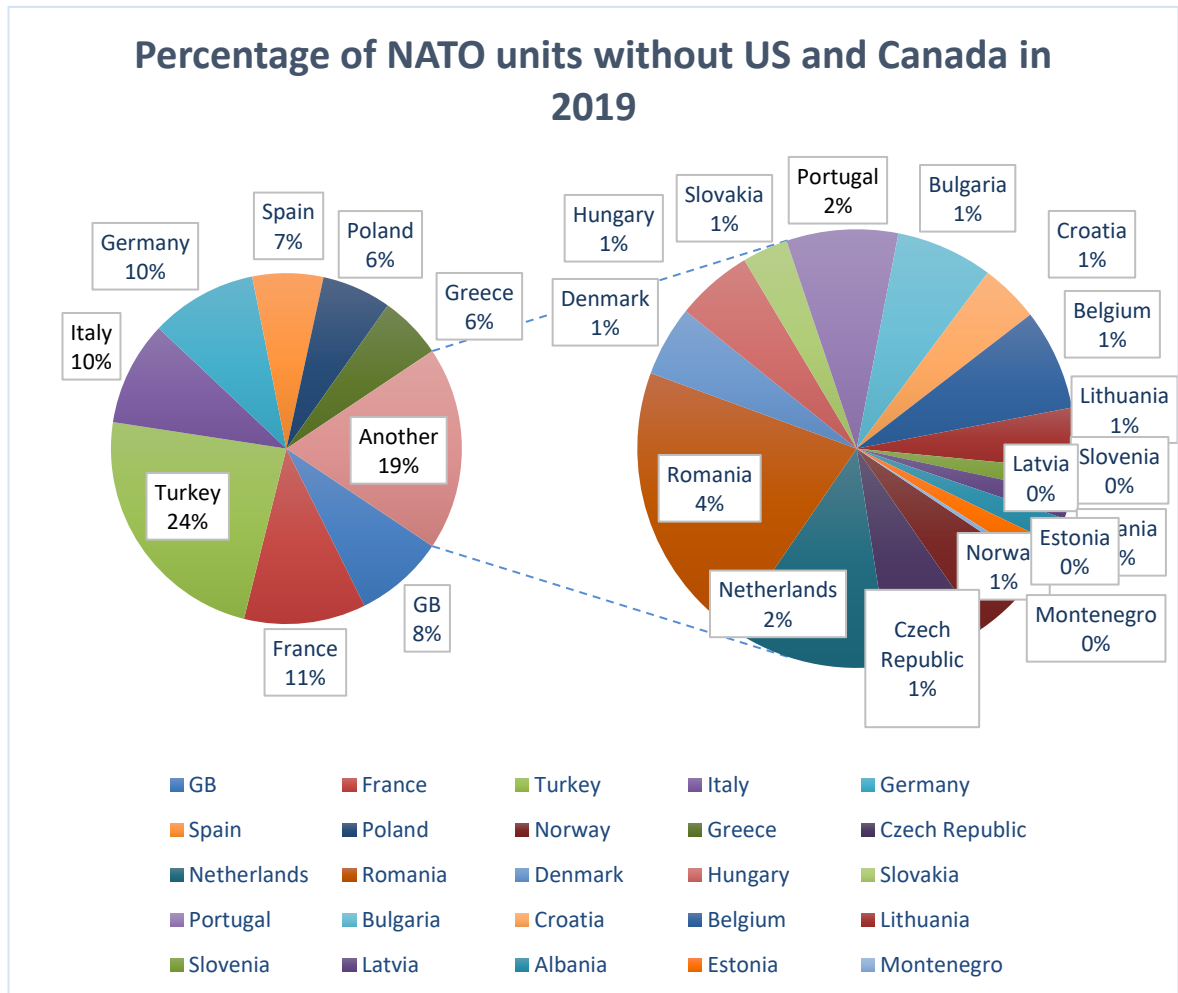


Figure 5 Percentage of NATO troops without US and Canada

Turkish dominance is not only in the terms of men, but Turkey reaches the highest numbers also in capacities of equipment while analyzing only European members of NATO. The Turkish aircraft strength comprises of 206 fighters, 80 transport airplanes, 276 trainers, 18 special – mission aircrafts and 497 helicopters and thus, is the second highest within the Europe after France. When focused on tanks, Turkey occupies the first place among European countries with 2 622 pieces of technique. Same results are in other equipment categories: 8 777 armored vehicles, 1278 pieces of self – propelled artillery, 1260 pieces of towed artillery and 438 rocket projectors. Except the US, Turkey has dominance in numbers of all

land forces in NATO. Because of its coastline on the Black Sea, Aegean Sea and the Mediterranean Sea, Turkey owns the NAVY fleet, which consists of 16 frigates, 10 corvettes, 12 submarines, 35 patrol ships and 11 mine warfare. Even it does not make Turkey the second biggest owner of the NAVY fleet as in other equipment categories, in the perception of other NATO members stands Turkey still high. Only three NATO members stand above Turkey in NAVY numbers – already mentioned the US as first, Italy on the second place and France on the third.

Despite the fact, that Turkey has the biggest army in Europe in terms of men, biggest capacities of land forces, second biggest air fleet and fourth biggest NAVY, Turkey does not own nuclear weapons, while only three other NATO members have them – the US, the UK and France. This can be one of the factors, why is Turkey considered as only fourth in military strength among NATO countries. Other factors can be training and abilities of its soldiers, modernity and reliability of its equipment, but also the specific role of army in the Turkish political system. The fact is, that Turkey is evaluated on the fourth place with a score of 0,2098 (0,0000 means „perfect army,„) in PwrIndx rating²⁶ (Global Fire Power rank), which means that Turkey has the fourth most powerful army in NATO. The final rating is a result of 50+ factors taken into a formula with a concrete number for each evaluated country. Following this rating, 3 NATO members are above Turkey in PwrIndx rating, despite the fact that two of them have smaller armies. On the third place is the United Kingdom with figure 0,1717²⁷. Second place is occupied by France with figure 0,1702²⁸. These two countries have smaller armies than Turkey, but both own nuclear weapons and their armies are considered much modern than the Turkish one. First place belongs to the US with 0,0606 rank²⁹, which means its army is not only most powerful in NATO structures, but also in the entire world.

