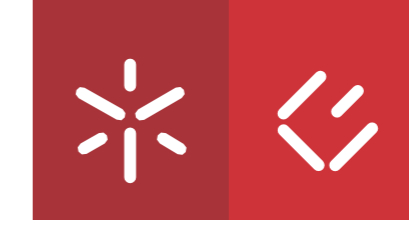




Ana Cristina Silva Pacheco

Assessing Turkey's changing NATO policy through the prism of the Intra-Alliance Security Dilemma

Universidade do Minho
Escola de Economia e Gestão





Universidade do Minho
Escola de Economia e Gestão

Ana Cristina Silva Pacheco

Assessing Turkey's changing NATO policy
through the prism of the Intra-Alliance
Security Dilemma

Dissertação de Mestrado
Relações Internacionais

Trabalho efetuado sob a orientação da
Professora Doutora Alena Vysotskaya Guedes Vieira

DIREITOS DE AUTOR E CONDIÇÕES DE UTILIZAÇÃO DO TRABALHO POR TERCEIROS

Este é um trabalho académico que pode ser utilizado por terceiros desde que respeitadas as regras e boas práticas internacionalmente aceites, no que concerne aos direitos de autor e direitos conexos.

Assim, o presente trabalho pode ser utilizado nos termos previstos na licença abaixo indicada.

Caso o utilizador necessite de permissão para poder fazer um uso do trabalho em condições não previstas no licenciamento indicado, deverá contactar o autor, através do RepositóriUM da Universidade do Minho.

Licença concedida aos utilizadores deste trabalho



Atribuição-NãoComercial-SemDerivações

CC BY-NC-ND

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>

Acknowledgements

Firstly, I would like to thank my supervisor, Professor Alena Guedes Vieira, for all the guidance and knowledge provided during this process and for all the feedback through which I managed to improve my work. Thank you for all the patience and availability.

I would like to thank my friends, old and new, for all the empathy, patience and kindness. In particular I would like to thank Teresa and my EB; you have been my biggest support and have definitely made everything a little better and more enjoyable.

At last, my biggest gratitude goes to my family, my parents and my sister, for always believing in me and for making this all possible, without your support and sacrifice none of this would ever have happened. A special thank you to my grandparents for all they have taught me and for all the love they carried.

STATEMENT OF INTEGRITY

I hereby declare having conducted this academic work with integrity. I confirm that I have not used plagiarism or any form of undue use of information or falsification of results along the process leading to its elaboration.

I further declare that I have fully acknowledged the Code of Ethical Conduct of the University of Minho.

“A mudança da política Turca relativa à OTAN através do prisma do Dilema de Segurança Intra- Aliança”

Resumo

O objetivo da presente dissertação é compreender a mudança do papel que a Turquia assume na OTAN através da perspectiva do Dilema de Segurança Intra- Aliança, o que significa que o principal objetivo da investigação em curso é abordar a forma como o *fear of abandonment and entrapment* influencia realmente o comportamento da Turquia no seio da Aliança Ocidental, especialmente considerando a sua capacidade de perturbar o equilíbrio da OTAN. Portanto, considerando a forma como a Turquia é retratada como um ator beligerante e imprevisível na ordem mundial, a dissertação pretende analisar os fatores e motivos que possam explicar as decisões desalinhas da Turquia em relação ao Ocidente. O desenvolvimento da análise realizada exigiu, antes de mais, a contextualização relativa às relações Turquia-NATO e à forma como o papel de Ancara na Aliança se alterou desde o fim da Guerra Fria, tendo em consideração a sua posição geopolítica e a forma como os principais objetivos e ambições da OTAN mudaram igualmente com o fim da ameaça soviética.

Para compreender a posição disruptiva da Turquia no seio da Aliança, esta investigação considera dois estudos de caso, o Conflito Sírio e a Guerra Rússia-Ucrânia, através do método de *process-tracing*. Desenvolvendo o quadro teórico do Dilema de Segurança Intra- Aliança, e analisando momentos-chave relativos à tomada de decisão da Turquia em ambos os estudos de caso, é possível compreender, através de *process tracing* e *plausibility probe*, se existe uma relação causal entre as ações disruptivas da Turquia e o *fear of abandonment* e/ou *entrapment*. Por conseguinte, a atual dissertação demonstra como o fracasso das Alianças em satisfazer as expectativas da Turquia relativamente ao envolvimento da NATO nos estudos de caso apresentados, aumenta o receio turco de abandono, especialmente quando alinhado com as diferenças, em particular entre os Estados Unidos e a Turquia, no que diz respeito às preocupações de segurança e às principais ameaças. A abordagem da OTAN relativamente à Rússia é também um fator de medo para a Turquia, que considera que uma abordagem mais agressiva com Moscovo, tendo em consideração os laços estabelecidos e a geografia, pode deixar Ancara numa posição indesejável, levando-nos a compreender como o *fear of abandonment and entrapment*, sentidos pela Turquia relativamente à Aliança, é um fator importante a considerar na análise do raciocínio por detrás da perturbação do país na OTAN.

Palavras-Chave: Dilema de Segurança; a política doméstica e estrangeira Turca; Conflito Síria; Guerra da Rússia-Ucrânia; OTAN

“Assessing Turkey’s changing NATO policy through the prism of the Intra-Alliance Security Dilemma”

Abstract

The aim of the present dissertation is to understand the changing role Turkey assumes in NATO through the perspective of the Intra-Alliance Security Dilemma, which means that the main goal of the research at hand is actually to address how the fear of abandonment and entrapment really influences Turkey’s behavior within the Western Alliance, especially considering its capacity to disrupt NATO’s balance and equilibrium. Therefore, considering the way Turkey is portrayed as a belligerent and unpredictable actor in the global order, the dissertation intends to analyze common triggers and motives that might explain Turkey’s harsh and disruptive measures regarding the West. The development of the analysis conducted, demanded, first and foremost, a background context regarding Turkey-NATO relations and how Ankara’s role in the Alliance has shifted since the end of the Cold War, taking into consideration its geopolitical position and how NATO’s main goals and ambitions equally changed with the end of the Soviet threat.

In order to understand Turkey’s disruptiveness within the Alliance, this research considers two case studies, the Syrian Conflict and the Russia-Ukraine War, through the process-tracing method. By developing the theoretical framework of Intra-Alliance Security Dilemma, and analyzing key moments regarding Turkey’s decision-making in both case studies, it is possible to understand, through process tracing and plausibility probe, in specific, if there exists a relation between Turkey’s disruptive course of action and fear of abandonment and/or entrapment. Therefore, the current dissertation demonstrates how the Alliances’ failure in meeting Turkey’s expectations regarding NATO’s involvement in the cases studies presented, increases the Turkish fear of abandonment, especially when aligned with differences, between in particular the US and Turkey, in regards to security concerns and main threats. NATO’s approach regarding Russia is also a factor of fear for Turkey who considers that a more aggressive approach with Moscow, taking into consideration ties established and geography, might leave Ankara in an undesirable position, leading us to understand how fear and abandonment and entrapment, felt by Turkey regarding the Alliance, is an important factor to consider when analyzing the reasoning behind the country’s disruptiveness in NATO.

Key-words: Security Dilemma; Turkish foreign and domestic policy; Syrian Conflict; Russia-Ukraine War; NATO

List of abbreviations

9/11	In reference to the terrorist attacks in the United States of American on September 11, 2001
AFAD	Disaster and Emergency Management Authority
AKP	The Justice and Development Party
Al-Qaeda	Qaedat al-Jihad
AMF-A	Allied Command Europe, Mobile Force - Air
DPC	Digital Preservation Coalition
EU	European Union
FSA	Free Syrian Army
ICJ	International Court of Justice
IS	Islamic State
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
NATO	The North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NSC	National Security Council
OIC	Organization of the Islamic Conference
PKK	Kurdistan Workers' Party
PRTs	Provincial Reconstruction Teams
PYD	Democratic Union Party
SNC	Syrian National Council
SWIFT	The Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication
TGNA	Grand National Assembly of Turkey
TİKA	Turkish International Cooperation Agency
UK	United Kingdom

UN	United Nations
UNCLOS III	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
URSS	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
US	United States
USA	United States of America
YPG	People's Defense Units

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
1. State of Art.....	5
1.1. Changing Foreign and Domestic Policy Dynamics	5
1.2. Turkey and NATO	9
1.3. Turkey's Eastern partnerships	13
2. Methodology and Research Design	21
3. Structure of the Dissertation	22
Chapter 1: Theoretical Framework	24
1. Main Tenets of Neorealism	24
2. Balancing Theories.....	2
3. Alliances	24
4. Intra-Alliance Security Dilemma	27
Chapter 2: Turkey and NATO: An Historical Overview of Ups and Downs	30
1. Turkey and Greece: A Tumultuous Relationship within the Alliance	31
2. Turkey's Role in the Gulf War	36
3. Constraints in the Alliance: the Iraq War and US-Turkey Relations	40
4. Turkey's (changing) Role in Afghanistan	46
Chapter 3: The Syrian Conflict and the Russia-Ukraine War	49
1. A Case Study on Syria: Foreign Policy Shift	49
1.1. Turkey and the West.....	52
1.2. Turkey and the Regional Powers	57
1.3. Turkey in Syria through Entrapment and Abandonment	60
2. A case study on the Russia-Ukraine War: Turkey's maneuvering between Both Parties	61
2.1. Turkey: Gains and Losses in the War.....	64

2.2 Turkey in Ukraine through Entrapment and Abandonment	66
Conclusion	69
Bibliography.....	77

Introduction

On the 18th February, 1952, Turkey officially joined The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), siding with the West in the aftermath of the Second World War and assuming its position as a Western ally during the Cold War. NATO has been always considered the main institution connecting Turkey to the West and therefore, Turkey's entrance into the Alliance legitimized Turkey's ambitions in integrating the Western International Community (Oğuzlu, 2012).

Both Turkish foreign and domestic policies have undergone a transformation since the Justice and Development's Party (AKP) rise to power and, especially, since Recep Tayyip Erdogan assumed the presidency of the country in 2014 – these noticeable changes were strengthened by events such as the attempted coup in 2016 (Can, 2021). Considering the observed shifts in Turkey, first and foremost, we can observe a rapprochement with actors that were unusual to Turkish foreign policy, including countries in Europe and Eurasia. Here, other than Turkey-China relations, one can especially highlight Turkey-Russia relations; this shift and rapprochement is accompanied by Turkey's change of heart regarding the West, distancing from typical Western allies and adopting actions, rules and decisions that complicate the establishment of peaceful relations between the actors concerned. One particularly relevant event is Turkey's purchase of Russia's S-400 Triumf Air Defense Missile System¹, while it's still possible to mention as complicated events the Halk Bank corruption case, the Turkish withdrawal from the F-25 fighter jet programs and the US-Tukey disagreement regarding Pastor Brunson and Fethullah Gulen. It is also important to point out Turkey's ambitions in the Middle East and the reinforcement of Turkey's role in the area (Haugom, 2019). The argument regarding Turkish foreign policy change seems to be especially corroborated by these developments, highlighting the difficulties concerning Turkey-West relations, where NATO plays a central role.

Turkey and NATO's relations are particularly interesting to consider, since tensions between these two actors are not new – Turkey's complicated relations with other allies such as Greece, as well as the United States of America (USA), tracing back to Turkey's refusal in 1991 and 2003 to let US deploy forces through its territory in the context of the wars against Iraq, are long standing issues closely paid attention to within the Alliance ("Turkey And NATO", 2019). Güvenç & Özel (2012) reinforced this idea, claiming how the denial of

¹ Can, Muhammed. 2021. "Is NATO Brain Dead?" *NATO and the Future of European and Asian Security*, 16–32. doi:10.4018/978-1-7998-7118-7.ch002.

the Turkish parliament to let the US use its territory to deploy forces was actually a turning point in US-Turkey relations, instigating Turkey's fear of entrapment and abandonment within the Alliance.

When analyzing Turkey-NATO's relations, it is important to consider that Turkey's geographic position was an important factor for the country to obtain NATO membership, since it was aligned with the Western security interests and strategy as a way to limit Soviet power expansion, considering the Cold War context (Güvenç & Özel, 2012). For that reason, Turkey's membership was supported by the US in 1952 as an opportunity to guarantee balance against the Soviet threat (Gürsoy & Toygür, 2018). Therefore, at the beginning of Turkey's inclusion into the Alliance, its location at the crossroads of the Middle East, Caucasus and the Balkans was seen as an advantage; however, after the Cold War ended, there were different opinions within the Alliance regarding Turkey's geographic and geopolitical importance (Güvenç & Özel, 2012). For the United States of America (USA), the end of the Cold War, meant that Turkey, sitting at these crossroads, went from a *"flank member to a frontline member"*, highlighting the importance of the country; however, to most European countries within the Alliance, Turkey's proximity to these regions implied more dangerous than necessarily advantages when it came to the Alliance and the West's security strategy (Güvenç & Özel, 2012).

With that being said, one can understand that at the end of the Cold War, Turkey's role and status in the Western Security Community and, specifically, within NATO, was challenged. This split concerning Turkey's status in the Alliance led to some questions regarding the support Turkey might encounter on the part of its NATO's allies when dealing with regional threats, leading to fear of abandonment (Güvenç & Özel, 2012). The *out of area* debate that shaped NATO in the aftermath of the Cold War and the USA's strategy, especially after the 9/11, implied a considerable adaptation from Turkey and there was a general concern on the part off Turkish policy makers regarding the possibility of entrapment in conflicts in the Middle East (Güvenç & Özel, 2012).

The fear of both entrapment and abandonment concerning security within the Alliance led Turkey to upgrade its expenses on defense and to change its security strategy (Güvenç & Özel, 2012). However, authors such as O Oğuzlu (2021) highlight that, although tensions between NATO and Turkey do exist, exacerbated by events such as the Arab Spring and the purchase of the S-400 missile system from Russia, they do not amount to a deep crisis between Turkey and NATO. They point, however, at the fact that Turkey and NATO

relations are particularly interesting to study, analyzing how both actors might have diverse international outlooks and ambitions as they simultaneously benefit from each other, something that leads one to the analysis of how Turkey might be an influential actor within the Alliance.

The present research intends to study how the fear of abandonment and entrapment have been influencing Turkey's course of action in the Syrian and Russia-Ukraine War. Therefore, it aims to understand how Turkey's position regarding international key issues has been aligned with NATO's decision making and the role the country can adopt regarding the Alliance's internal political equilibrium, through the lens of Neorealism of the intra-alliance security dilemma and more specifically, the fear of abandonment and entrapment,

Regarding the scope of analysis, the time period considered in this study will differ according to each of the case studies in analysis. For once, considering the case study of the Syrian Conflict, it will consider the timeline from 2011 to 2019. Since the Syrian conflict, and initial social protests began in 2011 and Turkey's engagement was immediate, even if it subsequently changed, the analysis will also begin in 2011. Nonetheless, in this specific case, the research should be considered until December 2019, as this was the month in which the US chose to impose sanctions on Turkey, following the country's purchase of the S-400 Triumf Air Defense Missile System from Russia, a decision that marked the culmination of the disruptive Turkish actions within the Alliance. On the other hand, when taking into account the Ukraine-Russia War case study, the scope is significantly reduced, as the phenomenon in itself is a much recent happening. Bearing this in mind, the period of analysis starts on the 24th February, 2022, with the invasion of Ukraine. Even if the Ukraine-Russian conflict was on the horizon of Turkish foreign policy decision-makers already since 2014, with the Russian annexation of Crimea, the analysis of the approach assumed by Turkey needs to start in February 2022. The analysis of this case will be carried out until July 2022, a crucial month for Turkey since it managed to feature as a mediator between both war parties and conclude an important, and UN backed, grain deal.

My interest in this topic is connected to the shift in Turkey's foreign policy, in connection with important concepts and approaches including *Pan-Islamism*² and *Neo-Ottomanism*³ that equally triggered my initial interest, but there are not central to the analysis at hand; in a chronological perspective, it's even important to consider the *Zero Problems with Neighbors* policy, introduced by former Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu to understand the changes within Turkey's course of action. Interestingly, there are authors who believe that Turkey adopts a revisionist foreign policy (Özpek, Bilgehan and Yaşar, 2018), in a change of its approach. According to Özpek & Yaşar (2018), AKP shifted to a foreign policy marked by concepts like *Islamism* and *Authoritarianism*, contrary to the belief that Turkey would maintain its position, globally and regionally. The country left behind a more pacific and integrationist policy and became a more disruptive, threatening and conflictual country.

Although this turn in foreign policy is an interesting topic of study in itself, in my perspective, considering the changes in the global world order, it is particularly interesting to study this change in policy in regards to the West and NATO and to explore the motivations behind these changing dynamics. Even though there is a lot of research on Turkish foreign policy, Turkey relations with NATO and alliance theory, and theoretical approaches like fear of entrapment and fear of abandonment, there is no research when it comes to the intersection among all of these literature streams; furthermore, this topic is especially novel and therefore highly intriguing.

Regarding the problematic, my research question will be:

“How did the fear of abandonment and entrapment have been shaping the role of Turkey, a NATO member, in the Syrian conflict and in the Ukraine-Russia war?”

Taking this into account, the study intends on analyzing its disruptive course of action since the rise to power of President Recep Erdogan and the transformation of Turkish foreign policy, doing so through the lenses of Neorealism of the intra-alliance security dilemma, as a way to explore the respective conflicts and Turkey's fear of both *abandonment* and *entrapment*, within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. This paper aims to

² Defined as the doctrine that establishes all Muslims should unite under on Islamic state, launched in the 19th century by Sultan Abdul-Hamid II as a way to stop *Westernization*

³ In reference to the revival of the Ottoman past, in the sense that it encourages the connection with the territories previously part of the Ottoman Empire, guaranteeing an increase of Turkey's political and economic influence in the region (Tüzün & Sen, 2014)

demonstrate that Turkish actions, in the analyzed case studies, result from Turkey's *fear of entrapment* or *fear of abandonment* in NATO, leading to Turkey acting in a disruptive manner within the Alliance.

As for the focus of the study, it corresponds to Turkey's approach to NATO and its Western allies. However, the changing foreign and domestic dynamics and a strengthening of relations with Eastern European and Eurasian countries, such as Russia, as well as states in the Middle East, demands its inclusion into the present analysis. Identifying limitations, it is important to note that the period of analyses will not allow a detailed historical background research, and even spatial analysis may not be as comprehensive as desired. In this connection.

1. State of Art

Considering the existent literature, Lars Haugom (2019), as previously stated, and as many other authors, emphasizes the arrival to power of President Recep Erdogan in 2014 and the 2016 coup attempt as important turning points in the changing Turkish foreign policy. With this being said, there is consensus in the existing literature that Turkey changed its approach regarding the West, shifting its attention to the East and searching for a reinforced role in the Middle East (Haugom, 2019). It is important to note, however, that changes in Turkish foreign policy cannot all be associated exclusively with Recep Erdogan's rise to power, even though these changes were accentuated with his presidency (Haugom, 2019). For instance, Güvenç & Özel (2012), this idea is reflected in the fact, how Turkey, since 2002, started to shift its paradigm and step away from the "*Westernization*" tendency, in harmony with the West, but embracing its Islamic ideology (Benli Altunisik, 2009).

1.1. Changing Foreign and Domestic Policy Dynamics

As stated by Murat Somer (2019), with AKP and, in particular, Recep Erdogan in power, Turkey has become one of the most polarized countries in the world, be it socially or politically; while Turkey's democracy, since 2002, is compromised by dominant elites and groups, highlighting the tendency towards authoritarianism (Somer, 2019). Most authors highlight different phases of AKP while in power (Somer, 2019; Yeşil, 2018; Öniş, 2015; Onis, 2011), and Somer (2019) points out in this regard how AKP started by adopting a reformist approach that gave space to a triggering of democratic reforms, since, as demonstrated by the author, AKP had the power and stability that previous governments lacked, something that had been limiting reforms

implementation in the past. With that being said, in 2002, AKP was still keen on chasing European Union membership and reinforcing its relations with the West (Somer, 2019). Keeping this in mind, Öniş (2015) also states that, initially, AKP assumed an orientation on economic growth and democratic changes, with a foreign policy underpinned by soft power and “Zero Problems” policy– this statement is equally corroborated by Onis (2011) and Barkey (2011).

Taking this into account, Somer (2019) considers three different time periods in the AKP: from 2002 to 2006, as stated previously, the party was keen on developing democratic reforms and on guaranteeing human rights; it is important to note, however, that the party already embraced its Islamic roots and, according to the author, these reforms were also sought as a way to legitimize an Islamic political system. From 2008 to 2013, Somer (2019) mentions the first tensions, referring to the occurrence of the first bottom-up uprisings, just as the *Gezi Protests*⁴ and also the first evidence of corruption linked to the AKP . The third era started in 2013, marked by the implications of the *Gezi Park Protests*, corresponding to a government concentrated on Recep Erdogan, marked by presidentialism. Even though opposition tried to organize itself, ideological differences limited their course of action and the government managed to obtain support from society, by justifying its position and authoritarianism tendencies with the need to adopt stricter measures due to security concerns (Somer, 2019). Following this line of thought, Yeşil (2018) also considers three different periods of AKP, noting, however, these eras are correlated with its approach to media. When AKP came to power in 2002, the mediatic system in Turkey was already dominated by corporate companies and linked to a patronage-clientelism relation. Therefore, since 2002, AKP has used cohesive strategies as a way to limit mediatic freedom, that range from tax fines to legal actions against journalists and media companies (Yeşil, 2018). From 2008 to 2012, AKP’s course of action in regards to this was based on the arrest without trial of multiple journalists who were not supportive, or critical, of the regime, as well as the distribution of benefits to loyal supporters of the regime (Yeşil, 2018). According to Yeşil (2018), after 2013, AKP went through two possible legitimizing crises with corruption accusations and the *Gezi Protests*, which led to a phase of more authoritarian practices and a reconfiguration of the judicial system and domestic security. With that being said, the pro-AKP elite was empowered by the government, investing in the media sector and gaining benefits from publishing the pro-government propaganda. In what concerns both foreign and

⁴ It’s also important to note that even though Gezi Park Protests started as a small root movement, it became a symbol of resistance against authoritarianism (Öniş, 2015), allowing to a bigger foreign policy shift in the country

domestic policy, Öniş (2015) also reinforces the existence of three different AKP periods: after the aforementioned “golden age” from 2002 to 2007, the AKP entered its second phase from 2007 to 2011 where the government and the country faced relative stagnation, with losses, be them for Turkey’s economy or, democracy. During this second period, Turkey’s foreign policy also changed, becoming more assertive and independent from the West and also facing the Middle East (Öniş, 2015); from 2011 on, the AKP entered its decline period, facing many challenges such as the Arab uprising that implied many difficulties and imposed on Turkey the necessity to leave behind the *Zero Problems* policy, especially when it came to conflicts such like the Syrian conflict. Turkey shifted its attention away from the West and from the European Union, even though it maintained its position within the Western security structures, by keeping the bilateral relations with the USA and its membership in NATO (Öniş, 2015). From 2011, Turkey experienced innumerable democratic step backs, leading to the monopolization of power by Recep Erdogan and the erasing of any real political opposition; Turkey went from a country invested into democratic reform to being described as an “illiberal democracy”, “hybrid democracy” or even “competitive authoritarianism”, given the existence of a dominant party system and a lack of an effective mechanism of checks and balances (Öniş, 2015). Onis (2011) also highlights a “shift of axis” referring to Turkey’s drifting away from the West, and assuming, consequently, a more assertive and independent foreign policy. With that being said, AKP managed to include both elements of rupture and continuity regarding Turkey’s foreign policy: at first, the party maintained its compromise with the European Union and the Western Alliance (first phase of the party); AKP focused even more on the improvement of the relations with Middle East countries that had been initiated since 1999 and it also reinforced Turkey’s approach to the East, especially improving relations with Russia (Onis, 2011). However, from 2008 onwards, the AKP initiated a rupture phase, reducing its commitment to the European Union membership and adopting a more assertive Foreign Policy, aiming to be a regional power – the party played more and more into its Islamic roots and started to develop a bigger cultural, diplomatic and economic relation with the Middle East (Onis, 2011).