²⁶ 2020 Military Strength Ranking. In: *Global Firepower* [online]. Global Firepower, ©2020 [cit. 2020-05-18]. Dostupné z: <https://www.globalfirepower.com/countries-listing.asp>

²⁷ Ibidem

²⁸ Ibidem

²⁹ Ibidem

5.2 Turkish defense expenditure

Despite Turkish military personnel and military capacities and its rating as a state with the fourth strongest army in NATO, when focused on defense expenditure as a share of GDP (gross domestic product) based on 2015 prices and exchange rates, Turkey occupies tenth position in NATO with an estimated value of 1,89 % of GDP given to defense expenditure in 2019³⁰. But concrete estimated amount of money is 18 000 000 000 US dollars, which places Turkey on the sixth position among NATO members³¹.

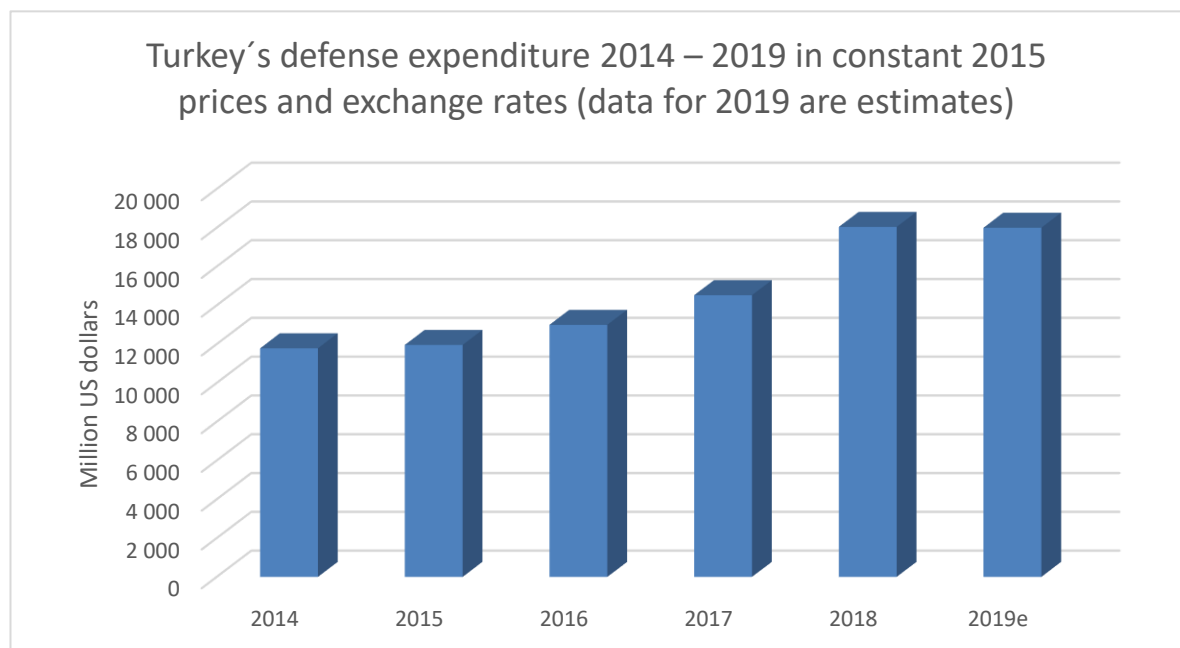


Figure 6 Turkey's defense expenditure 2014 – 2019

If Turkey follows current trend, we can expect further growth of defense expenditure in the future, but only to the level, which is allowed by the Turkish economy. It is not likely to expect Turkey to reach similar amounts, as western countries like France (47 771 000 US dollars, estimated for 2019)³² or United Kingdom (65 944 000 US dollars, estimated for 2019)³³ because it would cause a collapse of its economy. Also, it is less likely that Turkey will experience such economic growth, which would allow Turkey to radically increase its

³⁰ *Defence Expenditure of NATO Countries (2013-2019)* [online]. Brussels: North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, 2019 [cit. 2020-05-18]. Dostupné z: www.nato.int

³¹ Ibidem

³² Ibidem

³³ Ibidem

defense expenditure. Facing new global problems – global warming, droughts and migration, Turkey will not be able to keep a regular increase of its defense expenditure. This will lead to a fixed budget and in case that Turkey will struggle with dealing with already mentioned global problems, money can be taken from defense to other departments.

Even though Turkey does not meet NATO's requirements with its 1,89 % share of GDP dedicated to defense (it should be at least a 2 % share of GDP according to the Washington Treaty), it meets criteria related to spending at least 20 % share of defense expenditure on the equipment. For 2019 is estimated 38,6 %³⁴, which places Turkey on the fourth place among all NATO countries. This high share can be seen as a Turkish effort to modernize its army and a possible solution to a problem with future defense budgets. Nowadays, Turkey has the second biggest army in terms of military personnel and number of equipment. But, as mentioned above, when compared to other Western armies, personnel is often untrained and equipment is outdated. Modern armies rely more and more on equipment, rather than on numbers of soldiers. In the case of Turkey, when quality is replaced by quantity, a future drop in defense budget can cause problems with personnel and also with equipment. If Turkey is successful in the modernization of its equipment, it will not be necessary to depend on personnel numbers, but also the strength of its army will rise.

5.3 Partial conclusion

Turkey dominates among other NATO members in terms of men, also in most categories of equipment. Those soldiers and pieces of equipment are located mostly across Turkey, which is the most Eastern country of the Alliance. In the case of Russian aggression towards Europe, Turkey would be aside from the main attack, which means a long time until support would be delivered to its allies in Europe. If Russia would attack Turkey, it would be a naval attack from the Black Sea or land attack from Georgia. In both cases, Turkey would not be able to face the Russian attack for a long time and the question is if European countries would also be able to deliver support in time. Even though Turkish army is considered as quantitative rather than qualitative, in the current situation is it advantageous for NATO -

³⁴ *Defence Expenditure of NATO Countries (2013-2019)* [online]. Brussels: North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, 2019 [cit. 2020-05-18]. Dostupné z: www.nato.int

Turkey can provide high numbers of soldiers and technique whereas other countries can provide money, technology, training and experience. Combination of these two approaches results in a great, but also modern force. In the view of continuously rising defense expenditures, especially equipment expenditures, we can live to see the modern Turkish army, when priority will be given to quality, not quantity. How much modern will the Turkish army become is conditioned by the economic growth - unless Turkish economy experiences a rapid economic growth, efforts to modernize its army will be idle.

6 CURRENT IMPORTANCE OF TURKISH GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

Turkey is often called as “*a bridge between Europe and Asia*”³⁵. From Troy through the Ottoman Empire to modern Turkey, geographical location has always been crucial. Nowadays, Turkey shares its Northwestern border with Bulgaria and Greece, both are Orthodox countries and its allies. Especially the border with Bulgaria had played a crucial role in Turkey’s accession to NATO when it was the place where Soviet troops were placed to exert pressure on Turkey because of Turkish Straits. In the East, Turkey borders with Georgia and Armenia – both are considered as states in the Russian sphere of influence, even though Georgia is a member of NATO’s program PfP and NATO claims that relations will get even better in the future³⁶. Last Turkish eastern neighbor is Iran, who has no strong bonds with Russia, but stands against NATO and West in principle. The Southeastern border is shared with Iraq, but the longer part is shared with Syria.

After the start of the Syrian civil war, this border has become for Turkey more important than others for many reasons. Syrian civil war forced many Syrians to flee and their way led over Turkish–Syrian border. In addition to that, North Syria is home for Kurds, the biggest minority which lives also in Turkey and so-called Kurdish question is a very sensitive topic in Turkey. Situation in Syria led to the creation of many Kurdish militias, when the biggest of them is People’s Protection Units (Y. P. G.). They have fought against the Islamic State, but Turkey still considers them as a danger. Except Y. P. G., other militias and terrorist groups have been presented in North Syria, besides Syrian troops. All of that resulted in the deployment of Turkish troops near this border, which was only the foundation for Turkish intervention in Syria. Conflict in Syria has turned Turkish sight from North to South and it is less likely to expect that it would change unless conflict in Syria ends. North, South and Southwestern borders are formed by the coast.

³⁵ HUNTINGTON, Samuel P. *Střet civilizací: boj kultur a proměna světového řádu*. V Praze: Rybka Publishers, 2001. ISBN 80-861-8249-5.

³⁶ Relations with Georgia. *North Atlantic Treaty Organization* [online]. Brussels: NATO, 2019 [cit. 2020-05-18]. Dostupné z: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_38988.htm

6.1 Turkish Straits

In relation to Russia, the Northern coast is the most important, whereas it is washed by the Black Sea, where the Russian Black Sea Fleet operates. Its main base is located in Sevastopol, on the Crimean Peninsula. Although the Turkish North coast could be an easy target for Russian NAVY, the most important point is located in the Western part of that coast - Dardanelles and Bosphorus – the Turkish Straits, which connect the Black Sea with the Aegean Sea. Between them is located a small sea called the Sea of Marmara. Bosphorus goes through Istanbul and forms the natural border between Europe and Asia. Both Straits are without a toll, but Turkey has the right to restrict passage to non-Black Sea States warships. Except the strategic importance because of the Russian Black Sea Fleet, the Straits are a crucial passage for Russian tankers with oil. Despite its importance, both Straits are not heavily military protected as could be expected.

It is possible, in case of the conflict with Russia, to ban Russian ships from entering Straits and in case of Russian attack to defend Straits easily, unless Russians would take over the land from at least one side of Straits. If Turkey can defend its coast (especially Istanbul) and prevent Russian troops from landing, then would be able to defend Bosphorus. But even if Bosphorus would fall to Russian hands, there will be still Sea of Marmara and Dardanelles. Dardanelles could be defended with the help of the Greece fleet, but the same as with Bosphorus – the key to defend Dardanelles is the land, where equipment would be deployed. Despite Dardanelles length and shape, it is a tough question, for how long would be Turkey able (even with help from the Greece fleet) to hold Dardanelles. Contrary to Bosphorus, attack on Dardanelles would be a combination of naval and land forces from the beginning, which could lead to the need of forces differentiation. Also, for the defense of the Strait, defending troops would be concentrated in small areas along Dardanelles, which would make them easy targets for bombing or mortar fire. The danger could come from not only the land, but also from the Sea of Marmara, because it is big enough for ship maneuvers. Problematic could be also seen entering the Strait for Turkish/Greek ships to provide support for land troops or with a goal of destroying Russian ships. Because of the width of Dardanelles, it would be less likely for those ships to maneuver and ships would be easy targets for Russian forces. With all those problems, the most strategic point can be seen still Istanbul. The urban development means great positions and hideouts for Turkish troops, from which they could defend Bosphorus easily against attacking ships, when they could only bombard the city from the Black Sea, but because of the size of Istanbul, it would make no such harm as in case of

the same situation on Dardanelles. Also, the defense of the city against land attack would be easier for Turkish troops, because urban combat is different from open-field operation and the number of soldiers needed for defense is smaller. Another important factor is, that city lies on both banks of Bosphorus, which means that Russian would need to take over both sides of the city, because Strait could be defended effectively even from only one side.