With that being said, Sözen (2010) also analyzes Turkey’s foreign and domestic policies, this author highlights how Turkey’s Foreign Policy orientation was actually influenced by a post-Cold War scenario when, losing its previous role as a preventer of Soviet expansionism to the West, Turkey was not fully aware of its role in NATO and therefore did not have a clear strategy during the 1990s. AKP brought a clearer vision and direction to the country, based on concepts just as *neo-ottomanism*, *re-islamization* and *middle easternization*

of Turkey (Sözen, 2010). *Neo-Ottomanism* does not imply Turkey's recreation of the Ottoman Empire or an imperial vision altogether; rather, after the Cold War, Turkey reinforced its proximity with countries that were part of the Ottoman Empire and AKP's foreign policy shift and rapprochement with such actors which developed the *Neo-Ottomanism* ideas (Sözen, 2010). To reinforce this argument, it is useful to consider, as well, Davutoğlu's course of thinking: Turkey should assume a central position in its region given its general influence and the potential to be a global actor in the future, assuming a position as a pivotal state (Sözen, 2010). It is important to note however that Sözen (2010) does not mention a full shift from the West, highlighting how Turkey aims to play an important role in both Europe and the East. In the post-Cold War scenario, Turkey became more dynamic and diverse, putting greater effort into economic, cultural and security relations (Sözen, 2010).

Corroborating what was already pointed out as mentioned by Öniş (2015), Yilmaz, Caman & Bashirov (2019) agree that since 2011, Turkey has undergone a "*democratic backsliding*", considering the emergence of what the authors entitle as an authoritarian regime given the implementation of a presidentialism system with judicial, security, military, media control assured by the figure of the President. Other than understood as "*competitive authoritarianism*" (Yilmaz, Caman & Bashirov, 2019), the regime is also sometimes classified as "*Erdoganism*", although the concept is yet to have a clear definition (Yilmaz, Caman & Bashirov, 2019). However, the regime is sometimes entitled as such because the power has, in fact, been concentrated on the figure of Recep Erdogan that has managed to gain support and consent from all types of elites, including the opposition parties that, due to ideological differences, never managed to imply a united front against the regime (Yilmaz, Caman & Bashirov, 2019). The authors also point out that the change towards a more authoritarian regime was enabled by security concerns, especially after the 2016 coup attempt that made the population keener to accept power concentration in order to stop "*traitors*" from acting out against the government and national security, something that the regime used to eliminate both its internal and external enemies (Yilmaz, Caman & Bashirov, 2019). Sözen (2010) also acknowledges how security took priority over other issues which contributed to legitimizing the limitation concerning political and civil individual freedom. However, authors such as Öniş (2015) still consider a puzzle how Erdogan and the AKP manage to maintain a high level of popularity considering the growing authoritarianism and the increasingly less and less impressive results in sectors such as economy. Recep Erdogan benefits from the support of different society segments given the clientelism relations established and his image as a stronger leader for

his community (Öniş, 2015). It still is inevitable to notice how Turkey has a growing ambition to act as a global actor, even though, internally, it is showing struggles with democracy (Öniş, 2015).

Considering an historical background, Turkish commercial and economical system has been influenced by the economic and political changes that started being implemented in the country in the 1980s – during this decade, the country underwent a period of liberalization not only in terms of enveloping into a market economy, but also when it came to such issues as media liberalization (Yeşil, 2018). Together with Yeşil (2018) and Öniş (2015), Sommer (2016; 2019) highlights how, in the first decade of the 21st century, Turkey was on its way to become a pluralistic democracy and a model to the rest of the Muslim world. Nevertheless, the country underwent a shift to authoritarianism that is sometimes attributed to AKP as the dominant party, given its Islamic roots and the power concentration in the leader's figure (Sommer, 2016) – as we have seen the new regime has been classified in different ways and Sommer (2016) has used the concept of “new authoritarianism” to describe it. AKP managed to build a new sort of relation between the state and society, diminishing the democratic institutions and reinforcing the party's role, defining a new form of welfare system, where the benefits are seen by the population as intrinsically connected to AKP, and Recep Erdogan, other than the state – this reinforced the idea of a client-patron relation (Sommer, 2016). Yılmaz & Bashirov (2018) who also used the concept of “*Erdoganism*”, use “*Neopatrimonialism*” to describe all relations in AKP's regime as personal relations, eliminating boundaries between public and private sphere and simultaneously naming populism as an important characteristic of the regime.

Onis (2011) considers Turkey's foreign policy inconsistent and ambiguous since regional power aspirations do not necessarily mean the need of shifting away from the West. At the same time, Barkey (2011) indicates two factors that guided Turkey's foreign policy with AKP: transformations in Turkish economy and AKP's ambition to turn Turkey into a global actor; the party has been also keen on developing a policy that won't allow for secularism which builds points of divergence with the West, especially in Middle East issues like Iran's nuclear program. When analyzing the paradigm shift in Turkey's Foreign Policy, Tüysüzoğlu (2014) also recognizes “*Eurasianism*”, referring to the drive to amplify regional integration and, in particular, a relation with Russia, aiming to create a common identity to Eurasia.

1.2. Turkey and NATO

Turkey's relation with NATO is, in fact, changing (Oğuzlu, 2012). NATO has always been the most important organization connecting Turkey to the West; however, doubts have been recently raised about the extent to which the organization is still indispensable to Turkey's security and foreign policy (Oğuzlu, 2012).

According to authors such as Gürsoy & Toygür (2018), after the Second World War, Turkey reinforced its ambition to be anchored to the West and, without surprise, that led to Turkey's entrance into NATO in 1952, supported by the USA that saw Turkey as an important country to limit the expansion of Soviet influence into the West. In this regard, Oğuzlu (2012) also referred to NATO's importance in legitimizing Turkey's pro-Western alignment.

The end of the Cold War brought, according to Güvenç & Özel (2012), profound changes concerning Turkey's role within the Alliance. In this connection, Gürsoy & Toygür (2018) also demonstrate how the Cold War implied a new strategic framework for the USA. The termination of the Cold War equally led to the *out of area* debate in NATO raising doubts in Turkey about whether NATO would, in fact, be an ally in the case regional threats emerged against Turkey (Güvenç & Özel, 2012). Güvenç & Özel (2012) also noted how the *out of area* debate implied that Turkey would have to adapt to NATO's new direction more than any other country within the Alliance, raising the fear of entrapment in a conflict that the country did not want to have with its neighbors. This same author highlighted how the end of the Cold War changed Turkey's role in NATO and in Western security as a whole, given that Turkey went from being a flank to a frontline member in the Alliance, considering the new strategy pursued in areas such as the Balkans, the Middle East and the Caucasus, areas of great instability and security concerns (Güvenç & Özel, 2012). Turkey took the role of gatekeeper as the southeastern flank of the Alliance ("Turkey And NATO", 2019).

Although Turkey's position within NATO is changing (Oğuzlu, 2012), there are tensions between these two parties that not new; in fact, NATO had to accommodate Turkey-Greece differences from the outset, and the Alliance was capable of containing the rivalry between the two countries ("Turkey And NATO", 2019). Gürsoy & Toygür (2018) also agree Turkey's role has been often uncertain concerning its relation with Greece, leading to an arms embargo in 1978 from the USA, following Turkey's invasion into the north of Cyprus.

Apart from the tensions with Greece, tensions between Turkey and the USA have posed a problem to the Alliance, in 1991 but also in 2002. Accordingly, when the USA entered into War with Iraq, Ankara rejected the United States request to use Turkish territory - this idea is also reiterated in the contributions of several authors including Güvenç & Özel (2012), who note that Turkey was in an especially unpleasant position to deal with US demands. However, the strain in Turkey-NATO relations increased with Erdogan's rise to power, since his ambitions to turn Turkey into a regional power in the Middle East led to further disagreements ("Turkey And NATO", 2019). As Recep Erdogan took the course on a more active role in the Middle East and a position against Israel in the Israel-Palestine conflict, the relationship became even more complicated by Turkey's regional power aspirations (Gürsoy & Toygür, 2018).

Turkey's regional ambitions were hampered by the Arab uprisings and even reinforced Turkey's opposition within NATO, especially in relation to Libya and Syria's conflicts, to which these both actors adopted different approaches. In particular, the war in Syria intensified the disagreements between NATO and Turkey, in addition to the implications of the refugee crisis in the aftermath of the war ("Turkey And NATO", 2019). Gürsoy & Toygür (2018) also point out how the Syrian war has constrained Turkey's ambition to assume a position of a regional power, putting Turkey's relation with the USA in check. It is important to consider how third actors such as Russia and Iran also came into play in the Syrian War which led to the alliance with Turkey, once again raising doubts concerning Turkey-NATO relations. The United States' partnership with the PKK, in the Syrian war, also implied the worsening of US-Turkey's relations. The Syrian War implied not only a worsening of Turkey relations with the USA, but with the West as a whole, including the European Union, due to the refugee crisis and the European Union focuses on the East, urging Turkey to foster its connections with the Middle East countries ("Turkey And NATO", 2019).

It is also important to highlight that the disagreements with the West have pushed Turkey to establish relations with countries like Russia, something that once again implied troubled Turkey's relations with NATO ("Turkey And NATO", 2019). However, other authors, such as Jakob Lindgaard (2020) claim that even though the relations with Russian and Iran have improved, Turkey still attributes a bigger importance to NATO and the fact that Turkey is part of the Alliance is actually an important card Turkey has in its favor when negotiating with Russia and Iran.

Gürsoy & Toygür (2018) also point the coup attempt of July 2016 as a critical event not only for Turkey's domestic policy, but also when it concerns NATO-Turkey relations – this specific event implied worsening of the relationship because the media connected the West and, specifically, the US, to the coup, leading to authoritarian measures and the decline of democracy in Turkey (Gürsoy & Toygür; 2018; Pierini, 2020). This coup attempt also served as a motive to strengthen Turkey's relation with Russia, highlighting a troubled relation with the West – the democratic decline and the used populist rhetoric against the West lead to the distancing from these actors and to the convergence with the Middle East (Gürsoy & Toygür; 2018) – however, and once again, several authors including Gürsoy & Toygür (2018) note that, apart from the rapprochement mentioned above, NATO is still the most valuable alliance to Turkey.

The partnership between Russia and Turkey, however, was strengthened by the acquisition, by Turkey, of Russia's S-400 defense missile system, which exacerbated tensions in Turkey's relations with NATO (“Turkey And NATO”, 2019). According to “Turkey And NATO” (2019), the purchase of a Russian defense system by Turkey led to concerns raised in the West when it comes to the possible consequences it might imply to the western defense structure, leading NATO to decrease its defense in the southern flank and making Turkey's system work independently from NATO. In 2019, the USA declared that Turkey's purchase of the 10 F-35AS was suspended in consequence of the S-400 acquisition and that the country should no longer have a part in the production of the 10 F-53AS from 2020 on (“Turkey And NATO”, 2019). Pierini (2020) equally agrees that the purchase of the S-400 missile system may lead to the development of an adverse relationship between Turkey and the Western institutions such as NATO and the European Union.

Güvenç & Özel (2012) point out how Turkey's international identity is also important to understand the evolution of Turkey-NATO relations, claiming Islamism as an important concept to Turkish foreign and domestic policy. After the end of the cold war, Turkey's vision within NATO can only be understood by the prism of security dilemma and considering concepts such as the fear of entrapment and of abandonment – both these fears have shaped Turkey's role and vision of the Alliance since the end of the Cold War (Güvenç & Özel, 2012). Güvenç & Özel (2012) also reinforce how the end of the Cold War showed the futility of Turkey depending solely on NATO in what respects security, leading the country to increase its budget in defense and security. This idea is corroborated by Oğuzlu (2012), who also claims that, because of its majority European countries, NATO keeps its focus on the West and intra-European threats, raising doubts in Turkey

whether the Alliance actually takes Turkey's security as a responsibility. With that being said, Oğuzlu (2012) claims Turkey fears the possibility of being abandoned by the Alliance or entrapped in an unwanted conflict.

Even though we can observe tensions in NATO-Turkey relations, as previously stated, NATO continues to be one of Turkey's main Alliance and both actors benefit from the relation, which implies the tensions should not be associated with a crisis (Oğuzlu, 2012). According to Oğuzlu (2012), both NATO and Turkey are adapting to the global order which brings challenges for both actors, however Turkey's membership in NATO is beneficial for both. The author considers NATO is important for Turkey since it is a protector of the classic security threats and still is the connection between Turkey and the West; as previously mentioned by Jakob Lindgaard (2020) and Güvenç & Özel (2012), Oğuzlu (2012) affirms Turkey also benefits from the Alliance by using its membership as a bargaining chip when negotiating with external actors such as Russia, China and other powers, and even with other countries within the Alliance, having an opportunity to make its opinions and views being heard. Overall, being part of NATO, allows Turkey to capitalize its soft and hard power.

On the other hand, the benefits are not unilateral - NATO, especially the USA, also takes advantage of Turkey's membership in NATO (Oğuzlu, 2012). According to Oğuzlu (2012), Turkey has a key role in the European security, shielding the continent from conflicts, and in the Cold War era, against the soviet threat; the USA also sees Turkey as a bulwark against China and Russia and, Turkey being a Muslim country, it is also a very important actor in guaranteeing religious diversity in NATO and a connection with the Middle East; Turkey is also the second biggest military contribution⁵ (Oğuzlu, 2012).

Considering the literature regarding NATO-Turkey relations, geography and Turkey's relations with its neighbors are crucial elements that determine Turkey's role in NATO. For that reason, Turkey's position within NATO experienced change with the end of the Cold War. In this regard, Aydogan (2021) claims that recent events such as the Syrian conflict have also produced changes in Turkey-NATO relations.

⁵ In 2022, Turkey assumes the role of the second biggest contributor in the NATO Alliance in terms of military personnel contributing with 446,9 thousand in comparison with the US's 1,346,4 as the main contributor (Defence Expenditure of NATO Countries (2014-2022), 2022)

1.3. Turkey's Eastern Partnerships

Authors like Öniş & Yilmaz (2019) highlight how after the end of the Cold War, Turkey's Foreign Policy went through different stages; according to this author, in the post-Cold War era, Turkey went through a wave of foreign policy activism, followed by a second wave with the rise of the AKP, with a focus on the *Europeanization* process; however, according to the literature, in recent years, Turkish Foreign Policy has been marked by divergences between *Europeanization* and *Euro-Asianism* (Öniş & Yilmaz, 2019). Öniş & Yilmaz (2019) highlight that changes in Turkish foreign policy can actually be observed within AKP's period in power, keeping, however, foreign policy activism and a multilateral approach to policy-making during the AKP era, the author notices a shift from a strict commitment to *Europeanization* to what the author entitles as "*Europeanization*" or "*soft Euro-Asianism*". Balcer (2014) also notices how, since 2003, Turkey faced a worsening of relations with both the EU and the USA, having this statement corroborated by Hill & Taspinar (2006) who also highlighted Turkey's increasing frustration with the EU and its membership attempt. Therefore, since the mid-1990s and with special highlight to the "*golden years of the AKP*", the *Europeanization* process has been pursued, being distinguished as a period of economic growth, capture of foreign investment, democratization and usage of soft power, at least until the opening of EU accession negotiations in October 2005 (Öniş & Yilmaz, 2019). Focusing on the use of soft power and maintaining friendly relations with its neighbors, Turkey took forward a more multidimensional approach of its foreign policy, influenced by Ahmet Davutoğlu, improving relations with actors such as Cyprus, Syria and Georgia. The AKP led Turkey into searching a pragmatic drive to develop both diplomatic and economic relations with Russia and other Middle Eastern countries (Öniş & Yilmaz, 2019).

Concerning Turkey's relations with the West, Hill & Taspinar (2006) highlight how, by the time of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, Turkey was seen by the West as the ideal model for the Islamic World, being a democratic, secular, pro-Western and pro-NATO country.

To understand the changes in Turkish foreign policy, Öniş & Yilmaz (2019) consider crucial to comprehend how Turkey-United States relations have changed during the AKP's government, imposing a turn on the foreign policy orientation followed during the 1990s: the USA played a crucial role in Turkey's recovery, post-economic crisis, and in guaranteeing the drive to pursue the EU membership; however, in the post 9/11 era, new challenges aroused that implied divergences between these two actors (Öniş & Yilmaz, 2019). Balta

(2019) also reinforces a shift in Turkish foreign policy, implying a mix of multilateralism and bilateralism at the end of the 1990s and 2000s, building better relations with the neighbors and assuming a proactive approach regarding existent disputes in the regions. Hill & Taspinar (2006) also claim Turkey's aspirations regarding European Union membership have led to rising frustration considering the failed attempts to integrate the Union – according to the author, this frustration contributed to the rapprochement with Russia, since both countries show ambitions considering the revival of their imperial state traditions and their imperial state religion back into the political arena.

Regarding Turkey-EU relations and evolution, especially during the AKP era, Öniş & Yilmaz (2019) point out the identification of different phases. According to these authors, from 2002 to 2005, Turkey entered the “*Golden Age of Europeanization*” – during this phase, the country was fully committed to its ambition to obtain full membership, setting on economic and democratic reforms. The second phase, however, is associated with less enthusiasm in the pursuit of its European ambitions, as Turkey is less eager in its quest for European Union membership, Öniş & Yilmaz (2019) reinforce that Turkey is still keen on following a Western orientation in its Foreign Policy. Öniş & Yilmaz (2019) claim that there was no single turning point in Turkey-EU relations, but several factors implied a change in the of course of action – the author implies that there has been a decrease in the public support in Turkey, since in 2003, 74% of the public supported the pursuit of EU membership to around 58% by 2006 and 2007 (Eurobarometer, 2002; Eurobarometer, 2006; Eurobarometer, 2007)⁶.

Considering Turkey-US relations, Öniş & Yilmaz (2019) highlight a dramatic turn in the relations at hand during the AKP government, implying a change in the foreign policy orientation implemented in the 1990s. Until the changes occurred, the United States played an important role in Turkey's post-economic crisis recovery and EU membership pursuit. The post 9/11 era is, however, according to Öniş & Yilmaz (2019) marked by new challenges and divergences between these two actors. West-Turkey relations is also analyzed by Balcer (2014) who claims since 2003 not only Turkey, but also Russia, have experienced tensions with both USA and the European Union, leading to a worsening of relations with the West, but also an improvement of the affinity between Turkey and Russia. According to this same author, the improvement in Turkey-Russia relations was amplified by the fact that both countries have different geopolitical priorities and that the ties

⁶ Yilmaz, Hakan. 2011. “Eurocepticism in Turkey: Parties, Elites, and Public Opinion.” *South European Society and Politics* 16 (1): 185–208. doi:10.1080/13608741003594353.

between both countries have been institutionalized by the creation of the High Level of Strategic Cooperation in May 2010, initiating, in line with the existing literature, a new era in the relations between both countries (Balcer, 2014).

To corroborate the literature stated, Hill & Taspinar (2006) also acknowledge Turkey's frustration with both the EU and the USA, especially after the US-led invasion of Iraq. The US decision to invade Iraq had direct consequences in Turkey-US relations, given that it implied months of negotiations, over the military, political and financial dimension of the relationship, between the two countries, that resulted in Turkish denial of US access to Iraq through Turkish territory. According to the actors, the changes in US-Turkish relations were *an "unnoticed casualty of the Iraq war"* (Hill & Taspinar, 2006), highlighting the 1st March 2003 parliamentary vote to not allow territory access to the US and the US's alliance with the Iraqi Kurds, as important events to threaten the strategic partnership until then established between US and Turkey (Hill & Taspinar, 2006; Erşen, 2011). For Hill & Taspinar (2006), the biggest bottleneck in Turkey and the US relation is that there is no longer a common enemy between the two countries. In line with the previous stated, Erşen (2011) points out the US invasion of Iraq as the event that changed both Turkey and Russia's relations with USA, stating the ties between Russia and the US also weakened in 2003-2005 as the color revolutions erupted in countries previously part of the URSS; this same period as associated with the worsening of the EU-Turkey's relations.

Öniş & Yilmaz (2019) point out how during the AKP's era, Turkey's global role has been highlighted, using its historical background and geopolitical position as an advantage to extend its position globally. This author also emphasizes how, after 9/11, Turkey aimed to achieve a more relevant role in the international field and organizations, using diplomacy as a strength and developing contacts with new actors, through a framework Davutoğlu entitled *"rhythmic diplomacy"* (Öniş & Yilmaz, 2019). Erşen (2011) is in accordance with the previously stated argument, while also emphasizing Ahmet Davutoğlu's role in Turkey's multidimensional foreign policy pursuit during the AKP's term of office, basing Turkish foreign policy on principles such as *"rhythmic diplomacy"* and *"zero problem"* policy with its neighboring regions underpinning its aspiration of both a regional and global actor. Turkey's growing role as a mediator in conflicts had enhanced its role as a growing regional power (Öniş & Yilmaz, 2019).

When analyzing Turkish foreign policy during the AKP's power, it is important to notice that according to Öniş & Yilmaz (2019), there are elements of continuity in Turkey's Foreign Policy in the post-Cold War. The main difference Öniş & Yilmaz (2009) identify is that in the immediate post-Cold War, during the 1990s, Turkish Foreign Policy was more "*identity based and emotionally charged*", while in the AKP era, Turkish Foreign Policy has "*become more pragmatic*". Concerning the new Foreign Policy activism during the AKP's, a strong focus on *Europeanization* can be noted (Öniş & Yilmaz, 2019).

In compliance with the worsening of relations with actors such as the European Union and the United States of America, as mentioned by Hill & Taspinar (2006) and Erşen, (2011), Öniş & Yilmaz (2019) also point out how Turkey's soft power has limitation in terms of its effectiveness, especially when used without policy alignment and backup from the European Union and the USA. Turkey's soft power capacity is connected with the strength and stability of the Turkish economy – during the AKP's era the economy has flourished which contributed for Turkey's diplomatic growth, as well as the democratization of the foreign policy (Öniş & Yilmaz, 2019).

Erşen (2011) reinforces how, with the AKP and before tensions with the West, Turkey assumed an important role as a bridge between the West and Turkey's neighboring region, being named as the "*Turkish Model*" which symbolized its recognition by the West as a promoter of secular democracy, market economy and as an example to the authoritarian leaders in Asia and the Caucasus. With that being said, Turkey's soft power became especially important when considered in the international arena (Öniş & Yilmaz, 2019).

According to Erşen (2011), with Putin's election as President of the Russian Federation in 2000, relations between Turkey and Russia have faced evolving improvements, not only in terms of trade or energy, but also concerning global and regional issues. On another hand, Hill & Taspinar (2006) highlight how historical conflict and divergences have been surpassed as both countries improved relations based on the tensions they felt with the United States of America and their ambition and position regarding global issues. In accordance with these authors, relations between Turkey and Russia have improved after Turkey's shift in 2003 and the Turkish Foreign Ministry decision to reproach Russia, as both aimed to reduce regional instability (Hill & Taspinar, 2006).