The USSR had known the importance of Turkish Straits and pressure expressed on Turkey only confirmed that. The importance of those points remained same until these days but can even rise if a conflict between NATO and Russia would spread. In that case, NATO could close Turkish Straits and Strait of Gibraltar for Russian ships, which could almost close Mediterranean Sea (it is a question, if Egypt would close Suez Canal for Russian ships, but even if not so, it would be easy to block Suez Canal for Russian ships). Mediterranean Sea forms a long south border of NATO and if NATO had to face an attack from the Mediterranean Sea, it would need to deploy a large amount of personnel and equipment along all the length of the coast, which would certainly weaken other defense points across Europe.

6.2 NATO bases in Turkey

Immediately after Turkey entered NATO in 1952, one of its biggest cities – Izmir, became the capital base for NATO's Mediterranean forces. These days, in Izmir resides Allied Land Command Headquarters, which is one of three single-service basis of that type. All three bases support the Supreme Allied Commander Europe³⁷, who is the head of all NATO troops deployed in Europe. Except for Allied Land Command Headquarters, there are two more bases in Turkey – the first one is airbase in Konya. Its main purpose is to serve as a forward operation airbase for NATO's surveillance aircrafts (AWACS), which were important in fighting against ISIL. The main base for AWACS is located in Germany, whereas similar forward airbases as that in Konya are placed in Greece, Italy and Norway. These forward bases are always located on national air bases. The most Eastern NATO's base is forward-based radar in Kürecik which was provided by the US in 2012 but serves under NATO command. The reason for radar placement has been the rising danger of missile attacks. These 3 bases are main parts of NATO's support in Turkey, but except them, there are located also

³⁷ General Tod D. Wolters since May 2019

other systems and centers. When the civil war in Syria spread out, NATO decided to deploy defensive missile systems in two points close to the border with Syria – Adana and Kahramanmaras. In 2015, NATO decided to continue in its support because of non – ending conflict in Syria. Another NATO activity in Turkey is based in Ankara, where is located Defense Against Terrorism Centre of Excellence. As the name suggests, the concern of this center is to educate personnel in counter–terrorism. Ankara’s center is one of 25 centers located across NATO countries and each center deals with different field of interest. Last NATO presence in Turkey can be found in Istanbul, where resides one of nine NATO’s Rapid Deployable Corps. Each Corp is capable of commanding up to 60 000 troops and has to be prepared for deployment of first troops within 10 days.