From an historical point of view, from the 1960s on, there were attempts in order to improve Turkey and Russia's relations in terms of trade and energy, regardless of the ideological differences between the two

countries (Erşen, 2011). However, step backs in both countries' relations have been observable and in the 1990s they were both drawn into conflict due to tensions with countries in the Caucasus and Central Asia (Erşen, 2011). Hill & Taspınar (2006) also point out how throughout the 1990s, Turkey was seen by Russia as a US ally due to its membership in NATO – therefore even with the end of the Cold War, there still were not alterations in the relationship established between Russia and Turkey. With that being said, alterations in their relationship were only established with Erdogan and Putin's high-level meetings, as both countries assumed regional aspirations and recognized the importance of establishing relations (Hill & Taspınar, 2006). Erşen (2011) also points out the 2000s as the start of common understanding between the two countries, especially considering the political issues in the Caucasus. Balta (2019), in an analysis of the 1990s, claims how both Russia and Turkey assumed a more integrationist approach in the near abroad, aiming to consolidate their influence in the region, which motivated geopolitical competition between them and limited cooperation. With that being said, the main issues involving these countries were related to internal conflicts and domestic security (Balta, 2019). Erşen (2011) supports this view, affirming how Russia followed an assertive policy in its neighboring region. According to this author, from 1994 to 1999, Turkey-Russia competition was enhanced by both countries' ambition when it came to Caspian energy resources transportation to the West, both aiming for oil pipeline construction on their own ground (Erşen, 2011).

Concerning improvement relations between these two countries, the improvements were only possible due to economic understanding between them, as they found common ground in their previous turbulent relations in the region (Erşen, 2011). Hill & Taspınar (2006) emphasize how Ankara and Moscow's connection was boosted by both actor's disagreements with the United States of America – the US encouraging of regime change in countries such as Georgia (2003), Ukraine (2004) and Kyrgyzstan (2005), in the beginning of the 2000s, raised concerns in both Turkey and Russia, since Russia sees US support of regime change as an anti-Russia strategy (Hill & Taspınar, 2006); Turkey also believed the United States of America support in these countries would imply the independence of Iraqi Kurdistan and consequent loss of Turkey's Kurdish territories as they would join Iraqi Kurdistan in a new Kurdish State (Hill & Taspınar, 2006). The first steps into the institutionalization of the relations came at the beginning of the 2000s with the signature of the *"Action Plan for Cooperation in Eurasia"* signed by the foreign ministers of both countries in 2001, as they established a Joint Working Group that aimed to improve cooperation in the economic sphere, as well as regional political issues and international terrorism (Erşen, 2011).

As a way to understand Turkey's relation with Russia, Aktürk (2015) considers that the end of the Cold War brought a new geopolitical identity to Turkey, increasing the country's identification with its region and with countries such as Russia and, according to *Eurasianism*, placing it as Turkey's most important ally. With that being said, the author considers the rise of *Eurasianism* as one of the most relevant contributors to Turkey's debate over its geopolitical identity and place in the world. In contrast to Balta (2019) and Erşen's (2011) view concerning Turkey-Russia relations during the 1990s, Aktürk (2015) claims the late 1990s discontent against EU accession led to a growing number of *Eurasianism* supporters in Turkey and to a boost in Turkey-Russia relations. Flanagan (2012) also claims Turkey's relation with both Russia and Iran grew distant due to Turkey's place in NATO and its claim against the Soviet expansion. However, despite the tensions still observable during the 1990s, security concerns led to a shift in the relations established, accompanied by deepening economic and energy ties and their growing discontentment with the West. The author also analyzes how Turkey, Russia and Iran relations have deep cultural, historical and religious roots that had implications in Eurasia and the Middle East, especially considering Ottoman and Russian empires differences (Flanagan, 2012).

AKP's government assumed an important role in developing Turkey's relation with Russia, since the party's rise to power in 2002, increasing trade and fortifying economic and energy ties as a way to allow cooperation on both political and security issues (Flanagan, 2012). Both Flanagan (2012) and Balcer (2014) consider that, although both countries launched, what they entitled, a "*strategic partnership*" in 2010, the relationship is, in reality, a result of difficult understanding in regards to geopolitical and economic factors and it cannot be called a strategic partnership (Balcer, 2014). Flanagan (2012) equally states that the relation between the countries is more tactical than strategic and that it is only convergent in aspects such as trade and tourism. Erşen (2011) considers the term "*strategic*" as too ambitious to describe Turkey-Russia relations.

Although these authors consider that the relation between Turkey and Russia cannot be considered a strategic partnership, Balcer (2014) points to the creation of the High Level of Strategic Cooperation in May 2010 as a "*new era*" in these countries' relations.

Flanagan (2012) claims the cooperation or competition dynamic in economy and energy has been the main driver in Russia-Turkey-Iran relations. In alliance with this, Balcer (2014) also proclaims economic interests seem to be considered the biggest factor in Turkish-Russian relations, even though there has been a deficit,

in 2014, where Turkey's imports with Russia were less than 30% covered exports⁷, leading to an imbalance in the countries relations.

On another note, Flanagan (2012) presents a different perspective for the development of Russia-Turkey-Iran relations, highlighting how internal political developments and polarization in the Muslim world influence this connection; this idea is equally corroborated by Erşen (2011) who underlines the importance of similarities in both countries foreign policy orientation in order to guarantee structured ties.

Even though these authors note the variable factors in the countries relations and how the partnership cannot be considered a "*strategic partnership*", Aktürk (2015) points out how state figures such as the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ahmet Davutoğlu, highlights Eurasia in his speech even though Russia is not named as Turkey's biggest ally. Bringing consensus to the previous statement, Balcer (2014) states that a strategic partnership would not be sustainable as both actors do not share the same social base and claim opposing historical and empirical backgrounds, remaining prone to crises and discordance. As evidence of the fragility of the partnership, it is important to note Turkey has not recognized the results of Russia's referendum on Crimea, recognizing, however, the victory of Petro Poroshenko in the presidential elections in Ukraine and endorsing NATO's and UN General Assembly decisions, supporting the resolution claiming Crimea as part of Ukraine as well as condemning Russia for the aggression conducted (Balcer, 2014).

The literature claims that heavy differences, both political and cultural, will make the connection between these countries a constant struggle (Flanagan, 2012). Both Russia and Turkey try to stoke political tensions by fortifying economic and energy ties, although their relation in the Middle East might enter a dynamic of competition where Turkey plays in advantages (Flanagan, 2012). Balcer (2014) also brings relevance to how similarities should not be overestimated as differences remain in international issues, including energy matters, and as, in the post-Soviet space, Turkey and Russia claim their own geopolitical ambitions – with that in consideration, the EU and the US seem like more important allies in regards to economic, social and security issues for Turkey.

⁷ Turkish Statistical Institute, Foreign Trade Statistics, http://www.turkstat.gov.tr/PreTablo.do?alt_id=1046 (Balcer, 2014).

Regarding the West's perspective, Hill & Taspinar (2006) considers the reproachment as a troubling decision for the United States as they can no longer rely on Turkey as their ally and counterweight for Russia in the Black Sea and the Caucasus. Balta (2019) considers, in contrast, that the possibility of a more assertive foreign policy by Russia might imply Turkey gains a role as a balancer in NATO's relation with Russia.

At last, as an explanation to Russia-Turkey relations, Neorealism focuses on the distribution of power as an influence variable in state behavior and conflict and cooperation dynamics (Baltar, 2019). Following this line of thought, Sezer (2000) proclaims the dynamic between the two countries is explained by the distribution of power within the international system, but also as a reaction to economic ties and security competition in Eurasian, which tend to explain the increasing cooperation of the countries, forming the entitled "*axis of the excluded*".

In conclusion, Turkey-Russia relations are based on increasing economic cooperation and foreign trade, as both countries assume a tendency to compartmentalize economic cooperation and geopolitical discordance as a way to avoid negative spillover for both countries (Balta, 2019). On another hand, Özerterem (2017) defines both governments' pragmatism as the driver for the developing relations

It is important to note that the increasing relationship of Turkey-Russia, structured since the 2000, endured a setback in November 2015 as Turkey downed a Russian warplane in Syria (Balta, 2019). Although this implied a suffering in Turkey-Russia relations, the crisis was resolved as President Erdogan apologized to the family of the Russian pilot in 2016; throughout this year, in particular after the 15th July 2016, the coup attempt in Turkey, the relationship gained a new drive as Putin expressed full support for Recep Erdogan and visited the country on August 9th, 2016 (Balta, 2019).

When analyzing the Russia-Turkey relations, energy is an important factor to consider. Öniş & Yılmaz (2009) noted the growing role of Turkey as an energy corridor, while the country maintains a considerable dependency on Russia's natural gas. Turkey's role regarding energy was enhanced as the TurkStream pipeline[§] was announced by Putin in December 2014, preventing Ukraine from being a source of gas transit to Europe and strengthening the gas supply to Turkey, with this country becoming the biggest source of gas transfer to Europe, reinforcing its geopolitical position (Balta, 2019). Flanagan (2012) considers Turkey's

[§] Natural gas pipeline running from Russia to Turkey

energy strategy as a way to secure natural gas supply from Russia and to guarantee its strategy in becoming the bridge to the West.

The S-400 deal signed between Turkey and Russia assumes the culmination of the two countries' rapprochement. Kibaroglu (2019) writes on how the S-400 missile air defense system and rapprochement with Russia might severely damage Turkey's status within NATO. To understand Turkey's decision, Kibaroglu (2019) claims Turkey's airspace has not been protected with a sufficient defense system, enough to guarantee its territorial integrity and sovereignty. Although in 2010 the "*Missile Shield*" project was designed by NATO to be fully operational in the 2020s, it still left some districts of Turkey uncovered; with that being said, Turkey's allies' reluctance into supplying weapons and rethinking defense systems in order to cover Turkey's necessities would limit Turkey's change of mindset and rapprochement with Russia (Kibaroglu, 2019). As Turkey's decisions led to criticism from the West due to the S-400 deal, considering the implications it would bring to NATO, Kibaroglu (2019) recognizes that if NATO countries considered a different approach regarding Turkey's defense architecture ambition, the defense connection with Russia may not have led to security struggles for NATO allies.

2. Methodology and Research Design

The methodology applied in the current research corresponds to a diachronic case study research supported by *process-tracing*. Apart from defining the method implemented, it is important to consider the (diachronic) case study selection and the definition of the cases considered. For once, one should note that even though case study usage is a common method in social sciences, there still is no consensus in regards to the definition of case studies. According to Levy (2008), case studies have been defined, by qualitative methodologists, as a "*theoretically defined class of events*". With this in mind, for the present research, it is crucial for case studies to be understood as empirical observation of a specific object of interest, in order to interpret the plausibility of a developed hypothesis that should allow to answer a research question (Panke, 2018).

Diachronic case studies imply in-case variation through time, which means that one can observe how changes in an independent variable may or may not trigger changes in a dependent variable through a causal mechanism. On that account, a hypothesis should be rejected if a change in an independent variable does not imply a change in the dependent variable and, on the other hand, it should be considered plausible if the

empirical analysis of the case studies shows that a change in the independent variable demands a change in the dependent variable (Panke, 2018).

When considering case studies typologies, variations are associated with Lijphart's (1971) categories: *atheoretical, interpretive, hypothesis-generating, theory-confirming, theory-informing, and deviant case studies*; as well as Eckstein's (1975) typologies: *idiographic, disciplined-configurative, heuristic, plausibility probe, and crucial case studies* (Levy, 2008).

Taking these categories into consideration, Levy (2008) aims to develop a simpler and more useful typology, based on theoretical purposes and research design; therefore, Levy defines case studies as *hypothesis-generating case studies, hypothesis-testing cases and plausibility probe*, which is a compromise in between *hypothesis-generating* and *hypothesis-testing* and in which are included "*illustrative*" case studies (Levy, 2008).

Taking this typology into considerations, *plausibility probe* will be the variant assumed by both case studies presented in the dissertation, allowing to understand how suitable the cases presented are in relation to the theoretical framework implied – this is a variant that fits best in limited analysis regarding time and resources, which is the case of the present work. Therefore, the case studies on the Syrian Conflict and the Russia-Ukraine War can be defined as "*illustrative*" case studies, which, according to Levy (2008) are common in the International Relations field and are described as brief cases, limited in details and that do not aim to full test a theoretical hypothesis, but only to provide a concrete example of its application. Even so, these case studies aim to play a role in theory development as they should be a basis for the *fear of abandonment and entrapment* study in regards to other Alliances or different case studies.

To strengthen the method implemented, the research will consider *process tracing* as a complement to the usage of diachronic case studies. The use of *process tracing* in pair with diachronic case studies allows for a better understanding of the empirical plausibility of the hypotheses considered and improves the feasibility of the analysis, allowing to support the findings and conclusions in terms of credibility (Panke, 2018).

Taking into consideration the advantages of process tracing as a complement to diachronic case studies, this research will be developed under the application of *process tracing*. *Process tracing*, defined as a qualitative research method that aims to identify causal relations; as identified by Andrew Anguko (2019).

Considering Beach and Pedersen (2011), *process tracing* methods have acquired an increasing relevance in qualitative research in Political Science and in International Relations in the last decades. Although the method implementation is still misunderstood, scholars have mostly defined *process tracing* as an ambitious method to allow for causal mechanisms tracing, referencing Bennet (2008) and Checkel (2008). Therefore, it's argued that *process tracing* might gain different forms of implementations and goals, as it can be used for detailed narratives or regarding theory explanation and building, with systematic or non-systematic mechanisms.

As previously mentioned, the Syrian Conflict and the Russia-Ukraine War are the two case studies considered in the current research. The objective of the analysis is to understand, in each case, how the *fear of abandonment* and/or *entrapment* imply a variation in Turkey's disruptive actions towards and within NATO. It is therefore considered, in the case studies, the possibility that an increased *fear of abandonment* and/or *entrapment* will imply an intensification of Turkey's disruptiveness regarding the country's NATO policy. Therefore, the Syrian Conflict and the Russia-Ukraine War were the case selected as they represent two Case Studies on Turkey's disruptiveness within the Alliance.

Finally, regarding data-collection it is important to point out how the dissertation at hand will use mainly two sources: primary and secondary sources. In terms of primary sources, we have mostly official declarations from the Republic of Turkey, with especial regards to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as opinions and recommendations from President Erdogan in diplomacy forums, counting as well with speeches delivered at the United Nations General Assemblies; it is also possible to point out official documents such as the "Joint Declaration of the 9th Meeting of the High-Level Strategic Council between Ukraine and the Republic of Turkey." The primary sources considered were mainly accessed through the Republic of Turkey official website. As a way to enrich the primary sources consulted, several secondary sources came into play, highlighting articles from scientific journals in the Internal Relations and Political Science fields. At last, it is equally important to point out the use of conversations with Muhammed Can, an expert of Turkey's foreign policy and a Ph.D. candidate of Political Science and International Relations at the University of Minho, and equally a collaborative member of the Research Centre in Political Science (CICP).

3. Structure of the dissertation

Considering the structure of the present dissertation, following the present introduction, it will include three different chapters. The first chapter will consider the theoretical framework of the study, including an overview of the *balancing theories* and the *Intra-Alliance Security Dilemma*.

The second chapter aims to offer an overview of Turkey and NATO history. Therefore, the chapter will consider the ups and downs of the Turkey-NATO alliance, as well as the structural reasons for Turkey's disruption within the Alliance and key moments in Turkey's policy such as the Gulf War, the Iraq War and Turkey's role in Afghanistan.

At last, the third chapter of the dissertation aims to consider the two case studies analyzed: the Syrian and the Ukraine-Russia War, under the scope of the *process tracing* method, in specific, *explaining outcomes*, understanding how the fear of entrapment and abandonment comes into play regarding the decided disruptive course of actions in relation to the west and the Alliance in these two chosen phenomenon.

Chapter 1: Theoretical Framework

1. Main Tenets of Neorealism

Introduced by Kenneth Waltz (1979), Neorealism is presented as an effort to present greater accuracy into Realism, arguing that the most important features of international relations pertain to the anarchical structure of the international system. Neorealism is mostly considered an attempt to translate key aspects of Classical Realism into the methods and languages of modern social science (Bell, 2017).

Taking this into consideration, many scholars in the field of International Relations (Waltz, 1979; Buzan, 1993; Herz, 1950; Snyder, 2002; Jervis, 1997) highlight six basic concepts regarding Neorealism, expressing however differences in their conceptualization: anarchy, distribution of power, polarity, structure and national interest. Waltz (1979) stated the international system is based on structure (units and relations), anarchy and power distribution. Therefore, the international system is considered to be anarchic, which does not mean constant occurrence of chaos, but does imply an absence of a world government (Waltz, 1979). The central theoretical claim is that war and disorder are, nonetheless, a recurrent possibility because even if norms and laws are acknowledged as able to impact state and individual behavior, Neorealism considers they still do not play the central role that war and conflict play in the international system (McKeown, 2014). The lack of global authority as a way to guarantee security and the stability of the international order and relations, leads to an absence of a hierarchically organized world system (Dibek, 2012).

Due to this perception of the international system, every actor, hence every state, is responsible for survival and looking after its interests as the main focus; States consistently feel threatened by a potential attack as there is no authority governing the world system (Waltz, 1979). Concerning each state's *capability*, Neorealism considers this to be established by five fundamental criteria: natural resources inheritance, economic power, demographic capacities, military strength and technological development; since States feel constantly threatened, they are prone to ambition growing capabilities acquisition, leading to the *security dilemma* – as each actor acquires more capacities, as a way to fortify its security against potential attacks, this leads to other states growing insecurity and creating a world of competing unities in a vicious circle of capability accumulation where no state feels safe (Herz, 1950).

Therefore, Neorealism shares a similar paradigm, in the theory of International Relations, with Classical Realism, assuming, however, relevant differences. For once, the main contrast between both Neorealism and Classical Realism regards how the pursuit of power in the international system is defined: in one hand, Classical Realism considers that the flaws in human nature are behind the demand for power in the international order; in the other hand, Neorealism does not put human nature as the main reason regarding power struggles, but it argues that the structure of the international system is the main reason for power control (Patel, 2020). According to Rosenau and Durfee (2000), Neorealism considers that it is the structure of the international system that defines state behavior, leading Neorealism to sometimes be entitled as Structural Realism.

Classical Realism and Neorealism do share, nonetheless, key elements as both assume the international system is anarchical, leading states to act as rational actors as a way to pursue self-interests and, primarily, to guarantee state survival. However, as for classical realism power is resulting from human nature; Neorealism considers that the nonexistence of a global authority is the reasoning for anarchical structure of the international system and, therefore, the main reason for state behavior (Patel, 2020).

In relation to Classical Realism, Neorealism is more widely accepted for the explanation of recent developments in the international order (Patel, 2020).

2. Balancing Theories

To understand aspects such as the formation and duration of alliances, *balance of power theory* is a crucial tool in the field of international relations (Dwivedi, 2012). Piccoli (1999) states alliance theories as traditionally associated with the Realism and Neorealism school of thought, leading, therefore, to the conclusion that structural polarity and anarchy define the formation of alliances.

Theory of *balance of power* is, consequently, associated with the theory of alliances - alliances are considered as the path through which states maintain an appropriate balance and distribution of power between themselves (Piccoli, 1999). Amongst the authors defending this perspective, Morgenthau (1973) points out the necessity of a function to guarantee the *balance of power* in a multipolar system.

The theory of *balance of power*, furthered by authors such as Liska (1962), Morhenthau (1960), Kaplan (1957), among others, defends alliances as affiliations, established by rational agreement, that influence states' behavior. *Balance of power* theory, in the words of Morgenthau (1973), claims that States form alliances as a way to maintain an equilibrium regarding growing power, restoring balance. Wright (1942) equally sees the *balance of power theory* as a system that aims to prevent aggression and that allows for balance between states (Dwivedi, 2012).

In 1979, Waltz advanced the concepts of *balancing* and *bandwagoning*, within the balance of power theory - the theory considers states are more likely to join weaker alliances in order to prevent the hegemony of one powerful coalition, hence *balancing*, other than joining dominant alliances in order to strengthen said alliance even further, also known as *bandwagoning* (Dwivedi, 2012).

Balance theory presents different positions, at first the classical position of *balance of power theory* and further on, the revisionist position developed by Stephen Walt (Fedder, 2014). On one hand, classical theory considers alliances as the outcome of balance of power between the states: however, on the other hand, revisionists consider alliances as a mean to increase states' security against threats, such as established by Waltz (1979); Morgenthau (1985); Walt (1987, 1988); Niou, Ordeshook and Rose (1989), Christensen and Snyder (1990) (Dwivedi, 2012).

Stephen Walt (1979), in his theory development on alliances' formation, considered the concept of "*external threat*" as a fundamental factor on the *balance of threat theory*, building on a different approach than the stated in the traditional *balance of power*, explaining states do not seek alliances in order to balance power, but in order to balance threats (Piccoli, 1999). There's a clear contrast between *balance of power* and *balance of threat*, as both *balancing* and *bandwagoning* allow for alliance formation (Dwivedi, 2012). Scheller reinforces Walt revisionist approach, as he claims alliances are responses to both threats and opportunities (Piccoli, 1999).

Sorokin (1994), however, considers that the argument that states use alliances to increase their security by balancing against threats are incomplete and highlights how states might develop their own capabilities and stating that alliances are "*formal agreements between sovereign states for the putative purpose of coordinating their behavior in the event of specified contingencies of a military nature*", differing, with that intent, from *balance of threat* theories (Dwivedi, 2012).

3. Alliances

Alliances' role in International Relations represent a crucial debate as its definition has been discussed by scholars and practitioners (Fedder, 2014). According to Fedder (2014), some authors consider alliances as processes, as a type of statecraft, others as international organizations or even as a concept that approaches the status of belonging to an international federation; therefore, the concept of alliance in the literature is ambiguous (Fedder, 2014). Dwivedi (2012) considers alliances as a fundamental aspect of statecraft; Dwivedi (2012), simply states that an alliance can be formed between two or more countries as a way to face a common adversary, expressing how both strong and weak countries feel the need to build alliances; for once, weak states tend to enter alliances as a way to guarantee protection against stronger states; on the other hand, powerful states enter alliances as way to guarantee power balance with other strong countries. The alliances should imply military and diplomatic help from the allies in time of conflict (Dwivedi, 2012)

In the eighteenth century the concept of alliance was associated with the creation of arrangements that demanded mutual benefits and limited participation to the States involved. It became later on associated with the establishment of a contract between governments, obligating them to use military force outside their domain, against any adversary (Fedder, 2014).

Snyder (1990) takes on a different perspective on the concept, defining alliances as a part of a broader phenomenon that the author entitled as "*alignment*". Therefore, the main goal of an alliance is to allow for the members' capabilities to be combined as a way to pursue interests (Snyder, 1990). Dwivedi (2012) also highlights how Snyder (1990), differentiates between alliances and coalitions. On one hand, alliances are established in times of peace, in contrast with coalitions that are frequently formed during times of war (Snyder, 1990). According to Piccoli (1999), Rothstein (1968) also distinguished alliances between military alliances and political alliances, differing from most of the principal scholars of international relations, such as Marshall, Morgenthau, Haas, Wolfers, Kaplan, and such, that comprehend alliances as military deals (Fedder, 2014).

Paul Schroeder (1994) also proposes an alternative view concerning alliances, considering them not as "*weapons of power*", but as "*managing tools*" (Piccoli, 1999). Schroeder sees alliances as mutual pacts of control, concluding peace is better kept in the international system if states are tied by alliances. (Piccoli, 1999). Piccoli (1999) also points out that other than establishing the distinction between alliances from

organizations that do not consider military function, it's also important to establish the difference between alliances and security arrangements, Liska (1962) concludes that states join alliances as a way to reinforce each other's capabilities; alliances are, therefore, built as a way to reduce the impact of adversaries, seeking commitment while considering both the utility and cost of such commitment.