US and Nato presence in Turkey

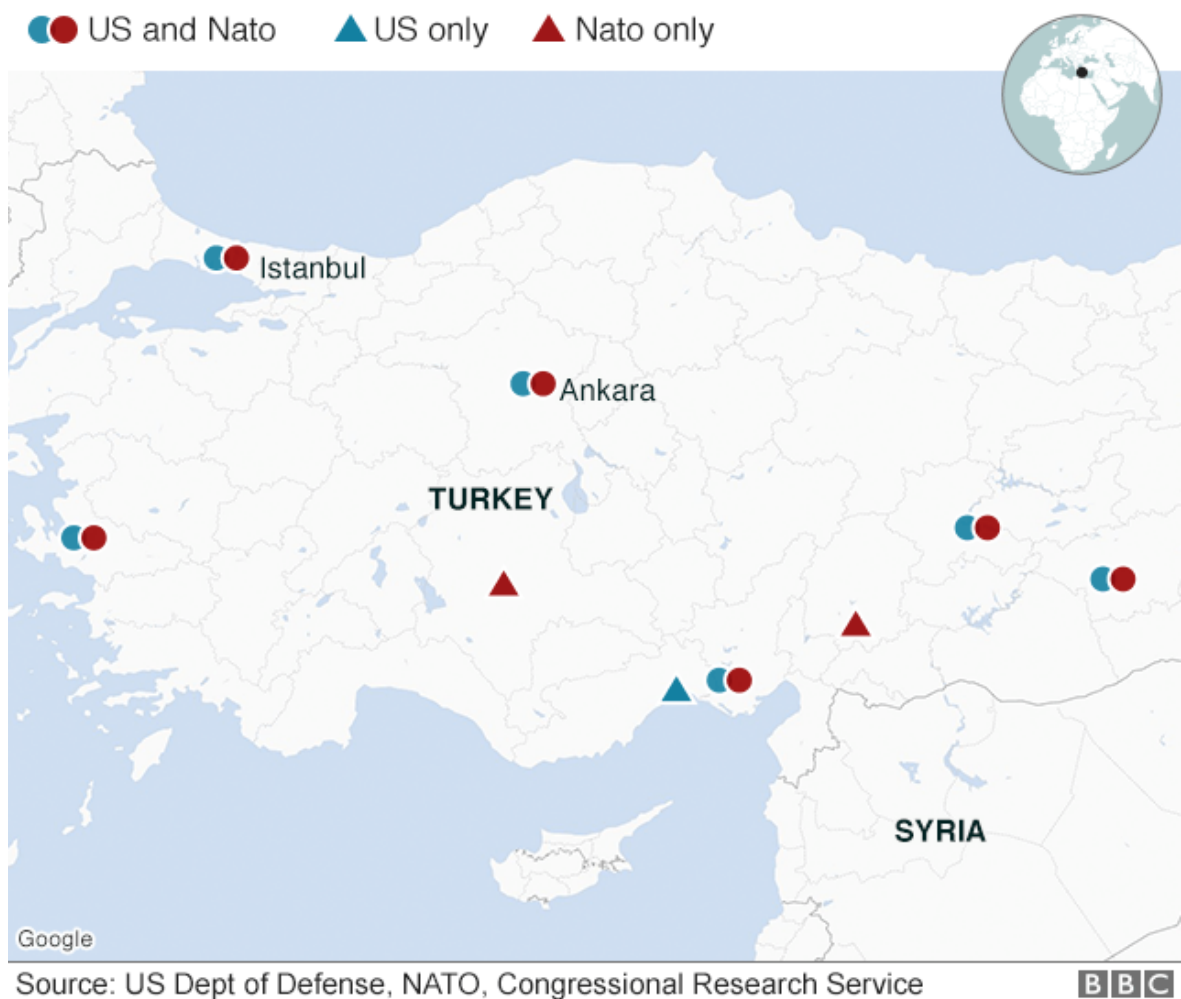


Figure 7 NATO and US bases in Turkey

6.3 PARTIAL CONCLUSION

From history up to the present, Turkey has always been a crossroad where different cultures meet. With its unique location, Turkey is one of the most strategically placed countries in the world, not only for its own purpose, but also for its allies, and even for its enemies. For Europeans, it is a gate to the Islamic world, for Muslims it is an entrance to Europe, and for Russians it is an only way from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean Sea. After all it was the geographic location of Turkey which was one of the main reasons for its acceptance into NATO in 1952. Nowadays, the importance is the same, maybe even bigger. After the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula became The Turkish Straits most strategically important points in the East part of NATO. Even though Turkey is nowadays more interested in the situation on its Southern border with Syria, the importance of Straits remains the same. The situation on its South border concerns other NATO members, because if the situation will graduate thanks to Turkish intervention there, and in response Turkey will be attacked, it would mean activation of Article V. of The Washington Treaty and could embroil NATO in a new conflict. The current location of NATO bases in Turkey provides great conditions for collecting information and early warning whereas defensive missile systems deployed in the South part of Turkey provide technological support such needed for Turkey. In terms of the location, Turkey is one of the most important members of NATO, when control over Turkish Straits is for the Alliance crucial, but the situation on its South border can bring problems not only for Turkey, but to the whole Alliance and it is a question, how would NATO react to a situation when Article V would be activated because of Turkey–Syria conflict with knowledge that it is Russia, who is a main Syrian ally and Russian troops are deployed in Syria.

7 BILATERAL RELATIONS BETWEEN TURKEY AND RUSSIAN FEDERATION

For most of the time throughout history, Russia (former USSR) and Turkey (former Ottoman empire) have been natural enemies declaring the will of defeating each other. Despite the size of both empires, the final word in their conflicts usually had Western countries, which were much modern, richer and powerful than these two. It can be said that Russian–Turkish relations have been rather part of the broader spectrum in the world politics than a solo chapter on the world scene. This stylization can be found even in current relations, even though Turkey reckons itself as one of the world leaders.

Since ascension to power of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in 2002, Turkey has started to adopt the image of a strong hegemon in its region and with military intervention even left proverb from Atatürk era “*Peace at Home, Peace in the World*”³⁸. This new Turkish approach is often called as neo–Ottomanism and parallels can be found in a comparison with neo–Sovietism. Both countries, Turkey and Russia, both distanced themselves from shadows of the past, but when analyzing both countries policies, similarities became obvious. After the dissolution of former empires, both countries were struggling economically and in terms of power. Both neo–approaches firstly met with enthusiasm on the domestic scene because of a short economic growth and stability, but later were confronted with problems – economic growth turned into fall, people realized rising centralization of power and dangers associated with that and warmhearted relations with other countries slowly experienced cooling down. Here end similarities and start differences. While one is the main opponent of NATO, the second one is one of its crucial members. Whereas many people in Russia lived also in the Soviet era, contemporary witnesses of the Ottoman era are all dead. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Russia had difficulties with its own identity, but it appears that with neo–Sovietism again finds itself, on the other hand Turkish citizens are divided with the approach of neo–Ottomanism and Turkey still couldn't find its own identity. Is Turkey a Muslim country? Does it mean every Turkish citizen is a Muslim? Should Turkey turn back to Mecca or keep trying reaching EU? Should Turkey leave NATO and create alliances with other Muslim countries? Those are questions, on which Turkey itself does not know

³⁸ Maxim which became the motto of the Republic of Turkey; quoted in many sources including, Atatürk (1963) by Uluğ İğdemir, p. 200; and Small Nations and Great Powers: A Study of Ethnopolitical Conflict in the Caucasus (2000) by Svante E. Cornell

answers and until then, when clear answers would be found, Turkey's identity remains uncertain. In this chapter are analyzed bilateral relations between both countries, their actions and policies towards each other since the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula to the end of the year 2019. During this period of time, reciprocal relations can be divided into three smaller periods on the basis of friendliness/unfriendliness of mutual actions. The first period is time-limited by the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula and shooting down of Russian bomber Su – 24 by Turkish fighter plane. The second stretch is bordered by already mentioned shooting down of Su – 24 and the point, where mutual relations turned back to friendliness. The last period has lasted since that turning point to present days, or rather to end of the year 2019, which was set as the final time point for this analysis.

7.1 The Crimean Peninsula and Su – 24

At the beginning of the Crimean crisis can be found one interesting parallel – the more the Russian intervention manifested itself, the more the protests of the Western countries grew. There is only one anomaly: the more the Russian intervention manifested itself, the more Turkish criticism subsided. Turkey is a key member of NATO, which is an organization of the West and what is more, the Black Sea is a part of the Turkish sphere of interest. It should be obvious to see Turkey as a main protester against Russian actions in Crimea, but the reality was diametrically different. A simple question arises – why? When taken a closer look at conditions in the Black Sea region, question can be changed from “why?” to “why to expect different reaction?”. Answer on both questions is simple, only two words - Crimean Tatars. Minority, originated from the Turkish nation, living on the Crimean Peninsula since moving back after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Crimean Tatars have been living on the Crimean Peninsula long before the October Revolution and creation of the USSR, but it had changed with coming to power of Joseph Stalin, who ordered deportation of Crimean Tatars to Uzbekistan, Siberia and the Urals and replaced them with ethnic Russians as new inhabitants of the Crimean Peninsula. When they were given permission in 1988 to return, they settle again on Crimea, even though their properties were confiscated and not returned to them. A close bond with Turkey dates back to the era of the Ottoman Empire, when Crimean Khanate was vassal of the Ottoman Empire, before being taken over by Russia. Since then, many Crimean Tatars have moved to Turkey. Even today, after centuries, Turkey still sees Crimean Tatars as a part of the Turkish nation, despite the fact, that Crimean Tatars are *de facto* citizens of the Russian Federation (they are citizens of Ukraine *de jure*). During

2014, with rising Russian activity and extremism on the Crimean Peninsula, Turkey feared that history of deportation could be repeated, because of incoming Russian citizens to Crimea. Fear of deportation has not come into reality till the present days, but discrimination and terror are on a daily basis. Even though Turkey still fears for the destiny of the Tatar minority on the Crimean Peninsula, those fears are being overshadowed by economic factors, which were besides Crimean Tatars reasons for keeping criticism quiet. Russian tourists are the main source of income for holiday destinations located on the Turkish coast, Turkish farmers export a high percentage of their crops to Russia and Turkish households are reliant on Russian gas. Tourism and crop export are key parts of the Turkish economy, whereas gas is a necessity for people's cooking and heating their households. That time, Turkey was still following century old proverb of its own funder "*Peace at home, Peace in the world.*"³⁹.

Ironically appears fact, that problems with its long- time opponent in the North arose on Turkey's South border with Syria. With the escalation of the conflict, new participants involved and rising instability of the whole region, Turkey came to the one of its biggest milestones in modern history. Leaving Atatürk's heritage behind, under the pretext of establishing security against Kurdish militias, Turkey fixed its eyes on former Ottoman Empire ambitions and stepped into the Syrian conflict. Standing against Kurdish militias, Islamic State and Syrian government forces supported by the Russian Federation, Turkey had shuffled cards of an ongoing conflict. With the rising involvement into the conflict, the possibility of confrontation with Russian forces was rising in the same rate. On advance to North and therefore to Syrian-Turkish border were marching Syrian government forces supported by Russian forces, mostly in the form of Russian airplanes. Russian air forces were flying closer to the Turkish airspace and in few cases even breached it. Turkey had protested and warned Russia to beware of its actions. On 24th of November 2015, Russian bomber of type Su – 24 violated Turkish airspace for 17 seconds after warnings from the Turkish side to change its direction of flight. After 17 seconds in Turkish airspace, Su – 24 was shot down by the Turkish fighter F – 16. At this moment ended the first phase of Turkish-Russian relations since the Crimean Peninsula was annexed.

³⁹ Maxim which became the motto of the Republic of Turkey; quoted in many sources including, Atatürk (1963) by Uluğ İğdemir, p. 200; and Small Nations and Great Powers: A Study of Ethnopolitical Conflict in the Caucasus (2000) by Svante E. Cornell

7.2 Severing ties

Only 17 seconds was sufficient for a complete change in mutual relations between Turkey and Russia. It was for the first time ever, when NATO member shot down Russian airplane. And what more, given the fact that Su – 24 was shot down by fighter F – 16, there is no doubt of intention from the Turkish site. Even though Russia made a statement, that its bomber had flown only in Syrian airspace⁴⁰, a similar incident from the previous week when Turkish fighters had escorted Russian airplane from Turkish airspace raised doubts about the veracity of that statement. Russian answer came soon. Since then, bombers were accompanied by fighters, Russian battlecruiser near the Syrian shore was mentioned in the press release, S – 400 missile system was moved to Syria. With knowledge of Russian excellence in radio electronic fighting skills, Turkey faced a strong show of Russian force.

Considering the military field, escalation of conflict did not graduate and was limited only on demonstration of power. What played a more crucial role was the economical part of mutual relations. Russian travel agencies stopped selling holidays to Turkey, Russia imposed an embargo on Turkish food, especially fruit and vegetables, Turkish students were deported from Russia and strategically important projects of Turkish stream and nuclear plant in Turkey were stopped⁴¹. During following winter months did not sanctions fall on Turkish people heavily and President Erdogan was regularly declaring the power and independence of Turkish people. As time had flown, holiday resorts remained empty and agricultural production filled up storages. Voices of Turkish people were gaining momentum, when whole holiday regions struggled in economic crisis and agricultural production almost stopped. Tourism and export of agricultural products are crucial parts of the state budget and missing money became obvious. Browbeaten in the military field, Turkey was also humbled in the economical field. In addition to all of that, Russia confronted Turkey in the field of international politics and perception. Russia accused Turkey of illegal trade with oil and named as a main supplier former Islamic State. As a prove, Russia provided satellite pictures with highlighted roads, which were used for oil transport to Turkey. Turkey was used as a

⁴⁰ Turkey's downing of Russian warplane - what we know. *BBC* [online]. 2015 [cit. 2020-05-18]. Dostupné z: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-34993629>

⁴¹ Russia halts Turkey gas project talks amid Syria row. *BBC* [online]. 2015 [cit. 2020-05-18]. Dostupné z: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-34995472>

transit shed, from there was oil transported to Iraq, back to Syria to Syrian rebels and part of it was used in Turkey. Despite the accusation from Russia and shared pictures with highlighted routes, Turkey was refusing any part in Islamic State's oil market. President Erdogan even offered his resignation if that accusation would be proven true. At the same time, when this affair was filling pages of the world press, Presidents of Russia and Turkey were both attending a climate conference in Paris, but Russian President Vladimir Putin refused to meet Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, President of Turkey. The situation remained in the status quo until the 12th of June 2016, when Russia celebrates so-called Russia Day (full name is Day of adoption of the declaration of state sovereignty of RSFSR). On this date, Turkish President sent a letter to his Russian counterpart and the same did Turkish Prime Minister to his Russian counterpart. In addition to the conciliatory rhetoric of the Turkish side in previous months, this date can be considered as a turning point in improving of mutual relations between Turkey and Russia since SU – 24 crisis.

7.3 Establishing a close partnership

Shortly after the 12th of June and letters sent by Turkish officials to their Russian counterparts, Turkey had to focus on its domestic affairs instead of the international situation. During Friday night from 16th to 17th of July 2016, Turkish army attempted a coup with a goal of overthrowing President Erdoğan. In the Saturday's morning, the coup was almost quashed, people followed Erdoğan's call and went into the streets. The core of putschists was made of low – rank military officers, without support from general staff was a low chance to succeed, only killing Erdoğan could be a way, how to finish a coup successfully. The majority of people and general staff supported their President. Immediately after the coup was over, President Erdogan started great purge in the army, schools, law courts, government employees and intelligence. Even this event is a matter of Turkish domestic political situation, given the perspective of international relations, one thing, important for the future development of Turkish foreign policy can be seen.