Dinerstein (1965) analyzes how wars and destruction have led to the transformation, not only, of international relations, but also the nature of alliances (Fedder, 2014). According to this distinction, traditional alliances were characterized by military goals and equality of participants; however, in post-war and the establishment of Communist States, ideological considerations assumed an important role in alliance formation and building (Dinerstein, 1965).

Wolfer (1968) simply defines alliances as *"a promise of mutual military assistance between two or more sovereign states"*.

4. Intra-Alliance Security Dilemma

The theoretical framework used in the current dissertation is the Intra-Alliance Security Dilemma, a concept applied to alliance relations in both bipolar and multipolar systems.

Concerning the security dilemma, the theory reinforces what has been previously stated that even if no state shows any interest in attacking others, peace still does not prevail in the world system and each actor must increase its pursuit into power accumulation for defense purposes (Snyder, 1984). Snyder (1984) also points out three different ways by which a state can pursue power: armament, territorial enlargement form and alliance formation – although significant relevance has been attributed to both armament and territorial enlargement, Snyder considered not enough efforts had been implied in to the security dynamics of the *alliance game*.

According to Snyder (1984), the security dilemma concerning alliances has two phases: first, the process of alliance formation and a second phase after alliances have been formed. Given the problematic at hand in the current dissertation, the second phase of the alliance dilemma should be particularly emphasized as the dilemma is no longer to ally or not, but regarding the level of commitment and effort of the actors within the alliance and regarding specific conflict interactions with the adversary – states can choose to cooperate or

to defect, showing weak commitment in the alliance and conflicts (Snyder, 1984). In respect to the intra-alliance security dilemma, states run risks, therefore, of both abandonment or entrapment – abandonment is perceived as “*defection*” and it may assume different forms: for once, the ally might realign with an opponent, simply de-align with current allies, fail in guaranteeing the expected commitment or fail to provide support in contingencies, it’s important to note the latter two do not imply the alliance destruction, but its weakening (Snyder, 1984).

On the other hand, entrapment implies being dragged into a conflict over an ally’s interest and typically occurs when the alliance is primary to the cost of battling of a partner’s interest – therefore, the greater the commitment to an alliance, the higher the risk of entrapment (Snyder, 1984).

It is crucial to highlight how the risk of entrapment and abandonment are inversely related, as reducing one implies increasing the other – therefore determinants such as dependence of the partner, strategic interest, explicitness of the alliance agreement and past behavior of each state will affect their demeanor within the alliance. For example, the more a state is dependent on an ally, more likely is the risk of abandonment, outweighing the risk of entrapment (Snyder, 1984).

Taking all of this into consideration, it is possible to conclude studying Turkey’s behavior in both the Syrian and Ukrainian-Russian Wars, considering the NATO alliance and rapprochement with actors such as Russia, can be pursued under the scope of Neorealism and the intra-alliance security dilemma.

Chapter 2: Turkey and NATO: An Historical Overview of Ups and Downs

On the 18th February, 1952, Turkey officially joined The North Atlantic Treaty Organization, siding with the West in the aftermath of the Second World War and assuming its position as a Western ally during the Cold War. NATO has always been considered the main institution connecting Turkey to the West and therefore, Turkey's entrance into the Alliance legitimized Turkey's ambitions in integrating the Western International Community (Özoğlu, 2012)

On the 20th February 1952, at the ninth meeting of the North Atlantic Council, in Lisbon, Turkey was formally accepted as one of the two first countries to enter the Alliance, alongside Greece, signing the *Instruments of Accession* two days before the official welcoming. When considering Turkey's membership into NATO, it's crucial to understand the importance of the country's geographical position in its purpose (NATO, 2022).

Turkey took a hostile stance during World War II as a result of feeling threatened by both the Axis and the Soviet Union. As a result, Ankara joined NATO to oppose the Soviet Union's expansion and sided with the West as the Cold War erupted. The country justified its decision to join NATO based on its ambition in pursuing a link with democracy, the rule of law and freedom, benefiting from the US support in an attempt to guarantee Turkey's role as a balance to Soviet power in the neighboring region (Gürsoy and Toygür, 2018). As Turkey joined NATO during the Cold War, its commitment to the Alliance was strongly identity-driven and justified by the pursuit of the *Westernization* ambition⁹, enjoying the security blanket offered from NATO and the European allies (Oğuzlu, 2012). Even before joining NATO, Turkey had already aligned with the West as it benefited from the Truman Doctrine (1947) and the Marshall Plan (1948). Taking this context into consideration, Turkey's decision to join NATO was both motivated by political and military reasons, as besides assuming a clear strategic importance for the Alliance on the south eastern flank, Turkey enjoyed NATO's membership as a way to reorganize its army and receive support from the USA in military, economic and educational departments (NATO, 2022).

However, after the Cold War ended, Turkey's role in NATO changed and the country's geopolitical value also shifted as it went from a flank to a frontline member at the crossroads of important regions in terms of

⁹ Ambitions to pursue Western values had been reflected in Turkish Foreign Policy since the 19th century with Kemal Atatürk (Glyptis, 2006)

security threats such as the Caucasus, Middle East and the Balkans. The West did not necessarily consider Turkey's geopolitical position as an advantage, but more as a potential security liability (NATO, 2022).

According to Güvenç & Özel (2012), since 2002, Turkey started to slowly shift its paradigm and step away from the Westernization tendency, embracing its Islamic ideology in the late 2000s (Benli Altunisik, 2009). That being said, Turkey's ambiguity in NATO dates to the post-Cold War context - Turkey was faced with fear of abandonment and fear of entrapment when it came to its place in the NATO Alliance, due to its geopolitical position¹⁰. After the end of the Cold War, NATO's course of action undoubtedly changed and the debate about the out of area approach began, which implied a change of strategic focus to the Middle East (Güvenç & Özel, 2012)

However, Turkey's role within NATO has always been challenging and tensions between the country and other allies have existed since Turkey joined the organization in 1952. First and foremost, NATO has struggled with divergences between the two countries entering the alliance during the first enlargement: Turkey and Greece ("Turkey And NATO", 2019).

1. Turkey and Greece: A Tumultuous Relationship within the Alliance

Since 1954 the Cyprus issue has been a reason for tension between Ankara and Athens which led the US and NATO to assume particular worry on Eastern Mediterranean security and possible implications of a conflict and paralyzation of the southeastern flank of the Alliance, allowing the Soviet Union to benefit from the situation, during the Cold War. Therefore, agreements were reached, such as the Zurich and London Agreements (1959), leading tensions to fade between the countries in an initial phase - these agreements allowed for both Turkey and Greece to intervene militarily in Cyprus, if in order to guarantee the territory's security (Yellice, 2017).

Considering the agreements established, in 1963, as tensions raised in Cyprus, Turkey announced they would intervene militarily in case security of the Turkish Cypriots could not be guaranteed, especially as Makarios, the Cypriot representative, sought help from the Soviet Union and claimed Turkey's attitude

¹⁰ Previous to joining the Alliance, due to its geopolitical positioning, Turkey was threatened by the USSR during the Potsdam Conference (1945), where Joseph Stalin, the political leader of the Soviet Union, openly claimed to take north east of Turkey. In response to the threat, the US sent the warships upon request to protect Turkey from Soviet invasion (İnanç & Yilmaz, 2012)

towards Cyprus had been hostile. As a way to control tensions, in January 15th 1964, the United Kingdom (UK) decided to organize a conference, however the lack of agreement led the UK to push the responsibilities over the tension established to the US that should manage the situation under the NATO framework, causing George Ball, United States Under Secretary of State, to assume the role of mediator between the parties (Yellice, 2017).

Managing the Eastern Mediterranean situation, the US launched a diplomatic initiative in order to define a plan fully supported by Greece, Turkey and Cyprus. However, Cyprus reluctance in accepting the resolution under the NATO framework led the country to seek the solution of the issue under the United Nation which was supported by Greece, which did not accept the Turkish possibility to intervene in Cyprus, in accordance with the London and Zurich agreements (Yellice, 2017).

According to the UN Security Council's resolution of March 4th, 1964, the Government of Cyprus should have the responsibility to restore order in the territory, as well as the other parties should refrain from the use of force to guarantee the territorial integrity or political independence of Cyprus. However, tensions in Cyprus did not end and due to tensions between Greek and Turkish Cypriots, in March, Turkey sent an ultimatum to Makarios, threatening to intervene and leading the Greek Government to declare that the country would support Cyprus militarily. Taking into account the difficulties in dealing with tensions, the US decided to consider Papandreou's, the Greek head of government, proposal that aimed for the construction of *Enosis*, the idealized political union of Greece and Cyprus. The State Department approach to the proposal drove Turkey to express their intentions on intervening in Cyprus (Yellice, 2017). As the US aimed to preserve peace in the southeastern flank of NATO, President Johnson sent a letter to the Turkish Prime Minister warning him that NATO might not be able to protect Turkey in case the country decides to engage in a military operation in Cyprus and ends up trapped by the Soviet Union taking advantage of the conflict (Gürsoy and Toygür, 2018; Lindgaard, 2020). The US reaction made Turkey give up on its decision to intervene.

On July 14th, 1964, Dean Acheson was appointed as the new US mediator proposing the unification of Greece and Cyprus and the full sovereignty of the Karpas Peninsula to Turkey - the proposal was not accepted by all parties and on 14th August 1964 negotiations resumed. After 1964, the Cyprus question remained unresolved and the tensions were brought back in the following years, driving both countries to the brink of war in 1967 and 1974 (Yellice, 2017). In 1974, as Turkey intervened in Northern Cyprus the relations not

only with Greece but also with Cyprus, became even more hostile and led to constraints within the Alliance, including the US placement of an arms embargo against Turkey from 1975 to 1978 (“Turkey And NATO”, 2019).

In 1964, as the United Nation first arrived in Cyprus, starting the peacekeeping mission in the country, a Green Line zone was created which is described as a buffer zone dividing the island through its capital, Nicosia. Nonetheless, the Cypriots still considered that Greek and Turkish forces aimed to impose their will on the country and due to the majority of Greek Cypriots in the island, the relevant desire of union with Greece left tensions in the country that emerged in 1974 (Olin, 2011).

In April 1967, changes occurred in Greece that led to the adoption of a pro-American military regime, aiming to solve the Cyprus issues according to the resolution and negotiations proposed by the American framework in 1964. On the 15th July 1967, the National Guard in Cyprus decided to attack the Presidential Palace, resulting in the replacement of Makarios with Nikos Sampson (Sakkas and Zhukova, 2013).

On the other hand, the Cyprus situation kept on building tensions within the Alliance, not only concerning the divergences between Turkey and Greece, but also due to Cyprus growing relations with the Soviet Union. By the end of the 1960s, the Soviet Union had already close diplomatic, commercial and cultural links with Cyprus (Sakkas and Zhukova, 2013).

In 1974, a Greek led *coup d’etat* originated in Nicosia led to the Turkish military intervention (Anastasiou, 2008, as cited in Olin, 2011). The tumultuous situation in the islands drove Turkey to use its right to intervene in Cyprus in a two-stage operation, first in 20th-22nd July and then in the 14th-16th August, 1974, occupying about 36% of Cyprus. Turkey recognized the North of Cyprus as the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus; however, no other state recognized it as such (Sakkas and Zhukova, 2013). With the *coup d’etat* and Turkish intervention, both Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots were forced to leave their homes and businesses to relocate to the North and South, respectively (Olin, 2011). Cyprus was divided into two different ethnical regions with no physical between them (Olin, 2011).

Turkey publicly claimed that the intervention in Cyprus in 1974 took place in order to protect its minority and prevent the union of the island with Greece as well as to limit the role of the Soviet Union in the Eastern Mediterranean. In July 1974, the Soviet Union sent 100 guns and 2.500 cartridges to Cyprus (Sakkas and

Zhukova, 2013). Nevertheless, on 20th July, Turkey saw the intervention as a great opportunity to separate Cyprus and implement strategic control over the entire island and even the Eastern Mediterranean flank, gaining advantage over Greece in the Alliance. Turkey's second phase of the invasion on August 14th 1974 resulted in the occupation of one-third of Cyprus and the creation of a refugee problem, where about 250 000 Cypriots were displaced (Sakkas and Zhukova, 2013). Concerning the US response to the Turkish intervention, the American Secretary of State Henry Kissinger did not immediately condemn Turkey, while keeping opposed to military invasions, standing aside and hoping Turkey's course of action would restore the balance of power in the Eastern Mediterranean. Even so, in response to pressure from Greece and due to American domestic policy, the US Congress reacted to the Turkish invasion by imposing an arms embargo on Turkey, partly lifted in 1975 and fully eliminated in 1978 (Sakkas and Zhukova, 2013).

Turkey responded to the arms embargo by suspending U.S. operations at U.S. bases in the country and Greece stopped operating militarily in the alliance in the 1970s, reentering NATO's command in 1980 (Mann, 2001).

Taking the context in consideration, the Soviet Union condemned NATO's interference in the Cyprus issues and its incapacibilities to fulfill the UN Security Council resolution of 20th July, implying a cease-fire and the stop of foreign military intervention. After deep negotiation, on the 30th of August, the Soviet Union supported a resolution sponsored by Austria, France, and Britain that aimed for Greek and Turkish Cypriots to negotiate directly within the UN framework, leading to the end of negotiations in the summer of 1974 (Sakkas and Zhukova, 2013).

Considering Turkish-Greece disputes with impact in the Alliance balance, it's important to note the Aegean Sea disputes as a complex legal and political issue. The Aegean Sea concerns a common sea between Turkey and Greece as both aim to protect their interests and rights, including the freedom of navigation at the high seas and air space. While Greece was mainly determined to solve the issue through the usage of the International Court of Justice (ICJ), Turkey attempted to solve the issue by bilateral negotiation with Greece, since bringing the issue to ICJ would affect Turkey's interests - therefore, there was a clear limitation when it comes to the countries' capacity to settle the dispute in the Aegean Sea (Avar and Lin, 2019).

The Aegean Sea equally represents the biggest border between Turkey and Greece, implying the dispute in respect to the continental shelf, the extension of territorial sea of the islands, the air space, the disputed

islands and islets and their corresponding status and demilitarization obligations. In regards to the continental shelf, the dispute arose regarding oil exploration, especially during 1963-1967. On one hand, Greece stated the islands produce the continental shelves as per affirmed in the 1958 United Nations Convention on the Continental Shelf. On the other hand, since Turkey is not part of the convention, the country did not consider it legally binding and kept on pursuing bilateral re-negotiations justifying it by the fact that both parties have signed the Bern agreement in 1976 that allowed it to use negotiation as a way to delimit the continental shelf. In 1981, however, Greece, quitted the negotiation processes (Avar and Lin, 2019).

In terms of territorial waters, the dispute is mainly about nautical miles. For once, instead of reserving the right of six nautical miles, Greece expressed the right to reserve 12 nautical miles as a limit, as in accordance with the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS III) of 1995. Turkey refused to accept Greece's declaration over its nautical rights and threatened to use military presence in case Greece did exercise this right. However, in the Black Sea, Turkey does not only recognize it as it practices the twelve-mile nautical limit. Nonetheless, for Turkey to allow Greece to practice the 12 nautical-mile limit would deprive Turkish interests and turn the Aegean Sea into a "*Greek lake*" (Avar and Lin, 2019).

In terms of International airspace, according to the Article 1 and 2 of the 1944 Chicago Convention on civil aviation, the airspace of the parties corresponds to its territorial sea, leading Turkey to consider itself at a disadvantage in case of an air attack - as Greece declared a 10 nautical mile national airspace over territorial waters and requested that Turkey submitted flight plans for military aircraft to obtain authorization, Turkey grew discontent with the requests established (Avar and Lin, 2019).

Greece and Turkey are equally in dispute over the approximately 2.400 islands in the Aegean Sea, the biggest struggle regarding the islands respects Greece's demilitarization obligations. The Treaty of Lausanne (1923) obligated the demilitarization of several islands in eastern Aegean. However, Greece began to militarize the islands after the Cyprus crisis, accelerating the program and imposing a threat to Turkey. Greece used self-defense allegations as a justification (Avar and Lin, 2019).

The divergences of both countries have led to consequences in NATO's defense planning and operations. First of foremost, one of the biggest outcomes of the dispute between both parties was Greece's withdrawal from NATO's integrated military structure between 1974-1980. Greece and Turkey's unwillingness to find solutions has brought delay and deadlock to NATO in logistic, operational and budgetary decisions, such as

the approval of the 1992 command structure. Other than this, there are other examples of consequent lack of readiness and efficiency of the Alliance in the southeastern sector due to Turkish-Greek disputes: in 1996, Turkey opposed the inclusion of the island of Gavdos in the NATO exercise "DYNAMIX MIX" due to the disputed property of the islands between both countries. The containments between both countries have caused delay in all decisions that require a unanimous consensus to be approved within the Alliance (Mann, 2001).

Since the 1970s, NATO's Defense Planning Review has been strangled as both countries have vetoed each other regarding yearly inventory of forces assigned to NATO that serve as a basis for common defense planning. Both parties equally vetoed the funding to NATO's regional installations and headquarters, as well as secondary budgetary requirements, especially in 1987 and 1988 that resulted in the disapproval of about half of the proposed projects (Mann, 2001).

In the Aegean Sea, many NATO exercises have been adjusted or stopped due to the dispute between Greece and Turkey that have withdrawn due to the islands included, the role they assumed, etc., affecting the credibility of the alliance (Mann, 2001).

2. Turkey's Role in the Gulf war

Turkey's relations with Iraq have been marked by cooperation, as exemplified by the signature of the Sadabad Pact in 1937, the Baghdad Treaty in 1955 and the bilateral trade relations established between both countries (Nachmani, 2018). Both countries' relations have been based on economic, security, historical and social-cultural ties from the 1920s until the Gulf War (1990-1991) (Gözen, 2005).

During the 1980s, due to the twin oil pipelines, Iraq was one of the most important economic partners to Turkey, operating as well in cooperation in order to fight together against terrorism and separatism groups in both countries, illustrated by the signing of the Turkish-Iraqi Agreement of 1978, allowing them to fight against these groups in each other territories (Gözen, 2005). It's important to note, however, that Iraq was economically supported by oil since 96% of Iraq's income came from oil exports - as the war between Iraq and Iran erupted (1980-1988), the Gulf route was closed to oil tankers and almost 100% of Iraq's oil was exported by the Turkish port of Yumurtalik, implying a growing and dangerous dependency in Turkey (Nachmani, 2018).

The Gulf War represented, therefore, a turn of events for Turkey and Iraq, leading to the discontinuation of the relations between both countries and resulting in negative outcomes in economic, political and security departments (Gözen, 2005).

The Gulf Crisis initiated on the 2nd of August, 1990 as Iraq invaded Kuwait and, due to Iraq's refusal to leave occupied territories, on the 15th January, 1991 the crisis escalated to the Gulf War with the resolutions of the United Nations. The reaction against Iraq's course of action was supported by 40 countries, with special highlight to the US, in account of the regional and international interests of the country (Önal and Özdağ, 2016).

Turkey assumed an important role in the conflict as the country decided not to maintain a neutral approach and joined the coalition of power that reacted against the Iraqi decisions in Kuwait. However, at the end of the Gulf War, with the military intervention in Iraq in February 1991, Turkey assumed the position of one of the most affected countries as the conflict implied significant economic loss for the country, and the country struggled to lead with the effects of the power vacuum in northern Iraq, with the establishment of a Kurdish State. Turkey wrestled equally to keep the oil pipelines open under the UN Security Council resolutions (Önal and Özdağ, 2016; Gözen, 2005).

Iraq's occupation of Kuwait brought changes into the established regional balance, as well as into global politics. Turkey was, therefore, one of the first countries abiding to the economic sanctions as stated per the United Nations resolutions, closing, as such, the oil pipelines. Due to its historical connection with Iraq and regional position, Turkey's decision to intervene in the Gulf War was subject of criticism; however, the western countries viewed Turkey's participation as an opportunity for the country to benefit from the war, strengthening its alliance with the West (Önal and Özdağ, 2016).

Turkey's involvement in the crisis is generally seen as an unexpected decision considering the country's position in the Middle East, assuming that if Turkey was to act in accordance to its traditional position it would be obligated to maintain a neutral approach towards the conflict. However, as the US and the United Nations took part into the conflict, Turkey adopted a more interventive position, following two crucial patterns in the country's foreign policy, *Westernism* and *Internationalism* (Çalış, 2000).

In response to the Kuwait invasion, Turkey called the National Security Council (NSC) and it was initially declared not to take any further action against Iraq nor to close the Kirkuk-Yumurtalik pipeline, maintaining economic ties with the country. The decision-makers took into consideration not only the fact that Iraq is the neighbor with which Turkey shares the longest border, but also the desire to maintain the balance of power in the region. Nonetheless, as it became clear that Iraq would not leave Kuwait and global actors such as the US and the UN became involved in the conflict, Turkey's approach shifted, assuming an anti-Saddam policy. As the UN Security Council adopted a resolution on the 6th August, 1990, requiring the withdrawal of Iraq's troops from Kuwait and an economic embargo, not only the Western world, but also the states in the region, became committed on finding a solution to the issue at hand, as even the Soviet Union and the Muslim Arab countries aligned with the UN and US. Had Turkey decided not to follow the UN's resolution and allow for the Turkish pipeline usage, the country could have benefited economically during the war (Çalış, 2000).

Concerning the Gulf War, it's also crucial to point out how Iraq's aspirations regarding regional hegemony have been observable since the country only demobilized a small part of its army after the victory over Iran in the Iran-Iraq war. The dispute with Iran was also important for Iraq to achieve an improved global and, especially, regional perception which also led the country to expect Arab countries as a support during the Kuwait occupation. The war with Iran, however, brought deep consequences to Iraq as its economy suffered relevant damages. Considering this economic context, Iraq pointed both Kuwait and Saudi Arabia as the responsible for the country's economic situation since they decided to reduce oil prices and obligated Iraq to quickly pay its debts (Nachmani, 2018).

Turkey's decision to oppose Iraq's invasion was also implemented due to the fear of the creation of a Super-Iraq with economic and geopolitical assets acquired through the conquest of Kuwait. As Iraq was seen as a dangerous threat to the stability of the Gulf, the country did not benefit from the traditional "East vs West" rhetoric as even the Soviet Union and the Arab countries, fearing Iraq power, decided to support the UN resolutions. Other than the alignment with the West, these factors also contributed to Turkey's decision to call for Saddam's overthrow during the Gulf war, insisting on military participation (Nachmani, 2018).

Within Turkey, there was however strong opposition to Turkey's course of action and, in particular, to President Özal's decisions and policies. Most opposition came from within the government; the generals

feared the anti-Saddam approach could set off a war with Iraq and feared that after the war the coalition forces would not support Turkey and the country would end up isolated in a conflict with Iraq. Religious circles were equally opposed to Turkey's course of action. Overall, there was a clear concern from the opposition that the Gulf War would represent a threat to Turkey's role in the Middle East (Nachmani, 2018).

Therefore, Turkey's involvement in the Gulf War had deep consequences to Turkey's regional role, as well as economic, diplomatic and political fields. Turkey's economy was pointed out as one the biggest losers of the war as not only did the country see its tourism revenue diminish as the sanctions implemented by the UN made it impossible for Turkey to maintain oil cooperation with Iraq (Çalış, 2000).

For starters, in 1993 Iraq decided to use Mina al-Bakr as the preferred route in oil export, refusing to give Turkey influence over what used to be the main source of cooperation between both countries. The divergences between the parties were not only associated with oil, but also with water: there were disputes concerning the Tigris and Euphrates rivers usage between Turkey, Syria and Iraq, since they could be important sources of cheap and clean hydroelectric power, which is in fact why Turkey maintains a monopoly over the rivers (Nachmani, 2018).

As a result of the Gulf War, Turkey's biggest threat, the separatist organization PKK¹¹, became more relevant in northern Iraq and south eastern Anatolia. In the wake of war, the buffer zone created between Iraq and Turkey, limited Turkey's military operations against the PKK, allowing for the influx of militants to Turkey, as well as an intense flow of Kurds that fled the country due to the war (Önal and Özdağ, 2016). The Kurdish problem has been a common problem between Iraq and Turkey that have worked together in order to impose limitations on the Kurds living in both countries. However, during the 1980s, as Iraq's treatment to the Kurds became harsher and the country used chemical weapons against a Kurdish rebellion in the Halabjah village, Ankara had to deal with about 100,000 Kurdish refugees that had fled the border into Turkey. As after the Gulf War the United States and the allies imposed a strict "Safe Zone " for Kurds in Iraq, Turkey has paid

¹¹ It's important to note the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) is considered a terrorist organization by Turkey, the US and the European Union. The animosity between Kurds and Turkey is mostly limited to Turkey-PKK differences as Erdogan has Kurdish Member of Parliament and ministers, as well as established relations with the Barzani family, the Kurdish Democratic Party since 1979

the price and the Turkish troops have been sent to hold back thousands of Kurds aiming to pass the border into the country (Nachmani, 2018).

Analyzing Turkey's involvement in the Gulf War, Turkey's declaration and course of action were clearly aligned with the West and notoriously anti-Iraq. The decision to align with West implied high risks for Turkey that saw a decline of revenue from tourism, oil royalties from Iraq and loss of services and construction, suffering especially from the UN resolutions on Iraq oil exportation - in the aftermath of the war, however, Turkey saw the necessity to pursue contracts with Iraq regarding the importation of crude oil (Nachmani, 2018). Turkey's action was not only framed by the association with the West, but especially for its role in NATO (Gözen, 2005). Therefore, it's important to note how Turkey's direct participation in the Gulf War was highly criticized since it differed from the neutrality maintained in the region and even though it was aligned with the western ideals observed in the Turkish foreign policy, it still implied the possibility of Turkey being involved in an unwanted conflict with Iraq and it did result in economic losses for the country (Gözen, 2005).

The Gulf Crisis emerged as NATO debated the focuses of the Alliance and how the security risks faced by the allies were, in fact, shifting towards the south and east, leading the Mediterranean Sea and the Gulf to be two focuses of attention even before the crisis emerged (Howe, 2008).

Taking into account this context, NATO's participation in the war was deeply influenced by Turkey's growing security concerns as the crisis progressed. On 17th December 1990, the AMF-A (Allied Command Europe, Mobile Force - Air) was sent to eastern Turkey upon Turkey's request; the request for such a move had been seriously debated by the DPC, who weighed the possibility of an Iraqi reaction against its necessity. The capacity to provide equipment to Turkey was limited by air and sea capabilities (Howe, 2008).

Alliance responses to Iraq's threats against Turkey have been criticized, however, due to the deliberate process. Regardless of such, the Gulf War provided the Alliance one of its first opportunities to put into action the strategy and operations concepts that marked the Alliance throughout the 1990s (Howe, 2008).

3. Constraints in the Alliance: the Iraq War and US-Turkey Relations

The war in Iraq assumed the position of one of the biggest challenges the Turkish-American alliance had faced, since the end of the Cold War (Parris, 2003). Following an intervention policy in the Middle East, the Bush Administration successfully led the Taliban out of Afghanistan in 2001-02, which resulted in the consideration of leading a similar plan in Iraq and imposing the end of Hussein Saddam's regime, the elimination of Weapons of Mass Destruction in the country and eradication of terrorist groups in Iraq ('Conflict Between Turkey and Armed Kurdish Groups (Global Conflict Tracker', 2022). Therefore in 2002, the United States of America started focusing on Iraq and even though they aimed to find diplomatic solutions, the administration allowed to be known war plans to be exercised in Iraq in case the regime continued on stopping change in the country (Brown, 2007).

The US decision to intervene in Iraq drove complications between Turkish-American relations (Kaya, 2011). During the Gulf Crisis of 1990, there were speculations concerning the usage of Turkey as a staging ground for an American northern front into Iraq which was easily discarded in 1990 but brought back again in 2002 (Brown, 2007).

As the plans for an US invasion in Iraq were known and talks concerning the subject emerged, the political domain in Turkey was uncertain: as the Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit initiated talks with President George W. Bush and the Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz, his party, the Democratic Left Party, started losing power as sixty deputies had already quit and calls appeared for the Prime Minister's resignation and the anticipation of general elections (Kaya, 2011). However, since initial communication between Turkey and the US, the Deputy Defense Secretary made it clear that the US had every intention to remove Saddam Hussein from power (Brown, 2007).

In July 2002, Wolfowitz visited Ankara as a way to settle agreements between the US and Turkey as both countries did reach an understanding in regards to the preparation of the war in Iraq (Kaya, 2011). However, at the time of visit, Turkey had yet to make a final decision regarding their role, but Turkish decision-makers did affirm the opposition to the possibility of a war in Iraq; Turkey considered however that an intervention led by the US could represent the possibility for Turkish interests to be guaranteed. The, at the time, Prime Minister, Bülent Ecevit, stated that in order to achieve cooperation between Turkey and USA in this matter, the US would have to guarantee that the war in Iraq would not allow for the creation of an independent

Kurdish State in the northern Iraq and Turkey would have to be compensated for future financial losses. Turkey also appealed for the new regime to be necessarily accepted by the people in Iraq in order to maintain stability in the region and to make sure the oil rich region in Iraq would be under the country administration and not under the Kurdish state, preventing negative consequences to the Turkish government. Since the beginning of negotiations, the US showed disposition to negotiate with Turkey and to follow the demands established (Brown, 2007). Plans for Iraq started being discussed by the Turkish military in October 2002, as the government allowed for the usage of the Turkish air space, but it's important however to point out that Turkish politicians were more invested in election campaigns than the Iraq situation since early elections were called in the country in the same day Wolfowitz made his requests regarding Turkey's support in the intervention (Kaya, 2011).

Considering the domestic political context, on the 3rd November 2002, the newly formed AKP won the general election, assuming deep Islamic roots and resentment over the US policies; as an Islamic party, the AKP did not see with good eyes an intervention (and the country's involvement) in a neighboring Muslim country (Kaya, 2011). Even though the United States were scared about Turkey's political shift, the new government supported a new resolution of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), the Resolution 1441, that called for Iraq to comply with disarmament obligations before suffering consequences - Turkey pressured Iraq in order for the country to comply (Brown, 2007).

Due to the possible shift in US-Turkey relations, at the end of November 2002, the Turkish government received a document from the Bush Administration stating the areas of cooperation for both countries and including the access to Turkey's air space for both combat and support, access to about ten Turkish air bases and sea ports and the deployment of American ground forces from the Turkish territory (Brown, 2007). According to Soli Özel (2012), in order to create a northern front, the US requested the usage of Istanbul and the Black Sea air bases as well as the permission to deploy 80,000 to 90,000 American troops on Turkish territory to use 14 airports and five sea ports. On the other hand, it was expected of the United States to guarantee a 20-kilometer security zone in northern Iraq, allowing for about 50,000 Turkish troops to go into that area and for about 30,000 under the American command; the American officials also promised to keep Kurdish political parties out of Kirkuk, a region dominated by Turcoman population (Kaya, 2011). On the 3rd of December, 2002, the Turkish Foreign Minister made it clear that the Turkish government was opposed to a war in Iraq, although he did express Turkey's willingness to allow the US to use the country's

air space to carry out strikes and for special operations forces, however this would only be possible in case of an UNSC resolution indicating the use of forces against Iraq. The US did not accept this as Turkey's final position and pursued negotiations and in a turn of events, on January 26, 2003, they reported Turkey had authorized about 20 000 American troops and equipment to use the country as a ground entrance into northern Iraq. The shift in the government's position regarding the cooperation with the US in the Iraq intervention, was established as the, at the time Prime Minister, Recep Erdogan, gave a speech on the 4th February, 2003, stating that staying outside the operation might be harmful in the long run to protect Turkish interests, as well as damage the country's security (Brown, 2007). Therefore, even if there was a clear division inside AKP regarding the provision of the US decision to invade Iraq, Erdogan was keen on supporting US's initial plan.

The public opinion however was not supportive of Turkey assuming a role in the Iraq intervention as the Turkish people still felt the consequences of the 1991 Gulf War, such as the estimated economic losses of \$40 to \$50 billion and the threat of the PKK since the power vacuum originated in the Northern Iraq in the Gulf War allowed for the creation of a semi-autonomous Kurdish State. The possibility of a new intervention raised the fear of establishment of this entity; Turkey feared specially that depending on the Kurdish groups' assistance to the American, the US might allow this group to be the main beneficiary of the regime fall. Most of all, Turkey's public opinion and government were particularly worried with the spillover effect of the war - Turkey feared that in case the US left the region prematurely or if they did not provide the necessary troops to rebuild Iraq, a catastrophe could arise and the countries in the region would have to deal with the political, economic and security consequences. Considering the regional influences the conflict might produce, Turkey feared that countries such as Syria and Iran might reinforce their support for terrorist groups to reduce American influence in the region - the rise of terrorism worried Turkey due to the possibility of refugees' influx into the country, as well the possibility of these groups to acquire weapons of mass destruction and increasing security fears in the region (Kaya, 2011).

Nonetheless, the government assured the media that Turkey would join the US in military action against Iraq and that even though this decision would require the TGNA vote on February 18, 2003, the AKP party leaders were confident the vote would pass. Even so, days before the vote took place, on the 19th February, 2003, Erdogan proclaimed that the American offer of \$26 billion in aid was still insufficient, which delayed the parliamentary vote, leaving the US navy waiting for the vote in the Mediterranean. At the end of the month,

on the 21st February, 2003, the US was confident the parties had reached an agreement, offering \$15 billion in immediate economic and military aid as long as Turkey allowed about 15,000 troops to enter Iraq through Turkish soil. The negotiations, even though, did not define clearly what role would be allowed to the Turkish troops in Iraq - Turkey demanded an interventive role that allowed it to prevent struggles such as the refugee issue of 1991 (Brown, 2007).

Opinions were divided in the country, for once the president and the speaker of the parliament were opposed to cooperation with the US in the war in Iraq without it being legitimized by a UN resolution; the foreign minister on one hand was in favor of cooperation, as was the military, with reservation however about the consequences of a war in Iraq, especially in northern Iraq. Although the National Security Council is the main responsible for security related decisions, this body was equally divided as they defended Turkey's unilateral deployment of troops into northern Iraq, while opposing the American troops deployment - a solution the US would never agree upon (Kaya, 2011).

When the parliamentary vote took place on March 1st, 2003, the AKP failed to pass the resolution with the absolute majority and about 100 members of the party either abstained or voted against the resolution. Nonetheless, the Prime Minister insisted that Turkey was still part of the US led coalition and in face of the media this was the rhetoric used. On the other hand, the Americans did not share this view as they failed to notify Turkey before the war began. Taking into consideration Turkey's decision, the US withdrew the \$15 billion aid offer and its request to make use of Turkey's territory; Recep Erdogan still attempted to get the US to allow Turkish troops to enter northern Iraq. However, many were the occasions where the US intercepted Turkish special forces as they tried to intervene into northern Iraq. The first opportunity for repairing the relations between both countries, appeared on July 18th, 2003 as the US requested Turkey to provide 10,000 troops to help on Iraq post-war stabilization - but Turkey didn't necessarily take the opportunity as the TGNA vote to deploy troops only happened on the 7th October, 2003 (Brown, 2007).

The decision not to back the US led coalition into northern Iraq, raised both critics and supporters of the parliamentary vote and led to doubts concerning the government's real intentions regarding the subject. For once, when considering the 1991 Gulf War, the Turkish President Turgut Özal assumed a crucial role in Turkey's decision to support the US-led coalition, since the decision was made while facing opposition from the Foreign Ministry and the public opinion. On another hand in 2003, even though the party in power and

the respective representatives publicly defended Turkey's support of the US intervention, the vote did not pass. For once, when it came to the parliamentary vote, even though Erdogan gave a speech supporting the US intervention and Turkey's supportive role, there was no party discipline imposed when it came to the voting intentions; even within the party there were very different opinions since, for example, the AK Party's speaker of parliament clearly affirmed that Turkey should not support the US operation since it was directed to a Muslim country and Muslim people (Brown, 2007). Doubts about the government's intentions regarding the approval of the motion to serve as ground base for the US intervention, were raised when the Turkish government decided to divide the issue into two different motions

The public opinion was particularly opposed to Turkey assuming any role in Iraq and in 2002, a survey of Pew Research Center stated that 83% of the people surveyed considered that the US should not use Turkey as a base to enter Iraq. As the war approached, this opposition rose to 94 percent; besides that, 16% of the people believed that US foreign policy took Turkey's concerns into account. At the end of the day, no group in Turkey, neither the military, the government, nor the President, wanted to take ownership for the decision at hand; losing the US as an important ally was a considerable concern for Turkey and the government aimed to diffuse responsibility as much as possible in order to conserve relations with the US (Brown, 2007).

In fact, the Turkish constitution stated that both the arrival of US troops in Turkey for modernization purposes and the deployment of troops with intention in combat in Iraq required parliamentary approval. If the government wanted to improve the chances of both cases being approved, both motions could have been joint, however they did not and while the first motion was easily approved, the second motion did not pass, with around 100 AKP parliament members voting against the use of US troops to enter through Iraq (Kaya, 2011). The TGNA didn't only stop Turkey from supporting the US, as it changed the course of the war and led a significant shift in the Turkey-US relations and the Turkish foreign policy as a whole (Gözen, 2005).

Turkey's hard time on making a decision regarding its position concerning the Iraq war was originated by the country and its foreign policy division regarding two points. For once, Turkey aimed to protect its own security, as well as economic and political interests; however, on another hand, Turkey aimed to protect relations with the US which operated not only bilaterally, but also within NATO's framework, cooperating globally and regionally in many issues (Gözen, 2005).

Nonetheless, Turkey's decision to cooperate with the US was expected not only to maintain good relations, but also as a way for Turkey to guarantee its role in influencing Iraq post war. Many were, however, the reasons for Turkey's decision not to cooperate - for once public opinion, as previously stated, was one of the most important factors as Turkish people considered the operations illegitimate, immoral and unlawful. The public opinion was also worried about the negative implications of post war and the spillover effect in Turkey and the region as a whole. As previously stated, the consequences of the 1990 Gulf War was equally one of the main reasons for Turkey's decision to stay out of Iraq; the same can be said for the lack of agreement established between Ankara and Washington - while Turkey pursued the will to send as many troops as possible to Iraq as a way to strengthen the fight against PKK and the possibility of a Kurdish state establishment in the city, the US was against a relevant Turkish role, equally disagreeing over post-war reconstruction of Iraq (Gözen, 2005).

Turkey's decision brought both positive and negative aspects. Turkey's lack of involvement allowed the country to avoid being trapped into a Civil War in Iraq such that it equally improved its image in most of the world, especially Europe, and particularly the European Union, and the Islamic World, that stood against an intervention in Iraq. The EU became fully aware that Turkey's foreign policy and foreign security are closely linked to its own - with that being said, the UE no longer viewed Turkey as a '*security consumer country*' as before, but as a '*security provider country*' (Gözen, 2005). In opposition, not getting involved, also brought negative consequences. For once, it builds grounds for a crisis of confidence in Turkish-US relations, as not only was the US disappointed, as Turkey equally frowned upon American decisions in the country and, particularly, the role assigned to the Kurds in Iraq's reconstruction, which became one block in the US policy towards Iraq and an increasingly growing threat to Turkey's security (Gözen, 2005).

4. Turkey's (changing) Role in Afghanistan

On the other hand, a different approach was led by Turkey considering the war in Afghanistan. In October 2001, the war against the Taliban was launched as, in the aftermath of 9/11, they were appointed as responsible for providing a safe haven to Al-Qaeda and refused to send any member up for trial in International Court (Çubuk, 2014). Since 2001, the US and NATO allies have deployed forces in Afghanistan as stated by the UN Security Council mandate in order to guarantee the country would not be, once again, a refuge for international terrorists and assume the role of a threat to any NATO member countries (NATO,

2022). In order for the NATO coalition to be put into practice, both article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations and the fifth article of the NATO Treaty were used as ground (Çubuk, 2014).

After the 9/11 terrorist attack, the American foreign policy and national security strategy were redefined as the war on terrorism, along with the use of weapons of mass destruction became the main security threats; the Bush Administration took upon a preemptive action, invading Afghanistan aiming to capture Osama bin Laden and replace with a US supporting government (Çubuk, 2014).

The intervention in Afghanistan could bring important benefits for NATO allies, mainly the elimination of Al-Qaeda leaders, however, if the US is not capable of guaranteeing the stability of the region, it could diminish the perception of its power in the international system - the intervention in Afghanistan equally represent an important test to the NATO alliance (Çubuk, 2014).

Concerning Turkey's position in the war, it's important to consider Turkey-Afghanistan relations - the relations between these countries was primarily established with the Treaty in Moscow in 1921, as Afghanistan became the first state to recognize Turkey and the latter equally recognized Afghanistan's independence. Nonetheless, the relations assumed a bigger and strategic relevance as both countries signed the Treaty of Eternal Amity on May 25th 1928, leading Afghanistan to recognize Turkey as the leader of the Islamic world, while Turkey supported Afghanistan with advisors and formation of state institutions. However, after World War II, as the Cold War erupted, as Turkey allied with US and NATO, Afghanistan took support from the Soviet Union, distancing from the western Alliance and leading the West to dissociate from the state's interests. As for Turkey, the country entered into NATO as a security guarantee which equally resulted in the detachment from Afghanistan (Çubuk, 2014).

After 9/11, Turkey's course of action within Afghanistan pursued the protection of the country's independence and territorial integrity and stability, aiming to shield the country from terrorism and fundamentalist threats. The Turkish Foreign Minister considered, therefore, the foreign policy in Afghanistan, based on four different principles: guaranteeing Afghanistan's integrity, providing security and stability strengthening its political structure and elimination of terrorism and extremism (Imai, 2021).

Turkey took part in Afghanistan through international cooperation under the fifth article of NATO, willingly stating the country's availability to fight alongside other powers concerning the threat against terrorism,

equally defending the importance of a strategic partnership with the United States and allowing for the use of the Incirlik air base and other facilities in order to allow for NATO troops' transportation. Turkey did, however, limit the military contributions for non-combatant forces, using its resources mainly for training Afghan troops and supporting the international forces in the country. Nevertheless, Turkey made it clear that if a military operation took place, the country would not provide troops, but that it would however provide military education and intelligence (Imai, 2021). Turkey is recognized for assuming a unique position, since Turkey is not only offering distinct resources as it's also the only Muslim country in NATO, gaining trust from the Afghans, NATO and the US (Çubuk, 2014).

For Turkey to pursue its policy in Afghanistan, Turkey would operate through soft power mechanisms such as the Turkish International Cooperation Agency (TİKA), where Afghanistan stands as the fifth recipient in 2019. Since 2001, Turkey has participated not only through NATO and coordination with the UN, but also through the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and its successor Resolute Support Mission, supporting Afghanistan by training its military (Imai, 2021).

As NATO institutionalized the first civilian-led Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) it was established by NATO aiming to improve the quality of life of the Afghan people as well as developing infrastructure and funding social, educational and health projects. Turkey's growing role in the region during the Afghanistan war was coherent with Turkey's membership in NATO. Therefore, if the US failed in Afghanistan, it would mean NATO, and Turkey, would lose alongside Turkish-American relations (Imai, 2021).

Standing as a long run conflict since 2001, after his election in 2020, President Joe Biden announced on the 13th April 2021, the US troops would leave Afghanistan, as stated per an agreement established with the Taliban. With that being said, in fourteen days it was expected that all NATO's allies and coalition forces would withdraw from the country, raising concern about Afghanistan's security (Imai, 2021).

Although worried about the possible Afghan refugees flowing into Turkey, the country saw the US withdrawal as an opportunity to improve its relationship with the US and, overall, with NATO. Regarding the West, Turkey has adopted, during the AKP's mandate, an assertive and threatening tone, including concerning NATO and its position in the Alliance. That being said, Turkey has been also looking for self-sufficiency and more strategic autonomy, aiming to create a defense industry technologically advanced - this ambition may have

been the roots for turbulent action within NATO that culminated with the acquisition of the Russian S-400 system, impossible to coordinate and a threat to the West, and NATO's, security system. (Haougom, 2019).

Due to the current context, Turkey might use its contribution to the mission and the withdrawal of the US as an opportunity to restore trust in NATO (Imai, 2021). Nonetheless, the Taliban are not keen on Turkey starting in the country as they have advised Turkey to withdraw their forces from Afghanistan; therefore, Turkey aims to get the approval of the Taliban to maintain its mission in the Kabul airport¹², in replacement of the US troops (Dayan, 2021).

¹² Currently controlled by the United Arab Emirates (George, 2022)

Chapter 3: The Syrian Conflict and the Russia-Ukraine War

1. A Case Study on Syria: Foreign Policy Shift

In the 16th century, Syria became part of the Ottoman Empire and continued as such until after the I World War (Askerov, 2017). However, it was especially after the end of the Cold War that tension arose between Syria and Turkey. For once, Syria expressed support to the PKK, being accused of allowing its territory to serve as ground for militant Kurdish groups in its fight against Turkey; other than that, there were also disputes between both countries regarding the Hatat province and the Euphrates and Tigris rivers (Tziarras, 2022).

In 1998 the discordance between the two countries escalated as Turkey threatened Syria with war as a strategy to limit Syria's support to the PKK and its role in providing a safe haven to the group's leader, Abdullah Öcalan (Tziarras, 2022). The Turkish-Syrian relation changed in the 2000s as Turkey's coercive diplomacy led to Syria's compliance in terms of Kurdish policy and as the AKP came to power in 2002, improving commercial and economic relations with Syria (Tziarras, 2022). According to Askerov (2017), the death of the Syrian president Hafez al-Assad in 2000 drove the improved relations between the countries that were followed through by Recep Erdogan and AKP.

Turkey's growing relations with Syria mirrored the country's policy change in the region, brought upon by the AKP. When analyzing Turkey's historical course of action in the Middle East and, overall, in its neighboring region, during the 20th century, Turkey avoided getting involved in regional issues (Taşpınar, 2012). Nonetheless, as stated in previous chapters, according to Özel & Güvenç (2012), since 2002, Turkey changed its foreign policy, drifting away from the "Westernization" tendency it had assumed since the Cold War and started embracing its Islamic ideology (Benli Altunisik, 2009). Taking this shift into consideration, since 2002, Turkey reinforced ties with countries such as Syria and Iran, improved its presence in the Arab League conferences, became involved in the UN's mission in Lebanon and assumed a leadership position in the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) (Taşpınar, 2012). Although Turkey improved relations with its neighboring countries, from 2002 onwards and during the mid-2000s, Turkish foreign policy was described as "*Zero Problems with Neighbors*", as the country used diplomatic efforts, avoiding getting caught up in regional conflicts (Manhoff, 2017).

The Syrian crisis unfolded in 2011 and it has brought upon a dilemma for Turkey's policy in the region, leading the country to assume a growing involvement in regional issues (Taşpınar, 2012).