Whereas Turkish allies from NATO shared restrained reactions to the whole situation, during Saturday's morning had President Erdoğan one important call. The person on the other side of the phone was Vladimir Putin, Russian President. It was Putin, who showed immediate support as soon as was possible when Western countries had been waiting, how the whole situation would end. Only when the situation was clear and was evident that Erdoğan keeps his power, only then showed Western countries their support to Erdoğan. It would be foolish to perceive the whole situation as unimportant, further evolvement of affairs proved the momentousness of Russian immediate support. Shortly after a great purge which had an impact on almost 60 000 Turkish citizens (number accurate to that time, later was still rising up to 160 000), Western countries came with a strong criticism because of human rights violations. From the other side, Russia has never known anything as human rights violations, which appeared favorable to Erdogan. When summarized, Russia as a first country showed support to Erdoğan after a coup and did not castigate Turkey for human rights violation whereas Western countries were waiting with their support to Erdoğan and later instead of words of support showed only criticism. As a result of this sequence of events, Erdogan turned his sight to Russia.

A few weeks later, Erdoğan and Putin met in Saint Petersburg. Old wrongs were forgiven, easing of sanctions was approved and a new partnership was confirmed. Erdoğan turned his enemy into an ally, whereas Russia made a strong bond with one of the most

important NATO members. Other NATO members perceived new change in the international situation with displeasure but had no cards to play. Although it is not obvious at first glance, a new partnership has been important for both countries, not just only for Turkey. Turkish reasons are explained in previous lines, but Russian not. Russia has started to feel the weight of sanctions too, Turkish fruit and vegetables were missing in Russian shops, textile plants were short of Turkish fabric and Russian citizens could not travel on holidays to their beloved destination. From the perspective of both states, a crucial project was the Turkish stream, a new way how to transport Russian gas into Europe and Turkey. Excellent mutual relations were not even harmed by the assassination of the Russian Ambassador to Turkey, Andrei Karlov, who was killed by Turkish police officer connected to Syrian rebels. Incident partially reflected a change in Turkish politics towards the situation in Syria. Weeks before the incident was becoming obvious an unofficial deal between Turkey and Russia about situation solving in Syria, to the disappointment of Western countries and Kurdish militias. In the first months of 2017, Turkey expressed interest in buying Russian missile system The S – 400 Triumph. For the first time in history was NATO member dealing with Russia about the purchase of military systems. NATO members with the US in lead significantly appealed on Turkey to consider its decisions, but Turkey opposed with the argument of no interesting offer from partners from NATO. The whole year 2017 continued in the same note, which was only rising displeasure of the West. All was crowned in the end of 2017, when Turkey and Russia signed a contract of purchase of 4 missile systems S – 400 in value of 2,5 billion US dollars. Even though the new Turkish S – 400 will never be part of NATO collective defensive system, the situation when the second biggest army in NATO regardless of sanctions had bought the Russian military system got up from chair many Western politics.

The year 2018 represents another important milestone in bilateral Turkish–Russian relations. In 2018 was held a presidential election in Russia, in which Vladimir Putin retained his mandate, and his first foreign visit was headed for Turkey. More than a clear signal for western countries. In the same year won Erdogan presidential elections in Turkey, which is still perceived as definitive turn from a parliamentary system to presidential. There could be found many opinions of putting into comparison Russian and Turkish systems with an unequivocal statement: Both systems are getting more and more similar. Following Turkish involvement, quarrels with other NATO members, especially the US, became more obvious. Result of that quarrels appeared in the form of threats from the US with economic sanctions

and refusal of supplying Turkey with American air fighters F – 35. With the gain of one ally, Turkey started losing many of others, which was strongly felt by the Turkish economy and was reflected in new international economic rankings. Those changes forced Turkey to milder rhetoric, but behavior has remained the same. What has been more, despite getting the situation under the control in Syria, Turkey decided to do a military intervention into Libya, but Turkish intentions are on the opposite side of a barricade than Russian, because Russia demonstrated its own interest in its region. As can be seen, Turkey has been trying to find a balance between its membership in NATO and a strong bond with Russia and it is a question for the future, if that balance can be kept.

7.4 Partial Conclusion

Throughout history, mutual relations between Russia and Turkey were formed by rivalry and hostility. Only after the dissolution of both their ancestors – the Ottoman Empire in the Turkish case and the Soviet Union in the case of Russia, could their relations undergo a radical change. But is it really a change or just a new modern form of old relations? Both countries cling to the imagination of their former size and power. For Turkey is the situation worse, because it has no capacities to face Russia in an open conflict and its economy is strongly oriented on Russia. On the other side, Turkey faces misunderstanding and criticism from its western allies for its actions and cannot afford to totally ignore them, because Turkey is addicted to investments and technologies from abroad. And what is more, Turkey knows that it can face Russia only with the help from NATO. With such interconnectedness to both sides, Turkey is trying to find the optimal balance. In addition, Turkey is trying to become its own lord but those tries were not successful yet and Turkish dream about becoming world power is getting far and far away from it. This can be seen in the first phase of Turkish–Russian relations between 2014 and 2015 when Turkey presented itself as a servile partner to Russia rather than a strong independent country. Totally diametral behavior became obvious after Turkey decided to break one of its long-term proverb “*Peace at home, Peace in the world.*”⁴² and intervened into Syria which has ended with shooting down of Russian bomber SU – 24. Since then, Turkey was trying to show its strength, independence and desire to conquer even the biggest world powers. Unfortunately for Turkey, this aim

⁴² Maxim which became the motto of the Republic of Turkey; quoted in many sources including, Atatürk (1963) by Uluğ İğdemir, p. 200; and Small Nations and Great Powers: A Study of Ethnopolitical Conflict in the Caucasus (2000) by Svante E. Cornell

could not survive even one year, because of the weakness and dependence of Turkish economy. After a series of apologizes to Russian side, Turkey has changed its position again. It turned from an enemy to a close partner with showing its back to its other allies. Short-term benefits of that change turned into long-term problems and only showed Turkish addiction on western investments and technologies. With that awakening, Turkey decided for one more change. Turkey has chosen to balance in the middle, between NATO and Russia, because Turkey cannot stay Turkey without both of them. It is the question of a time when Turkey will change its statement again. But following this statement, another question is arising: For how long will both sides tolerate Turkish dance between them?