Facing the Syrian crisis, Turkey, and in particular the AKP government, took a shift concerning the country's foreign policy, leading it to a new, more assertive and interventive direction. Turkey's role within Syria took part as the biggest and most aggressive interference the country had taken in a neighboring territory and its affairs since the beginning of the 20th century (Salt, 2018).

Facing the Arab Spring and the collapse of several governments, due to the popular uprisings in countries like Tunisia, Libya and Egypt, in March 2011, in Syria, popular reaction against the government equally emerged (Salt, 2018). The city of Daraa, in the southwest of Syria, saw the first pro-democratic protests in the country in the aftermath of the arrest and torture of students who painted revolutionary and anti-government slogans on a school wall. The protests were once again met with violence and repression from the security forces who killed several protesters and, in turn, incited a bigger reaction on the demonstrators, increasing the number of people protesting in the streets and leading to nationwide protests that aimed for the fall of the government and the resignation of President Bashar al-Assad (BBC, 2016). Therefore, peaceful demonstrations aiming for goals such as the release of political prisoners, democratic reforms, the free creation and operation of political parties and the lifting of emergency laws established in 1963, were at the beginning of the Syrian crisis that later unfolded (Ilgit and Davis, 2013).

As violence heightened, the initial uprisings and revolutionary protests quickly escalated into a civil war where rebel groups and government fought for the control of different cities and territories and by 2012, the conflict had already reached Damascus and Aleppo, the two biggest cities in the country (BBC, 2016).

Turkey's first approach into the Syrian crisis, a country with which since the early 2000s and in particular since the AKPs and Erdogan's rise to power, relations have been improved, was marked by a soft policy and diplomatic approach. Therefore, as the crisis emerged in March 2011, Erdogan addressed President Assad directly, with whom he maintained good relations, asking for the implementation of economic, and mostly, political and social reforms taken by the current government (Taşpınar, 2012; Ilgit and Davis, 2013). However, Turkey's efforts seemed to be fruitless and its capacity to influence Assad's course of action was less than expected and the crisis saw the level of violence growing, from both the government and the protestors' side. By November 2011, Erdogan saw the necessity to increase its assertiveness towards the

Syrian President, asking for his resignation and supporting the Syrian opposition, including by allowing for several meetings of the Syrian opposition to meet in Turkish grounds (Taşpınar, 2012; Manhoff, 2017) - in November 2011, in a speech addressed to the AKP, Erdogan said it was time for Assad to finally step down *“Without spilling any more blood, without causing any more injustice, for the sake of peace for the people, the country and the region (...)”*, even comparing Syria's decision making to politics pursued by Hitler and Mussolini (Burch, 2011). With this in mind, in 2011, Turkey came to face the limitations of its regional policy of *“zero problems with friends”* and its regional influence (Taşpınar, 2012; Manhoff, 2017).

Other than the direct diplomatic efforts with Syria to end the conflict, Turkey's initial approach was also keen on international intervention and the creation of safe-zones for the armed opposition in Syria. Therefore, the rhetoric used by Turkey and in particular by the Foreign Minister Davutoğlu implied that Turkey's course of action was limited to the intervention of the international community, which was mostly lacking and failing as it did in the past with Gaza and Srebrenica, as examples (Davutoğlu, 2012). This presented another limitation to the Turkish diplomatic approach as the country soon realized the United Nations was incapable of achieving consensus in respect to the international influence in Syria, as Russia and China did not agree with any intervention. This was another factor that led Turkey to understand the limitations of the diplomatic approach and drove Ankara to cooperate with other countries, providing support and weapons to armed opposition and aligning itself with the Syrian National Council and the Free Syrian Army (FSA) (Manhoff, 2017).

The shift in Turkish foreign policy was confirmed by the decision taken by the Turkish Grand National Assembly, on October 4th, 2012, as a motion that authorized the deployment of the armed forces to foreign countries, in case the government saw fit to do so, was approved. Although it was not necessarily mentioned in the motion, the Syrian crisis was the main motive for the approval of such decision, as the motion proposal was triggered by the incident in the town of Akçakale, days before the Turkish Grand National Assembly, where five Turkish citizens were killed and nine wounded by a mortar shell fired from Syria that hit this region in Turkey (Ilgit and Davis, 2013). The repercussions of the Syria conflict had already caused casualties of Turkish citizens as in June 2011, a Turkish fighter jet was shot down resulting in a killing of two pilots which, once again, caused changes in the Turkish foreign policy and the military assets from Syria began to be seen as a threat (Ilgit and Davis, 2013).

Other than that, in response to the Turkish diplomacy approach, the Syrian government reacted violently to the protests leading to the mass arrest of activists. By June 2011, it was estimated that about 1400 people had been killed and 10 000 arrested since the beginning of the crisis in march of that same year (Ilgit and Davis, 2013). Before shifting into a more interventive policy, in August 2011, the Turkish foreign minister held a six hours meeting with president Assad, warning that Turkey would stop the diplomatic approach if Syria did not take steps into stopping the killing of civilians and changed its approach. On the 7th of August 2011, Turkey officially condemned Syrian actions and in that same month it supported the transformation of the Syrian opposition into the Syrian National Council (SNC), with that being formed in Istanbul (Manhoff, 2017); Turkey equally opened its borders to armed opposition and rebel groups. With that in mind, in September 2011, Turkey stopped the contact with the Syrian government, implementing in particular an arms embargo in Syria (Ilgit and Davis, 2013).

Due to Turkey's growing role in the region and, especially, its geographic position and close proximity with Syria, Turkey assumed many different roles in the Syrian crisis, initially assuming mostly a mediation role in the crisis solution and, after that, collaborating with and sheltering armed opposition groups; Turkey assumed as well a crucial role in hosting the refugees originated from the conflict (Ilgit and Davis, 2013). In 2011, Recep Erdogan even described the developments of the Syrian crisis as almost an internal issue for Turkey (Manhoff, 2017).

It is important to note that even though Turkey and the international community became involved in the conflict and aimed for its strategic resolution, Turkey faced many difficulties considering the support of the Syrian opposition since from the beginning there were many groups standing against the Syrian regime, from more secular to more radical and Islamic oriented. Turkey did not only shift its position towards Syria, as it equally shifted its support in the opposition into more hardline forces, backed by countries such as Qatar and Saudi Arabia (Manhoff, 2017). Turkey's choice to support more extremist groups also represented a rupture with the West, as the western countries grew more and more preoccupied with the terrorist groups and organizations emerging in Syria, Turkey increased its support to the Islamic and mostly extremist factions, not placing a special concern on the War on Terror but instead prioritizing the regime change in Syria and its own battle against the PKK and other Kurdish groups; Turkey's regional power ambitions, rather than a close relationship with West became even more obvious after the end of 2013 where the support to radical Islamic groups assumed a more significant role (Manhoff, 2017).

1.1. Turkey and the West

As Turkey adopted a different foreign policy approach in Syria, intervening directly in a neighbor's conflict, the country equally redefined its alliances whether international or regionally, taking into account its domestic and foreign interests and goals. For once, especially since 2015, the Syrian war has been the most challenging issue in American-Turkish relations, especially as the US has come to support Kurdish groups of the opposition that Turkey considers the country's biggest threat (Siccardi, 2021).

As the US established a relationship with the Kurds, Turkey aimed, almost exclusively, the country's political and military resources in Syria to the weakening of the Kurdish forces, mainly from 2018 onwards, since according to Erdogan it should *be "absolutely unacceptable to take the YPG-PYD into consideration as partners in the region (..)"* because that would be against a global agreement reached by both countries (BBC, 2011). Turkey's reaction and policy regarding Syrian Kurds was also related to Syrian history with Kurdish cadres as in 1980s and 1990s, the Syrian government sheltered many Kurdish cadres in its territory, including the PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan, which put the two countries in the brink of war until the president Hafez al-Assad decided to abandon the Kurdish policy and forced the PKK leader to leave the country in 1998. Since then, and especially with the rise of the AKP, the successive governments have tried to improve the relationship with the PKK in order to win their support in the electoral vote, even abolishing, in 2002 the emergency state in southeastern Turkey, allowing for the creation of a Kurdish television channel in the 2000s and establishing a formal truce in 2013 (Siccardi, 2021)

Nonetheless, even as Turkey's relationship with the PKK improved and the AKP governments even allowed for the Democratic Union Party (PYD) to rise, a PKK's Syrian affiliate, the trust between these two parties soon came to an end as in 2012 the YPG, the PYD's military wing, took control in many territories in the north of Syria, building the fear of a Kurdish State creation in Turkey. Therefore, the US-Kurd relationship was not well perceived by the Turkish government and population. The end of Turkey's peace process with the PKK came in 2013, when the country refused to help the Kurdish forces against the Islamic State in the town of Kobani and was officially declared in 2015 as Erdogan stated that there wasn't a *"Kurdish problem in Turkey"* anymore (Siccardi, 2021).

Concerning Turkish domestic policy, the AKP saw the support for the party decrease as it no longer enjoyed the Kurds' backing. Taking these developments into consideration, in June 2015, the AKP failed to gain a

parliamentary majority and saw fit to pursue a new source of political support which the party found by establishing an alliance with the Nationalist Movement Party - on the 1st of November, 2015, the AKP managed to obtain a parliamentary majority and in the 2017 referendum, the Turkish people approved the constitutional reform to strengthen the President's power; Turkey's military intervention from 2016 onwards and its first militia operation need to be understood into this context, which leads to the nationalist rhetoric adopted against the PKK and their understanding as a terrorist group and main threat for Turkey (Siccardi, 2021).

Although the Kurdish issue was one of the main struggles in the US-Turkey relationship in Syria, it is important to understand how these countries' ties were already jeopardized from the start of the conflict - as Turkey continuously asked for the support of the international community and for the establishment of no fly zones in Syria, the US successively denied Turkish requests and even decided not to act upon Syria after the country was accused of using chemical weapons in 2013, with this in mind, Turkey was met with misaligned expectations concerning the role of the international community in the conflict. However, product of the international pressure and also its own perception of the terrorist organization, Turkey joined the US led coalition against the Islamic State in September 2014, aligning with Obama's new strategy that prioritized the downfall of the Islamic State over the downfall of the Assad regime. Obama's new strategy included, nonetheless, the search for a dependable partner to fight the Islamic State on the ground, which the US found on the Kurdish Democratic Union Party (PYD) and the YPG, establishing ties with Turkey's biggest threat (Manhoff, 2017).

Considering the many shortfalls of the Turkey-US relation in Syria, the battle of Kobani and the divergences regarding the YPG, are one of the main key points. In the summer of 2014, the town of Kobani, controlled by the YPG, was attacked by the Islamic State (IS), however the Turkish forces had already closed off the borders of the town and the Kurdish groups in Turkey had no possibility to support the YPG troops, leading Turkey to be accused of supporting the Islamic State, also considering its previous role in supporting and arming foreign fighters who later on joined more radical Islamic terrorist groups (Manhoff, 2017; Siccardi, 2021). The Kobani battle assumed an important landmark symbolizing the moment the YPG became the reliable alliance of the US in Syrian ground.

When considering the role it could play in the Kobani conflict in 2014 and 2015, Turkey did not understand how much the US valued the defeat of the Islamic State as its main priority and, for that reason, did not allow for a better cooperation with the Kurdish fighters or assumed a higher role in fighting the IS, therefore, underestimating the importance of this battle for the US, Turkey offered only the Sunni forces as support against the IS in Kobani, which resulted in a shift in the US loyalties (Siccardi, 2021). As the YPG assumed an important piece for the US in Syria, it not only received support in terms of arms supply, but also in terms of logistics and military training which equally allowed the group to conquer the territory along the Syrian-Turkish borders in the east side of the Euphrates River. This newly formed alliance paired with the end of the peaceful atmosphere between Turkey and the PKK led to an increased animosity with the Kurdish fighters (Manhoff, 2017).

The tensions between the two previous allies found reasoning on the fact no regime change was undertaken in Syria, blaming Obama's lack of action for that and for many of the conflict consequences, such as the refugee flow into Turkey and many economic and social struggles. Turkey's disapproval regarding the American lack of reaction and its connection with the YPG came from its fear of the possible emergence of a terrorist state in Turkey's borders (Cook, 2018).

Apart from this disparity, there are other downfalls in the Turkey-US relationship that reinforce the different goals and interests of both of these countries. For once, Turkey's disregard for US-Kurdish alliance continued to be at the center of the discrepancy as Turkey invaded areas occupied by Syrian Kurdish, such as Afrin and the surrounding area of Aleppo, intervening in the Kurds' fight, and the US, against the Islamic State (Cook, 2018).

Other struggles concern the countries' approach to both Pastor Brunson and Fethullah Gulen. In regards to the first, in 2016 Pastor Andrew Brunson, an American citizen, was arrested in Turkey for espionage and connection with the PKK and the Gulen movement. On the other hand, in the aftermath of the 2016 coup attempt in Turkey, the country demanded for the extradition of Fethullah Gulen, accusing the Islamic scholar of influencing the 2016 coup attempt. Nonetheless, the US government refused to do that as it did not consider Gulen responsible for any terrorist activity and, consequently, found no ground for his extradition. In face of this disagreement, in September 2017, President Erdogan proposed the exchanging of Pastor Andrew Brunson for Fethullah Gulen. However, the US did not cooperate with Ankara and initially imposed

sanctions on two government ministers due to the detention, damaging Turkey's public opinion on the US and leading to President Erdogan accusing the US of "*economic warfare*" against Turkey. Apart from the sanctions, Turkey grew discontent on the US since Ankara blames Fethullah Gulen for the coup attempt and cannot punish him due to the US lack of cooperation (Cook, 2018), which equally led Turkey to blame the US for taking part in the coup and increased on the already existing idea regarding the possibility of the United States involvement in the Gezi Park protests in 2013.

Taking into account the tensions felt by the US and Turkey, in the context of the Syrian crisis, Turkey assumed a rapprochement with the partners to its East, including both Moscow and Tehran. Once again, this course of action was not well perceived by the US and discontent culminated with Ankara's plan of purchasing the S-400 air defense missile system from Russia. Turkey intended on operating simultaneously the Russian system and the F-35, a high-tech military jet, operated within the NATO alliance. This raised concerns in the West, not only due to Ankara's growing dependence on Russia, but also on behalf of Moscow's privileged position to gather intelligence from the West and to easily detect the NATO's F-35 (Cook, 2018).

In July 2018, the American Congress reacted by prohibiting the F-35 delivery in Turkey until it was released an assessment, by the Department of Defense, on the impact of the simultaneous usage of the S-400 and the F-35 and how that might allow Russia to access privileged information regarding western defense. On the other hand, Turkey did not accept the West's critics since the US did not allow Ankara to purchase a US manufactured system, which was the main reason leading to the Turkey-Russia alliance in regards to defense material (Cook, 2018). As Turkey decided to follow through with the purchase of the Russian system, in 2019, the decision was met with sanctions by the US and the final decision to exclude Turkey from the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter Program (Siccardi, 2021).

Nevertheless, Ankara's connection with Russia in terms of defense did not stay isolated in the purchase of the S-400. Russia assumed a key role in regards to Turkish nuclear development and in April 2018, as stated in a governmental agreement signed in 2010, they began to work on the construction of a nuclear power plant at Akkuyu (Salt, 2018).

The Turkey-West relationship was threatened as well by the refugee crisis the Syrian War generated in Turkey and that led to friction with the EU. Receiving over 3.5 million refugees in its territory, both in 2018 and 2016, President Erdogan spoke up against the European Union for not delivering the aid previously promised

and threatened to open the borders gates to allow refugees into the rest of Europe if the western approach to the problem did not change (Salt, 2018). Adding up to the relevant number of refugees in Turkish ground, an anti-refugee sentiment equally grew in the country, increasing social problems and spats.

Therefore, Turkey's increasing relation with Moscow is also understood as result from the relationship with the West, as the belief in NATO and the guarantee the Alliance would come in the country's defense in case of need became questionable for Turks, especially due to the connection with the YPG. Turkey's newfound ties with Russia did not only imply a threat to the bilateral relation with the US, but especially for the cooperation within the NATO Alliance. Notwithstanding the rapprochement with eastern allies and the damages in the relation with the West, Turkey maintained a connection through the West by holding its position in NATO and also due to its constant ambition in taking part of the European Union; the economic ties as well as security and intelligence cooperation with the West are also relevant for both Turkey and Western allies and indicate that even if their relationship might be damaged, it will most likely remain a reality (Salt, 2018). On the other hand, it's important to understand Turkey's role in NATO in a different light from the one it assumed during the Cold War, creating even more ambiguity in the relationship. Erdogan's centralization of power and its approach in regards to the suppression of rights concerning journalists, academics and even civil organizations, equally assumed a concern for Turkey-West relations (Cook, 2018).

Although the disparities in a diplomatic level between the West and Turkey, especially the US and Turkey, have grown notably since the Syrian war, the NATO alliance still remains an important tie to the West and it remains unlikely the effects of the Syrian War imply a long-term shift in Turkey's foreign and domestic policy (Manhoff, 2017).

1.2. Turkey and the Regional Powers

Since the beginning of the Syrian War, as previously stated, Turkey, and in particular the AKP government took upon a change in regards to the country's foreign policy that equally implied changes in Ankara's allies and allowed for the rapprochement with neighboring countries such as Russia and Iran.

However, it's important to note that the increased communications and cooperation during the Syrian Crisis, does not imply an established strategic partnership between these countries. Turkey's relationship with Russia and Iran has actually been compromised since the beginning of the Syrian war since both Russia and

Iran supported the Assad regime and Turkey sided with the West, aiming for the downfall of the Syrian government (Manhoff, 2017).

Specifically concerning the Turkish-Russian relation, the two countries have been pointed out to assume either a “*cooperative competition*” or a “*competitive cooperation*” (Siccardi, 2021), depending on the issue at hand and how much their interests converge.

As previously mentioned, Turkey did not feel, as an Alliance, that NATO was focused on finding a strategic response for the situation in the Middle East, especially concerning the adopted Kurdish policy by the US and looking for a possible ally in Russia.

Nonetheless, as Turkey and Russia saw the opportunity for an alliance on the Syrian ground, the relationship between the two was not as smooth as expected. In November 14th 2015, a particular threatening episode for these countries occurred as Turkey shot down, through a F16 fighter aircraft, a Russian jet in the Turkish-Syrian border (Oğuzlu, 2012). This occurrence brought strains in the Turkish-Russian relations as trade sanctions were immediately implemented by Russia against Turkey, and only lifted in May 2017 when relations were once again improved with cooperation between these countries for the Astana Peace Talks (Salt, 2018).

In the aftermath of the Russian Jet downing, came a diplomatic crisis between the countries, not only marked by trade sanctions, but also by increased limitations considering Turkey's actions in Syria as the Russian military did not allow for the Turkish direct intervention against both the rebels and the IS. Facing this scenario, Turkey aimed to recover relations with Russia and in May Turkey officially apologized for the event, improving Russian-Turkish relations (Manhoff, 2017). As that allowed for improvements between these countries, in the aftermath of the coup attempt in Turkey, on the 15th July 2016, President Putin was the first to reach out to President Erdogan and to show support in regards to the situation, once again allowing for the improvement in this relationship (Oğuzlu, 2012). Bearing in mind the Turkey-Russia rapprochement, Turkey saw fit to shift its priorities in Syria, shifting further away from its goal of regime change in Syria to focusing on the YPG combat along the Syria-Turkey's border (Manhoff, 2017).

The Turkish acquisition of the S-400 Triumf Air-Defense system from Russia highlighted the rapprochement between the two countries and assumed the culmination of the established relationship (Turkey and NATO,

2019). This purchase equally assumed itself as the biggest threat to the NATO alliance (Oya, 2019), as it symbolized the troubled relation Turkey has come to develop with the Alliance and threatening NATO's technology and intelligence against Russian forces - therefore, NATO could not allow for the integration of S-400 into the Alliance's data system as it could allow for the weakening of NATO's defense system. In 2019, the US declared Turkey would not be able to purchase the 100 F-25AS and that it could no longer take part in the F-25 production due to its links with the Russian defense (Turkey and NATO, 2019). The strains caused by the Turkey-Russia cooperation were reinforced by the Russian support for Turkish Nuclear development. In 2010, both countries had already established an agreement for the construction of a nuclear power plant in the town of Akkuyu, which was initiated in April 2018.

The Turkish-Russian rapprochement led to considerable changes in the Syrian war as, for once, Turkey saw new policy options as its course of action was no longer denied or stopped by the Russian military presence and Ankara was even allowed to conduct missions in Syrian airspace; on the other hand, Russia also saw an increased possibility to intervene, as Turkey became silent over events such Russian airstrikes in Aleppo (Manhoff, 2017). With this in mind, both countries saw the pact as a positive way to pursue their goals: for Turkey it meant the opportunity to guarantee Moscow would keep the Syrian Kurds in check, not allowing them to assume a threatening position against Turkey; as for Russia, although initially its main focus was the support of the Assad regime, which was not a position taken by Turkey, the country still aimed to establish a relationship with Ankara as that harmed US interests and could bring vulnerability into the NATO alliance (Siccardi, 2021).

As a way to pursue a resolution regarding the Syrian Conflict, in 2016, the United Nations initiated the Geneva Peace Talks which can be described as peace negotiations between the Syrian government and the respective opposition. However, no evident results were achieved from the Geneva Peace Talks and in response to that, on the 20th December 2016 the Astana Peace Process was introduced, implemented in January 2017, as a complement to the previously mentioned process, when Turkey, Russia and Iran decided to pursue Syrian Peace Talks in the city of Astana, following the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2254. The Astana Peace Talks aimed for the indirect talks of the Syrian opposition and government with the three mentioned countries as observers of the discussion, while respecting the Geneva Talks (Talukdar and Anas, 2018).

Although Iran, Turkey and Russia decided to cooperate regarding the Syrian conflict, it was not always easy to achieve consensus between all the parties. In particular during the eight rounds of the Astana Talks, in December 2017, achieving consensus regarding a peaceful resolution was not possible and it resulted in the Russian Forces' partial withdrawal from Syria. Nonetheless, all countries agreed upon the necessity to guarantee Syria's sovereignty, the conduction of fair elections and the elimination of terrorism. Under the Astana Peace Process, de-escalation areas were created including the Idlib province; the Rastan and Talbiseh enclave; Eastern Ghouta - Damascus; the southern areas along the border with Jordan - that have helped in reduction of violence and the flow of refugees, gathering conditions for the return of displaced people. Taking this into consideration, the UN and many world leaders have recognized Astana's contribution to the diplomatic attempt in resolving the conflict, complementing the Geneva Process (Talukdar and Anas, 2018). Nonetheless, as the Astana Talks evolved, it gradually replaced the Geneva process.

As Turkey and Russia cooperate in the Syrian War and show flexibility regarding their approach in the conflict, they still face relevant disagreements over issue such as the future of Syria: for once, both Russia and Iran support the Syrian government, while Turkey's main goal in the beginning of the conflict was the removal of Assad from power - even if the main goal for Turkey became the fight against Kurdish groups, this was still a position Turkey held throughout the war. Another point of discordance in the Turkish-Russian relation was the fact that, in similarity to the US, Russia does not consider PYD a terrorist organization and assumes a different position over the opposition's groups in relation to the one followed by Turkey (Çitlioğlu, 2020).

1.3. Turkey in Syria through Entrapment and Abandonment

Under the method of in process tracing and plausibility probe, and considering the theoretical framework of Intra-Alliance Security Dilemma, when assessing the illustrative case study of Turkey's involvement in the Syrian War in comparison with the West's, and in particular NATO's, course of action, we aim to understand how fear of abandonment and/or entrapment imply causal relation, and therefore the reason for, Turkey's disruptive conduct within the Alliance.

Considering Turkey in the NATO Alliance, it's important to note that the country's geographic position as the most eastern country brings specific particularities in relation to the possible consequences regarding regional issues. Therefore, as the Syrian crisis erupted, Turkey's course of action could not only consider the Alliances' interest as it necessarily implied domestic interests.

Right at the beginning of the conflict, fearing the possible implications it might create for Turkey, the country's representatives, from President Erdogan to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ahmet Davutoğlu, instantly called out the necessity of the international community to intervene in Syria. In particular, on the 30th of August of 2012, in New York, the Minister of Foreign Affairs emphasized the need of international action in order to undermine the conflict at hand, highlighting the role Turkey has played in the conflict and the number of refugees in the country so far until that month.

Against this background, right at the beginning of the conflict, Turkey felt fear about the possibility of entrapment in this regional conflict, not because of its role in the Alliance, but because of its specific geographic position. Nonetheless, the fears regarding the Alliance started early into the conflict as the West did not comply with Turkey's expectations regarding its involvement in the Conflict and especially in establishing a security zone in Syria which Turkey felt was crucial for its own security for which NATO did not show any proactivity or concern.

However, the main reason for Turkey's doubt regarding NATO and the consequent fear of abandonment came from the US and Turkey's misalignment regarding the main threat in Syria: for once, as the US quickly defined terrorism and the Islamic State as its main threat, due to historical connection and geographic proximity to Syria, Turkey's main threat fell on the PKK. As Turkey felt deeply concerned regarding the possibility of Kurdish groups passing through the Syrian-Turkish border, fear of abandonment regarding NATO came not only because these groups were not considered the Alliance's main concern but, especially, due to the fact that, during the conflict, the US chose Kurdish groups such as the YPG and PYD as their main strategic partner on the ground, providing arms and military support for these groups. Apart from this, Turkey alone received more than 3.5 million refugees, sustaining deep economic and social consequences without receiving support from the West.

Putting into practice the plausibility probes, it is possible to conclude that the fear of abandonment felt by Turkey regarding the Alliance, was the main reason for Turkey's disruptive action considering that same Alliance, such as the alignment with Iran and Russia and, in particular, the purchase of the S400 Defense Missile System; and even Turkey's connection with possible nationalist and terrorist groups in Syria, as the country's main ambition rested on defeating Kurdish groups that ended up backed by the US.

2. A Case Study on the Russia-Ukraine War: Turkey's Maneuvering between Both Parties

The Russia-Ukraine War brought upon the possibility of changes in the international system and international order due to the global impact it generated, also allowing Turkey to reevaluate its strategic position in the current order (Tapia, 2022).

Ukraine's geopolitical position assumes an important role regarding aspects such as energy supply from Asia to Europe. However, apart from its relevance for Europe, also assuming a position in the post-soviet sphere of influence, Ukraine and Russian relations equally assume a bigger relevance. Therefore, since the end of the Soviet Union, Ukraine has assumed a "*crisis of management style*" (Dag, 2022). Ukraine has faced difficulties in implementing a concrete foreign and domestic policy since the country has shifted from either a biggest convergence with Russia or the West. In specific, since 2004, the country has suffered with instability regarding this division, starting with the Orange Revolution where people-initiated protests in the streets and the presidential elections that opposed the pro-Western candidate, Viktor Yushchenko, and the pro-Russian candidate, Viktor Yanukovich, which was at the origin of the revolutions - taking this context into consideration, protests began as Viktor Yanukovich was declared the winner of the elections. Taking these results into account, the country received criticism about internal and external interference in the elections, which led the Ukrainian Supreme Court to renew the elections; with the repeat of the election, in the 26th December, 2004, Viktor Yushchenko won the election process, shifting the country into a pro-Western approach (Dag, 2022).

In face of the instability and armed conflicts between the two groups in Ukraine, it allowed Russia to take action in the country initially by annexing Crimea and unilaterally declaring the autonomy of several areas where the Russian population and influence were dominant (Dag, 2022).

In the face of Russian Intervention, Turkey supported Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity and Recep Erdogan disapproved of the annexation of Crimea, defending the Turkic Tatars as justification. Therefore, the Ukrainian-Turkish relationship can actually be described as a partnership as both countries signed a military cooperation agreement in 2020 and in 2021 Turkey publicly announced its support considering Ukraine's membership in NATO. Apart from that, days before Russia's invasion of Ukraine, on the 3rd February 2022, Turkey and Ukraine signed an agreement regarding free trade and the joint production of manufactured Turkish drones (Isler, 2022).

Russia felt its influence in the post-soviet space to be threatened by the closeness of countries such as Georgia and Ukraine and the Western institutions, such as the European Union and NATO. Taking this into account, when Russia felt the possibility of membership for these countries within NATO, Moscow reacted by showcasing the option of military intervention in order to control or limit the course of actions of these governments. Fearing the possibility of the western, and in specific the American, power extension into the post-soviet space, Russia intervened militarily in Georgia, controlling both South Ossetia and Abkhazia; equally considering the Ukraine's situation, Russia's main goal was to guarantee a pro-Russian government, affirming its willingness to intervene and threaten the Ukraine's relation with the West, in case the government did not match Moscow's interests (Dag, 2022).

As the Russian-Ukrainian War escalated, on the 24th February 2022, Erdogan quickly denounced Russia's course of action, affirming that the Russian military intervention is unacceptable, against the international law and a threat to regional peace (Isler, 2022).

Although Turkey showed its discontentment over the 2014 Crimea annexation, its *"Zero Problems with neighbors"* policy driven by the AKP in the 2000s did not allow the country to exert influence over the post-Soviet space. Nonetheless, it was still capable of developing a relationship with Ukraine regarding defense and to promote a cooperative partnership with Georgia and Azerbaijan (Tapia, 2022).

Turkey's balancing act in the region and its tentative to maintain a relation with both Ukraine and Russia, allowed the country to assume the role of a possible mediator as the Russian-Ukraine War emerged at the beginning of 2022; it's also important to reinforce that since the 24th February 2022, Turkey aimed not to take part into the conflict and to approach the situation with neutrality (Tapia, 2022).

In the aftermath of the Russian intervention, on the 2nd of March, Turkey voted in favor of the UN General Assembly Resolution demanding the withdrawal of Russian military forces from Ukraine. However, although Turkey was quick to condemn Russia's course of action, the country did not follow through with the NATO allies decision as it did not vote in favor of the sanctions imposed against Russian and neither did the country close its airspace to Russia civil aircraft - Turkey still assumes a considerable dependence both economically and militarily on Russia, especially considering running operations in Syria and Libya which led Erdogan to quickly criticize NATO's response (Tapia, 2022).

Other than that, Turkey's misalignment with NATO's decisions is also visible by Ankara's lack of support regarding the military alliance expansion through Finland and Sweden. This position was justified by Turkey regarding fear of these countries' support to the PKK (Chausovsky, 2022). With this in mind, to guarantee Turkey's support for Finland and Sweden's entry, it was necessary to celebrate a trilateral memorandum between the three ministers of foreign affairs of Turkey, Sweden and Finland, stating how Stockholm and Helsinki will prioritize Turkey's national security over connection with the PKK (Çavuşoğlu, Haavisto and Linde, 2022).

As the Russian-Ukrainian war started, Turkey mobilized humanitarian assistance, including the Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD), based both in Siret and Lviv, as a way to understand humanitarian needs and to send adequate aid; Turkey quickly became a stage for refugees as well, not only regarding Ukrainian but equally Russian citizens (Isler, 2022).

As Turkey and Russia both aim to gain regional and international relevance, the Syria and Russia-Ukraine wars assume an increasing importance for both these countries. As this conflict puts into question Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial independence, it represents a critical point in regional and global order and, taking as example the Syrian War, it can assume great importance for both Russia and Turkey's national interests. Therefore, if on one hand Turkey did not recognize the Crimea annexation in 2014 and criticized the Russian intervention in Ukraine in 2022, Ankara still maintained military, trade, economic and political relations with Russia, following the compartmentalization approach in its policy in order to pursue domestic interests (Dag, 2022).

Turkey has seen itself involved in the Ukrainian-Russian Conflict in many ways, concerning either security and military cooperation with Ukraine or energy cooperation with Russia and therefore it equally assumed an important role as a diplomatic mediator between both countries involved in the conflict (Chausovsky, 2022).

Right at the beginning of the war, the Russian and Ukrainian Foreign Ministers, Sergei Lavrov and Dmytro Kuleba, respectively, met in Antalya on March 10th, and later on, on the 29th of March, in Istanbul - although no agreement has come out of these meetings, Turkey was the country chosen to hold negotiations between the two parts of the conflict. Erdogan, and consequently Turkey, emerged as an important swing player in the war, following a compartmentalization policy and aiming to please both Russia and Ukraine (Isler, 2022).

With this in mind, Turkey aimed to please both countries, by condemning Russia's action and voting in favor of the UN resolution, but by avoiding sanctions against Russia, especially considering its dependent relation with Moscow in terms of tourism, trade and energy (Isler, 2022).

2.1. Turkey: Gains and Losses in the War

Although Turkey is an integral member of NATO, since the AKP's rise to power it has become an unpredictable actor within the Alliance acting sometimes independently and distant from the western course of action, especially when considering the relations established with eastern countries, such as Russia (Chausovsky, 2022).

Turkey's role in the Ukraine-Russia War and the tentative neutrality can be explained by Ankara's relation with both Moscow and Kiev – therefore, the war obligated Turkey to take part in a complex balancing act. Ankara's balancing act was particularly obvious concerning specific parameters such as the military cooperation with Ukraine, the misalignment with the West considering Russia and the increase of the country's power diplomacy in the region (Atlantic Council, 2022).

For once, understanding Turkey-Ukraine relations, it's crucial to understand their military cooperation - Turkey and Ukraine have an important connection regarding weaponry trade since Turkey is the main provider of the Bayraktar TB2 drones, which have been crucial in the Ukraine fight against Russia and provided continuous military trade to the country (Chausovsky, 2022). The military ties assumed a particular importance as the Baykar company, which has Erdogan's son in law as executive, aimed to provide drones free of charge to Ukraine (Stein, 2022).

Turkey defends Ukraine's sovereignty and independence, condemning Russia's actions as the conquering of this territory would be perceived as a threat to Turkey's security. Therefore, Ankara's reaction to this conflict was especially motivated by the country's own domestic interests, Turkey regional ambitions and Turkey's unpredictable relation with the West. As Turkey's presidential elections are scheduled for 2023, Erdogan's participation is calculated based on his desired results in the election, aiming to reduce, as much as possible, the economic and financial disequilibrium resulting from the war. Therefore, this conflict is highly worrying for Ankara's domestic policy since the country is dependent on Russia, in regards to energy both in terms of gas or nuclear energy, just like their joint cooperation in the Akkuyu Nuclear Power Plant project (Atlantic

Council, 2022; Stein, 2022). Turkey's relation with Russia is also marked by a strong cooperation regarding trade and the military operations in Syria, and all of these connections have led Turkey to implement an approach where Ankara aimed to be pro-Ukraine while not being anti-Russia, as stated per former Turkish diplomat, Sinan Ülgen (POLITICO, 2022).

Turkey's tentativeness of adopting a balance act was internationally criticized for being an approach aiming for war profit, even capitalizing sanctions and embargoes for its own benefit. Turkey's capitalization of the war is seen by the increased Turkey cooperation between Russia and Turkey, jumping from \$417.3 million in July 2021 to \$730 million in July 2022 regarding exports and from \$2.5 billion dollars in July 2021 to \$4.4 billion in July 2022 in terms of imports, representing 17% of Turkey's full imports between April and June in 2022 in comparison to 10% one year earlier (POLITICO, 2022).

While most European countries and companies consider the possibility of trading with Russia not only unethical, facing Moscow's course of action, they equally fear the reputational risk that might arise from it. Therefore, Turkey has assumed the position of an export base for most European companies, furthering on supply to Russia. Apart from trade, Turkey has also been accused of facilitating Russia's financial grip: from their trade being settle in rubles to Turkish banks adopting Mir, the Russian payment system, as alternative to the western SWIFT payment system from which Russian financial institutions have been excluded, this partnership has been vocally criticized by the West and in particularly by the US that threatened the western companies withdraw from Ankara (POLITICO, 2022).

Turkey also became a destination of interest to Russians since Ankara offered visa-free entry to Russian citizens and the possibility of acquiring Turkish citizenship in three months to all who purchase real estate worth \$250,000 or more (Isler, 2022). Turkey's Foreign Minister, Mevlut Çavusohlu, stated Turkey was welcoming Russian oligarchs into the country (POLITICO, 2022).

As previously mentioned, another point to consider is the lack of participation from Turkey regarding the West' sanctions against Russia, as well as the increased cooperation in energy between Turkey-Russia (Chausovsky, 2022).

Other than Turkey-Russia's relation, Turkey's role in the War has been crucial since Ankara plays a crucial part as a transit corridor from both Ukraine and Russia, especially considering resources like energy and

food (Chausovsky, 2022). Russia and Ukraine alone represent 53% of the global trade in sunflower oil and seeds and 27% of global trade in wheat; apart from that, Russia is also an important supplier in terms of chemical products from fertilizers to metals (UNCTAD Rapid Assessment, 2022). Turkey's importance to Russia equally grew considering its airspace: currently Russia is not allowed to pass through the EU airspace and the Turkish government has maintained cooperation with Russia in order to facilitate tourism traveling. It's important to note Turkish economy was highly expecting tourists' arrival from both Russia and Ukraine (about 10 million people), which was made impossible with the war and that limited Ankara's economic recovery and potentially deepened its economic crisis, showing the war in Ukraine imply both gains and losses for Turkey. Considering this context, one of Turkey's most relevant roles in the War has been the mediation role over the supply of grain and food between both countries at war - most exports from both Ukraine and Russia need to transit through Turkey's maritime territory in order to reach the markets in the Middle East, Africa and Europe - as the only NATO member with good relations with both countries, Ankara aims to benefit from this cooperation by taking an increasing important role in trade and transportation, being responsible for vital food supplies, but also allowing the country to increase its diplomatic role (Chausovsky, 2022).

Turkey's performance in train and in particular grain deals, implies an important but complex part into the conflict that will most likely imply its role in the developing and aftermath of the conflict as a whole, leading it to turn the liabilities of the war into diplomatic assets, aiming to use its mediator role as a way to justify its still sustained relation and cooperation with Russia (Atlantic Council, 2022).

Turkey's tentativeness in a balancing act and its diplomatic role in the conflict is seen as Erdogan met both Volodymyr Zelenskyy and Vladimir Putin, agreeing to keep on improving their cooperation. However full neutrality in the conflict and a positive awareness in the global order should be hard to maintain for Turkey. Nonetheless, even though the country maintains important relations with Russia, the Ukraine defeat would bring a negative impact to Turkey considering Russia's power growth, Turkey's interests in the Middle East, in particular in Syria, and the country's economy (Atlantic Council, 2022).

As the war arose, Turkey's conduct in it brought many questions and possibilities, for once it could be expected for Turkey to assume Russia as the common enemy and to align itself, fully, with the West, getting back on the *Westernization* process of Turkey, abandoned since 2011 by the AKP; on the other hand,

considering Turkey-Russia relations, another possibility for Turkey's action was to stay far from the conflict and maintain neutrality (Tekines, 2022). However, analyzing Turkey's course of action, it's important to analyze how neither option was fully adopted by Turkey as the country's main goal is to be involved, and manage to gather benefits from the conflict, while aiming to maintain relations with Russia and Ukraine and a positive image in the international order (Atlantic Council, 2022).

2.2. Turkey in Ukraine through Entrapment and Abandonment

Once again, analyzing the case study on Ukraine-Russian War, through process tracing and plausibility probe, and considering the theoretical framework of Intra-Alliance Security Dilemma, when assessing Turkey's involvement in the conflict in relation to NATO, and overall, the West's decisions, it's crucial to understand if the fear of abandonment and/or entrapment implies the disruptive conduct of Turkey's within the Western Alliance.

Just like it happened in regards to the Syrian War, Turkey's geographic stand yet again puts Ankara in a more sensitive situation regarding the conflict in comparison to any other country in the Alliance, which demands the country to consider cautiously domestic interests and consequences behind every action.

When considering Turkey's role in this conflict, the Syrian War actually implies an important role. For once, the lack of involvement from NATO in Syria and the increasing removal from the US in concern to the Middle East and Caucasus regions with the Trump, and currently, Biden administrations, put Turkey in a particular situation where the country fears the possibility of being involved in a regional conflict without the support of the NATO Alliance, putting fear of abandonment into practice. This fear is particularly evident because since 2012 and, especially in the aftermath of the Syrian War, Turkey has become disruptive not only in its actions, but also in its partners, considering an increasingly important economic and military partnership with Russia, that also considers energy politics, driving even further the possibility of abandonment from the western allies.

However, fear of abandonment considering the Ukraine-Russia War is not only based on the reality of the Syrian conflict, but also regarding the West's reaction to the war at hand. As the conflict assumed an increasing importance in 2014 with the Russian annexation of Crimea, the US, the EU and NATO barely reacted. In 2022, the same approach can be considered from the West, as in multiple occasions, such as

Ankara's Diplomacy Forum, President Erdogan demanded a bigger reaction from the west, not only recommending specific actions to Ukraine, but playing an important role in the conflict.

It's possible to analyze how NATO's lack of involvement is behind Turkey's course of action that includes the lack of interest in putting sanctions against Russia, the increasing economic and trade relations established between both countries and the tentative to maintain a neutral and balanced approach in the conflict. Turkey fears that a more aggressive approach in regards to Russia might leave Turkey in an undesirable position; it might imply a sensitive economic and energetic situation in Ankara and even the involvement in an unplanned regional conflict, without the backing of the Alliance since it has opted to maintain a lack of real involvement in the war.

The implied methodology in the diachronic case studies leads us to conclude, once again, that fear of abandonment plays a relevant role in Turkey's decisions as the lack of confidence in the Alliance's support is what stands behind decisions like the nonexistent sanctions against Russia from Turkey's side and the maintained overall relation between Ankara and Moscow, which differs deeply from the NATO's course of action.

Conclusion

The current dissertation has set an objective to understand the changing position of Turkey in NATO through the perspective of the Intra-Alliance Security Dilemma by how the fear of abandonment and entrapment has been influencing Turkey's behavior within the Alliance, especially considering its capacity to disrupt NATO's balance and equilibrium. Geography has always been a relevant factor in the Turkey-NATO relation, since Turkey's acquired membership in NATO in 1952 was associated with tangible NATO's security interests and strategy aimed at limiting the Soviet's expansion. With that in mind, at the end of the Cold War, Turkey's geographic position shifted and Turkey's proximity to the Middle East, Caucasus and the Balkans implied more risks than necessarily advantages when it came to the Alliance and the West's security strategy (Güvenç & Özel, 2012). Other than that, with the rise and establishment in power of the AKP, a lot of changes occurred both in domestic and foreign policies – for once, it became possible to observe Turkey's distancing from the West and the emergence of a new, more complex decision-making processes that began to difficult relations with the allies, something that allowed for a *rapprochement* with the countries to Turkey's east, in particularly, Iran and Russia.

The first chapter of the current dissertation has presented the theoretical framework as a tool to answer the research question at hand, focusing on Therefore, the first chapter had in view to present the main tenets of Neorealism, as well as present an overview of *balancing theories*, *alliances* and *Intra-Alliance security dilemma*.

Considering the concept of alliances, the chapter allowed for an overview on the evolution of said concept, leading to the main conclusion that the literature is ambiguous in its definition of alliances. Nonetheless, it is also important to conclude that, even though there is ambiguity regarding the concept, Wolfer (1968) simply defined alliance as “*a promise of mutual military assistance between two or more sovereign states*”. When it comes to *Balancing Theories*, it is possible to distinguish different positions corresponding to different theories for once, the classical position regarding the *balance of power theory* which considers alliances as the outcome of balance of power between the states; on the other hand, the position developed by Stephen Walt (1979), considers alliances as a mean to increase states' security against threats, contemplating the concept of “external threat” as a fundamental factor, emphasizing that states do not seek alliances in order to balance power, but in order to balance threats (Piccoli, 1999).

At last, the first chapter focuses mainly on the theoretical framework used in the present dissertation, the *Intra-Alliance Security Dilemma*. Apart from presenting the main tenets of Neorealism, we analyze how, according to Snyder (1984), the security dilemma has two phases: first, the process of alliance formation and a second phase starting after the alliance has been formed, the latter is more relevant to the present research. Therefore, the focus falls on the second phase of the dilemma, where the level of commitment and effort of the actors within the alliance, as well as conflict interactions with the adversary, play an important role. In respect to the intra-alliance security dilemma, states run risks of both abandonment or entrapment – abandonment is perceived as “defection” and it may assume different forms: for once, the ally might realign with an opponent, simply de-align with current allies, fail in guaranteeing the expected commitment or fail to provide support in contingencies. It is important to note the latter two do not imply the alliance destruction, but its weakening (Snyder, 1984). On the other hand, entrapment implies being dragged to a conflict over an ally’s interest and typically occurs when the alliance is primary to the cost of battling of a partner’s interest – therefore, the greater the commitment to an alliance, the higher the risk of entrapment (Snyder, 1984).

The second chapter provides deeper context in regards to the Turkey-NATO relation. On the first note, the chapter allows us to understand, even if very briefly, Turkey’s interest in joining the Alliance – Turkey’s geographic reality has always been an important factor regarding the country’s role within NATO. During the World War II, Turkey’s position imposed a sense of threat from both the Axis and the Soviet Union and, as result, Ankara decided to join NATO as a way to oppose the Soviet Union’s expansion, justifying the decision to join on its ambition in pursuing a link with democracy, the rule of law and freedom. Turkey benefited from the US support in joining the Alliance since that would guarantee a balance to the Soviet power extension in its neighboring regions (Gürsoy and Toygür, 2018). During the Cold War, Turkey’s commitment to NATO was primarily identity-driven, and it was aligned with the country’s ambition of westernization and with the need to take advantage of the security blanket offered by NATO and its European allies. Since then, NATO has been the main institution connecting Turkey to the Western International Community (Özoğlu, 2012). As NATO’s role changed after the Cold War, Turkey’s geopolitical value also shifted as it went from being a flank member to being a frontline member at the crossroads of major regions with security threats, such as the Caucasus, Middle East and Balkans, being considered by the West as a potential security liability (NATO, 2022).

This chapter equally aimed at demonstrating how Turkey's role within NATO has brought challenges and tensions in the Alliance, due to Turkey's confrontation and differences with the allies. On one hand, Greece and Turkey have assumed a tumultuous relationship within the Alliance. Since 1954, Cyprus issues have been the main reason for the dispute between Ankara and Athens, and even if agreements, such as the Zurich and London Agreements (1959), were reached and allowed for both Turkey and Greece to intervene militarily in Cyprus, the tensions did not fade (Yellice, 2017). Although the US reacted quickly by launching a diplomatic initiative, Cyprus was reluctant to find solutions under the NATO framework, leading to the involvement of the United Nations (Yellice, 2017). In 1974, a *coup d'etat* led by Greece, drove Turkey to intervene militarily (Anastasiou, 2008, as cited in Olin, 2011), claiming the intervention was necessary to protect its minority in Cyprus. The US Congress reacted to the Turkish invasion by imposing an arms embargo on Turkey, which was partly lifted in 1975 and fully eliminated in 1978 (Sakkas and Zhukova, 2013), resulting in Turkey's response by suspending US operations at US bases in the country (Mann, 2001).