CONCLUSION

Turkey has always played a crucial role in the region of the Middle–East, but in the sphere of world politics has had never the final word. Since the great turn which modern Turkey made by its founder Mustafa Kemal, Turkey has started to make bonds with Western countries – those, who were its former enemies. Situation with Russia remained the same, until the end of World War II, when the aggression of the USSR brought Turkey in NATO. When USSR fell, both countries have started with a new approach towards each other, but both suffered its own sort of internal crisis. Crisis in Russia was solved with Vladimir Putin ascension to power, whereas in Turkey was crisis calmed down with Recep Tayyip Erdoğan ascension to power. When Putin has been rebuilding Russia's power and importance, Erdoğan kept trying to reach the West. In that time, NATO already figured out its new purpose in a world without the original reason for its creation and transformed itself into a new form. In 2014, when Russia restored its own interests and showed the world, that it is still an important world power, NATO faced a new approach from the successor of its former great enemy. Seen many times before, it was again only enemy's actions, that could unite Western countries. What appeared as a uniting factor for all other NATO members, turned to be a changing factor for Turkey. Turkey reacted in a different way than other NATO members, and as time had flown, Turkey has started its own dance between NATO and Russia. After the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula expressed its relation to Russia with silence and servility, then shoot down Russian bomber and opposed Russia as an enemy just to become after a few months strong ally of Russia and its President Vladimir Putin. None of these three approaches has seemed suitable for NATO, so questions about Turkish membership in NATO had arisen. Turkey has the second biggest army in NATO in terms of numbers of men and occupies front rungs in the quantity of equipment. With such a quantity Turkey replaces quality. In the current situation is the Turkish army important for NATO, but if Turkey cannot transform its army from quantity to quality, it will become a burden and even a threat for the whole Alliance. In terms of the geographical position of Turkey, last years showed that Turkey as a gate to the Middle East is more likely to be a danger for Europe than a strategical advantage. With rising instability of the whole region and Turkish efforts of establishing its own hegemony, the danger of activation Article V of the Washington Treaty is more than presumable. But keeping control over Turkish Straits is crucial for the whole NATO, which means that the current presence of NATO bases and centers will probably rise, if NATO wants to keep an eye over its Eastern shield. The last analyzed field

was already mentioned above, but there are few things, which have to be added to previous statements. Turkish behavior and especially relations with Russia are formed by Turkish President Erdoğan, who changed the political system from parliamentary to presidential. With the vision of Turkey as a world power, Erdoğan balances between two sides – NATO and Russia. Turkish problem consists of the fact that Turkey needs both sides, from economic reasons, but also from security reasons. Turkey cannot afford to stand against Russia without NATO, but also vice versa. Both sides are aware of the Turkish problematic alliance, but in the same measure is the alliance with Turkey important. Membership of Turkey in NATO has not the same reasons as they were at the beginning of Turkish membership, but Turkey still plays an important role in NATO's strategy towards Russia, even though Turkish behavior speaks in the last years differently. The challenge for NATO is to show Turkey importance of its membership and also put under the control Turkish neo-Ottomanism tendencies. The biggest challenge for Turkey represents sustainable development and modernization - if Turkey cannot modernize its army and will not be able to transform and strengthen its economy, its membership in NATO will lose meaning despite its great strategic location. As a relevant topic for further analysis appears rising Islamic influence on Turkish internal policy, which is one of the major factors causing changes in the political direction of Turkey. From an economical point of view would be interesting and beneficial to analyze Turkish economy – its trends, parts, structure and potential for the future.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EU	European Union
ISIL	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant
NAC	North Atlantic Council
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Nongovernmental organization
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PfP	Partnership for Peace
TNC	Transnational corporation
UK	the United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
US	the United States
USSR	the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WWII	The Second World War

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX P I: LIST OF NATO MEMBER COUNTRIES WITH YEAR OF ENTRANCE
(CURRENT TO 2019)

APPENDIX P II: NATO'S PARTNER PROGRAMS AND THEIR MEMBERS
(ACCURATE TO 2019)

APPENDIX P I: LIST OF NATO MEMBER COUNTRIES WITH YEAR OF ENTRANCE (CURRENT TO 2019)

Albania - 2009	Belgium - 1949	Bulgaria - 2004	Canada - 1949
Croatia - 2009	Czech Republic - 1999	Denmark - 1949	Estonia - 2004
France - 1949	Germany - 1955	Greece - 1952	Hungary - 1999
Iceland - 1949	Italy - 1949	Latvia - 2004	Lithuania - 2004
Luxembourg - 1949	Montenegro - 2017	Netherlands - 1949	Norway - 1949
Poland - 1999	Portugal - 1949	Romania - 2004	Slovakia - 2004
Slovenia - 2004	Spain - 1982	Turkey - 1952	United Kingdom - 1949
United States – 1949			

APPENDIX P II: NATO'S PARTNER PROGRAMS AND THEIR MEMBERS (ACCURATE TO 2019)

Partnership for Peace program

Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Finland, Georgia, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Malta, The Republic of Moldova, Russia, Serbia, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan

Mediterranean Dialogue

Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia

Istanbul Cooperation Initiative

Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, United Arab Emirates

Partners across the globe

Afghanistan, Australia, Colombia, Iraq, Japan, Republic of Korea, Mongolia, New Zealand, Pakistan