At last, disputes concerning the Aegean Sea, the most extensive border between Turkey and Greece, has been a complex issue for both countries, as they aim to protect their interests and rights, including the freedom of navigation at the high seas and air space. The divergences of both countries have led to consequences in NATO's defense planning and operations and obligated the stop and/or limitation of NATO's exercises in the Aegean Sea. Other than that, one of the biggest outcomes of the dispute between both parties was Greece's withdrawal from NATO's integrated military structure between 1974-1980 and the delay and deadlock both countries obligated to NATO in logistic, operational and budgetary decisions.

The second chapter considers besides this, Turkey's involvement in the Gulf War, stating how Ankara's role in the conflict was unexpected considering its usual position of neutrality, until then, in the Middle East. However, as the US and the United Nations took part into the conflict, Turkey adopted a more interventive position, following two crucial patterns in the country's foreign policy: westernism and internationalism (Çalış, 2000). It is also important to consider that NATO's involvement in the war was influenced by growing security concerns as the crisis progressed (Howe, 2008).

Another important event for the Turkey-NATO considered in this chapter is the US invasion in Iraq. From the start, Turkey assumed divisions regarding the support, or not, of the American ally. Right as the plans began being developed, the Prime Minister, Bülent Ecevit, initiated talks with the American officials about possible

cooperation (Kaya, 2011). However, as a parliamentary vote took place in March 2003, no resolution was passed regarding cooperation in the conflict. This decision, allowed for doubts, paving the way to the reinforced crisis of confidence in Turkish-US relations, as not only was the US disappointed, but Turkey equally frowned upon the American decisions in the Iraq as it could imply a security threat to Turkey and, particularly, the role assigned by the US to the Kurds in Iraq's reconstruction (Gözen, 2005).

At the end of the day, the chapter considers Turkey's role in the Afghanistan War where Turkey decided to adopt a different approach than the one supported in the Iraq War. After the 9/11, nonetheless, Turkey's approach in Afghanistan, aimed to guarantee the country's integrity, providing security and stability in its political structure, as well as elimination of terrorism and extremism (Imai, 2021). As the US decided to intervene in the country, even if mostly by soft power, Turkey decided to contribute to this mission as a way to restore relations with NATO (Imai, 2021). Nonetheless, Turkey aimed to maintain a good relation with Afghanistan. Chapter two has, therefore, the main goal of guaranteeing contextualization in regards to Turkey-NATO relations.

In the third and last chapter of this dissertation, two case studies analyzed were selected due to their disruptive potential to the Alliance: The Syrian conflict and the Russia-Ukraine War. Considering the Syrian War case study, the key moments analyzed concern Turkey's intervention in the conflict and the associated shift in Turkey's foreign policy, Turkey's support to radical opposition groups, the conflicts regarding Pastor Brunson and Fethullah Gulen, US-Kurds relationship and the consequent Turkish-Russian rapprochement, with particular highlight to the purchase of the S-400 air defense missile system from Russia and the Astana Talks.

For once, the Syrian crisis initiated in 2011, however, has brought upon a dilemma for Turkey's policy in the region, leading the country to assume a growing involvement in regional issues (Taşpınar, 2012). Facing the Syrian crisis, Turkey, and in particular the AKP government, adopted a foreign policy shift in leading it to a new, more assertive and interventive orientation. Turkey's position towards Syria corresponded to the biggest and most aggressive interference the country had taken in a neighboring territory and its affairs, since the beginning of the XX century (Salt, 2018). Turkey's initial diplomatic efforts were however fruitless and its capacity to influence Assad's course of action was less than one could have expected as the crisis saw the level of violence growing, both on the governments and the protestors' side. By November 2011, Erdogan

saw the necessity to increase its assertiveness towards the Syrian President, asking for his resignation and supporting the Syrian opposition, by allowing for several meetings of the Syrian opposition to happen on the Turkish territory (Taşpınar, 2012).

Concerning Ankara's support of the opposition groups, Turkey did not only shift its position towards Syria, but also position regarding the support to the opposition, and especially the hardline forces, backed by countries such as Qatar and Saudi Arabia. Turkey's choice to support more extremist groups represented another rupture with the West. As the Western countries grew more and more concerned with the terrorist groups and organizations emerging in Syria, Turkey increased its support to the Islamic, and in particular extremist factions, placing emphasis on the regime change in Syria and its own battle against the PKK and other Kurdish groups rather than on the War on Terror; Turkey's regional power aspirations developed to the detriment of its close relationship with the West, which became even more obvious after the end of 2013 with the further support provided by Turkey to radical Islamic groups (Manhoff, 2017).

Since 2015, the Syrian war has been the most challenging issue in American-Turkish relations, especially as the US has come to support Kurdish groups of the opposition. which Turkey considers the country's biggest threat. The US-Kurds relation gained particular importance as Turkey did not understand how much the US valued the defeat of the Islamic State as its main priority and, for that reason, did not allow for a better cooperation with the Kurdish fighters or assumed a higher role in fighting the IS. Therefore, underestimating the importance of this battle for the US, Turkey offered only the Sunni forces in support of the fight against the IS in Kobani, which resulted in a shift in the US loyalties (Siccardi, 2021). As the YPG assumed an important role for the US in Syria, it received support in terms of arms supply, logistics and military training which allowed the group to conquer the territory along the Syrian-Turkish borders in the East side of the Euphrates River. This newly formed alliance, paired with the end of the peaceful atmosphere between Turkey and the PKK, led to an increased animosity with the Kurds (Manhoff, 2017).

Under these circumstances, Turkey did not feel that NATO, as an Alliance, was focused on finding a strategic response for the situation in the Middle East, especially in the light of the US Kurdish policy and, therefore, Turkey saw a potential ally in Russia. The Turkish acquisition of the S-400 Triumf Air-Defense system epitomized the rapprochement between the two countries, consolidating the established relationship (Turkey and NATO, 2019). This purchase equally assumed itself as a significant threat to the NATO alliance (Oya,

2019), while also symbolizing the extent of the troubled relation Turkey has come to develop with the Alliance, up to threatening NATO's technology and intelligence against Russian forces. Turkey-Russian rapprochement was also observable in regards to the Astana Talks: as the Geneva Peace Talks had no tangible outputs, on the 20th December 2016 the Astana Peace Process was introduced, and implemented in January 2017, as Turkey, Russia and Iran decided to pursue Syrian Peace Talks in the city of Astana, following the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2254.

At the same time, regarding the Russia-Ukraine War, the chapter particularly focused on topics such as Turkey's condemnation of Russia's invasion but the refusal to implement any sanction against the country; Turkey-Ukraine military cooperation; trade, energy and military relations between Russia and Turkey; and Turkey's role as an export base for Russian products in regards to European companies.

In the aftermath of the Russian intervention in 2022, Turkey voted in favor of the UN General Assembly Resolution of the 2nd of March demanding the withdrawal of Russian military forces from Ukraine. However, although Turkey was quick to condemn Russia's course of action, the country did not follow through with the NATO decision by abstaining from the sanctions imposed against Russia. Neither did the country close its airspace to Russian civilian aircraft; Turkey still assumes a considerable dependence, both economically and militarily, on Russia, especially considering the ongoing operations in Syria and Libya which led Recep Erdogan to criticize NATO's response (Tapia, 2022).

Turkey's role in the Ukraine-Russia War and the tentative neutrality can be explained by Ankara's relation with both Moscow and Kiev, forcing Ankara to take part in a complex balancing act. The latter was in the military cooperation with Ukraine, the misalignment with the West considering Russia and the increase of the country's military diplomacy in the region (Atlantic Council, 2022).

For once, understanding Turkey-Ukraine relations, it is crucial to understand their military cooperation - Turkey and Ukraine have an important connection since Turkey is the main provider of the Bayraktar TB2 drones, which have been crucial in the Ukraine fight against Russia guaranteeing a continuous arms sale (Chausovsky, 2022). The military ties assumed a particular importance as the Baykar company, which has Erdogan's son in law as executive, aimed to provide drones free of charge to Ukraine (Stein, 2022).

While most European countries and companies consider the possibility of trading with Russia as unethical, facing Moscow's course of action, they also equally fear the reputational risk that might arise from it. In this context, Turkey has assumed the position of an export base for most European companies, furthering on supply to Russia. Apart from trade, it is crucial to consider relations regarding Russia's investments in Turkey, such as the Akkuyu nuclear energy power plant. Turkey has also been accused of facilitating Russia's financial grip, reflected, for instance, in the fact their trade is being settled in rubles to Turkish banks adopting Mir, the Russian payment system, as an alternative to the western SWIFT payment system from which Russian financial institutions have been excluded. This partnership has been vocally criticized by the West and in particular by the US that threaten the western companies' withdrawal from Ankara (Politico, 2022).

Therefore, as the present contribution aimed to answer the research question stated, one can conclude, regarding the Syrian War case study that, right at the beginning of the conflict, Turkey felt fear of possible entrapment in this regional conflict, not because of its role in the Alliance, but because of its specific geographic position. Nonetheless, fear of abandonment was also present in the Syrian War as the fears regarding the Alliance started early into the conflict as the West did not comply with Turkey's expectations regarding its involvement in the Conflict and especially in establishing a security zone in Syria which Turkey felt was crucial for its own security for which NATO did not show any proactivity or concern.

However, the main reason for Turkey's doubt regarding NATO and the consequent fear of abandonment, came from the US and Turkey's misalignment regarding the main threat in Syria: for once, as the US quickly defined terrorism and the Islamic State as its main threat, due to historical connection and geographic proximity to Syria, Turkey's main threat was related to the PKK. As Turkey felt deeply concerned regarding the possibility of Kurdish groups passing through the Syrian-Turkish border, fear of abandonment regarding NATO substantialized Turkish foreign policy not only because these groups were not considered Alliance's main concern but, especially, due to the fact that during the conflict the US chose Kurdish groups such as the YPG and PYD as their main strategic partner on the ground, providing arms and military support. Apart from this, Turkey alone received more than 3.5 million refugees, sustaining deep economic and social consequences without receiving support from the West. It is possible to conclude that the fear of abandonment felt by Turkey regarding the Alliance, was the main reason for Turkey's disruptive action considering that same Alliance, such as the alignment with Iran and Russia and, in particular, the purchase of the S400 Defense Missile System; and even Turkey's connection with possible nationalist and terrorist

groups in Syria, as the country's main ambition rested on defeating Kurdish groups that ended up backed by the US.

In regards to the Ukraine-Russia War case study, when considering Turkey's role in this conflict, the Syrian War actually assumes special importance. For once, the lack of involvement from NATO in Syria and the increasing removal from the US in concern to the Middle East and Caucasus regions with the Trump, and currently, Biden administrations, put Turkey in a particular situation where the country fears the possibility of being involved in a regional conflict without the support from NATO Alliance, putting fear of abandonment into practice.

As the conflict assumed an increasing importance in 2014 with the Russian annexation of Crimea, the US, the EU and NATO barely reacted. In 2022, the same approach can be considered from the West, as in multiple occasions, such as Ankara's Diplomacy Forum, President Erdogan demanded a bigger reaction from the West, not only recommending specific actions to Ukraine, but playing an important role in the conflict. It is possible to analyze how NATO's lack of involvement is behind Turkey's course of action that includes the lack of interest in putting sanctions against Russia, the increasing economic and trade relations established between both countries and the tentative to maintain a neutral and balanced approach in the conflict. Turkey fears that a more aggressive approach in regards to Russia might leave Ankara in an undesirable position; it might imply a sensitive economic and energetic situation in Ankara and even the involvement in an unplanned regional conflict, without the backing of the Alliance since it has opted to maintain a lack of real involvement in the war. Therefore, fear of abandonment and entrapment plays an important role in Turkey's decisions as the lack of confidence in the Alliance's support is what stands behind Turkey's disruptive behavior.

As a note for future research, it is important to highlight how the Russia-Ukraine war is a very recent event that, for the time being, has allowed for Turkey to maintain its mediator role. Nonetheless, Turkey's neutrality in the conflict is a difficult balancing act that might not last as the war progresses. Therefore, in my perspective it is very important to analyze further Turkish action in this specific conflict as Ankara will most likely need to take sides that will, eventually, push the country further from the West or imply an alignment with NATO that, on another hand, will put Ankara in a sensitive position towards Russia, being extremely interesting to understand how *fear of abandonment* and/or *entrapment* will play out in that scenario and the consequences it might bring for the Syrian Conflict, where Turkey-Russia ties have specially relevant. Other

than that, Turkey's *fear of abandonment* and/or *entrapment* was applied to two specific case studies, being very relevant to develop broader research that allows for theory-testing concerning the role the intra-alliance security dilemma plays on Turkey's disruptiveness towards NATO.

Bibliography

- Primary Sources

“Antalya Diplomacy Forum.” 2022. *Presidency of the Republic of Turkey Directorate of Communications*.
<https://www.iletisim.gov.tr/english/duyurular/detay/antalya-diplomacy-forum-2022>.

Çavuşoğlu, Mevlüt, Pekka Haavisto, and Ann Linde. 2022. *TRILATERAL MEMORANDUM*. Madrid.

Minister of the Foreign Affairs of Turkey. 2012. “Speech Delivered by Mr. Ahmet Davutoğlu, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey at the UN Security Council, 30 August 2012, New York” *Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs*. February 19. https://www.mfa.gov.tr/speech-delivered-by-mr_-ahmet-davuto%C4%9Flu_-minister-of-foreign-affairs-of-the-republic-of-turkey-at-the-un-security-council_30-august-2012_-new-york.en.mfa

Minister of the Foreign Affairs of Turkey. 2017. “Speech by H.E. Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, at the 53rd Session of the Munich Security Conference (MSC), 19 February 2017.” *Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs*. February 19. https://www.mfa.gov.tr/speech-by-h_e_-mevl%C3%BCt-%C3%A7avu%C5%9Fo%C4%9Flu_-minister-of-foreign-affairs-of-turkey_-at-the-middle-east-peace-conference_-15-january-2017_-paris.en.mfa.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization. *North Atlantic Treaty Organization NATO*. International Organizations, 2001. Web Archive. <https://www.loc.gov/item/lcwaN0011199/>.

President of Ukraine, and President of the Republic of Turkey. 2021. “Joint Declaration of the 9th Meeting of the High-Level Strategic Council between Ukraine and the Republic of Turkey.” *Official Website of the President of Ukraine*. April 10. <https://www.president.gov.ua/en/news/spilna-deklaraciya-devyatogo-zasidannya-strategichnoyi-radi-67909>.

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Speech at the United Nations General Assembly (77th Session). 2022.

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Speech at the United Nations General Assembly (74th Session). 2019.

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Speech at the United Nations General Assembly (76th Session). 2021.

Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs. «From Rep. of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs». Accessed on the 10th of September 2021. https://www.mfa.gov.tr/speech-byh_e_-mevl%C3%BCt-%C3%A7avu%C5%9Fo%C4%9Flu_-minister-of-foreign-affairsof-turkey_-at-the-53rd-session-of-the-munich-security-conference-_msc__-february17_19_-2017.en.mfa.

Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs. «From Rep. of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs». Accessed on the 10th of September 2021. https://www.mfa.gov.tr/no_210_-abdnin-turkiye-yi-f35-programindan-cikarmasi-hk.en.mfa.

Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs. «From Rep. of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs». Accessed on the 10th of September 2021. https://www.mfa.gov.tr/no_-321_-abdnin-ulkemize-karsi-acikladigi-yaptirim-kararlari-hk.en.mfa.

Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs. «From Rep. of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs». Accessed on the 10th of September 2021. https://www.mfa.gov.tr/sc_-48_-abddb-sozcusunun-s400-tedarigimize-iliskin-aciklamalari-hk-sc.en.mfa.

Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs. «From Rep. of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs». Accessed on the 10th of September 2021. https://www.mfa.gov.tr/no_-321_-abdnin-ulkemize-karsi-acikladigi-yaptirim-kararlari-hk.en.mfa.

United Nations. 1945. *Charter of the United Nations*. Accessed on the 28th of May 2022. <https://treaties.un.org/doc/publication/ctc/uncharter.pdf>

United Nations. 1982. *Convention on the Law of the Sea*. Accessed on the 29th of June 2022. <https://www.refworld.org/docid/3dd8fd1b4.html>.

- Secondary Sources

Aghaie Joobani, Hossein, e Mostafa Mousavipour. «Russia, Turkey, and Iran: Moving Towards Strategic Synergy in the Middle East?» *Strategic Analysis* 39, n. 2 (4th of march 2015): 141–55. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09700161.2014.1000658>.

Aktürk, Şener. 2015. "The Fourth Style of Politics: Eurasianism as a Pro-Russian Rethinking of Turkey's Geopolitical Identity." *Turkish Studies* 16 (1): 54–79. doi:10.1080/14683849.2015.1021246.

Al Jazeera. 2022. "'Provocations': Erdogan Decries Western Policy towards Russia." *Russia-Ukraine War News / Al Jazeera*. Al Jazeera. September 7. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/9/7/erdogan-says-western-nations-using-provocations-against-russia>.

Altunişik, Meliha Benli. 2006. "Turkey's Iraq Policy: The War and Beyond." *Journal of Contemporary European Studies* 14 (2): 183–96. doi:10.1080/14782800600892242.

Anguko, Andrew. 2019. "Process Tracing as a Methodology for Evaluating Small Sample Sizes." *Evaluation Matters*, October, 18–27. doi:10.13140/RG.2.2.31211.28963.

Atlantic Council Experts. 2022. "How Long Can Turkey Play Both Sides in the Ukraine War?" *Atlantic Council*. August 18. <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/how-long-can-turkey-play-both-sides-in-the-ukraine-war/>.

Avar, Yusuf, and Yu Chou Lin. 2019. "Aegean Disputes Between Turkey and Greece: Turkish and Greek Claims and Motivations in the Framework of Legal and Political Perspectives." *International Journal of Politics and Security* 1 (February): 57–70. <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/pub/ijps/issue/41279/530234>.

Aydoğan, Merve |. 2021. "Turkey Remains as Indispensable Member of NATO for 69 Years - Timeturk Haber." *Timeturk*. June 14. <https://www.timeturk.com/en/turkey-remains-as-indispensable-member-of-nato-for-69-years/news-38420>.

Balcer, Adam. 2014. Working paper. *Dances with the Bear: Turkey and Russia After Crimea*.

Balta, Evren. 2019. "From Geopolitical Competition to Strategic Partnership: Turkey and Russia after The Cold War." *Uluslararası İlişkiler Dergisi*, September, 69–86. doi:10.33458/uidergisi.621309.

Baltacı, Alişan. 2007. "Political and Economic Role of Turkey within the Scope of the Russia-Ukraine War"
1.

BBC. 2011. "Syria Unrest: Turkey Presses Assad to End Crackdown." *BBC News*. BBC. August 9. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-14454175>.

BBC. 2016. "Syria: The Story of the Conflict." *BBC News*. BBC. March 11. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-26116868>.

Bechev, Dimitar. 2022. "Russia's Ukraine Losses Are Turkey's Gains." *Russia-Ukraine War / Al Jazeera*. Al Jazeera. September 15. <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2022/9/15/russias-ukraine-losses-are-turkeys-gains>.

Benli Altunışık, Meliha. «Worldviews and Turkish Foreign Policy in the Middle East». *New Perspectives on Turkey* 40 (2009): 169–92. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0896634600005264>.

Bluth, Christoph. «The Security Dilemma Revisited: A Paradigm for International Security in the Twenty-First Century?: Ken Booth and Nicholas J. Wheeler, *The Security Dilemma: Fear, Cooperation, and Trust in World Politics* (Palgrave Macmillan 2007)». *The International Journal of Human Rights* 15, n. 8 (December 2011): 1362–77. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13642987.2010.513092>.

Buhari Gulmez, Didem. «The Resilience of the US–Turkey Alliance: Divergent Threat Perceptions and Worldviews». *Contemporary Politics* 26, n. 4 (7th august 2020): 475– 92. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13569775.2020.1777038>.

Burch, Jonathon. 2011. "Turkish Pm Calls on Syria's Assad to Quit." *Reuters*. Thomson Reuters. November 22. <https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-turkey-syria-idUKTRE7AL1JC20111122>.

Cagaptay, Soner, and Mark Parris. 2003. *Turkey after the Iraq War: Still a U.S. Ally?*

Çalış, Şaban. 2000. "Turkey's Traditional Middle East Policy and Ozalist Diplomacy: Gulf Crisis Revisited," 101–17.

Can, Muhammed. 2021. "Is NATO Brain Dead?" *NATO and the Future of European and Asian Security*, 16–32. doi:10.4018/978-1-7998-7118-7.ch002.

Center for Preventive Action. 2022. "Conflict between Turkey and Armed Kurdish Groups | Global Conflict Tracker." *Council on Foreign Relations*. Council on Foreign Relations. August 3. <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/conflict-between-turkey-and-armed-kurdish-groups>.

Chausovsky, Eugene. 2022. "Turkey Is the Biggest Swing Player in the Russia-Ukraine War." *Foreign Policy*. August 11. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/08/11/turkey-russia-ukraine-war-swing-player/>.

Çitlioğlu, Ercan. 2020. "A Turkish Perspective on Syria." *Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung*, October, 1–35.

Cook, Steven A. 2018. Rep. *Neither Friends No Foe: The Future of the US-Turkey Relations*. New York, NY: CFR.

Cowell, Alan. 1987. "Greeks and Turks Ease Aegean Crisis." *The New York Times*, March 29, sec. 1. <https://www.nytimes.com/1987/03/29/world/greeks-and-turks-ease-aegean-crisis.html>.

Dag, Rahman. 2022. "Geopolitical Struggle between Russia and Turkey: The Intersection of Ukraine and Syrian Crises ." *Journal of Politics and Development* 12 (2): 150–50. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/363320429>.

Dalay, Galip, and Daria Isachenko. 2022. "Turkey's Stakes in the Russia-NATO Rivalry." *SWP Comments*, 1–4. doi:10.18449/2022C09.

Dalay, Galip. 2022. "Turkey and the Ukraine War: A Reset with the West?" *ISPI*. March 30. <https://www.ispionline.it/it/pubblicazione/turkey-and-ukraine-war-reset-west-34301>.

"Defence Expenditure of NATO Countries (2014-2022)." 2022. *North Atlantic Treaty Organization* . NATO. https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_197050.htm.

Dibek, Elif. 2012. "System Structure and State Behaviour: Turkey's Middle Eastern Activism in the 21st Century." Dissertation. Trinity College Dublin.

Djavadi, Abbas. 2016. "Turkey's Foreign Policy: From 'Zero Problems' to 'Nothing but Problems'." *RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty*. Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty. June 7. <https://www.rferl.org/a/turkey-foreign-policy-erdogan-zero-problems/27781927.html>.

- Dursun-Özkanca, Oya. 2016. "Turkish Soft Balancing against the EU? an Analysis of the Prospects for Improved Transatlantic Security Relations." *Foreign Policy Analysis*, March, 1–19. doi:10.1093/fpa/orw004.
- Dursun-Özkanca, Oya. Turkey–West Relations: The Politics of Intra-alliance Opposition. 1.a ed. Cambridge University Press, 2019. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781316998960>.
- Dwivedi, Sangit Sarita. 2012. "Alliances in International Relations Theory." *International Journal of Social Science & Interdisciplinary Research* 1 (8): 224–35.
- Erşen, Emre. 2011. "Turkey and Russia : An Emerging 'Strategic Axis' in Eurasia ? " 35-36: 263–81.
- Fedder, Edwin H. 1968. "The Concept of Alliance." *International Studies Quarterly* 12 (1): 65–86. doi:<https://doi.org/10.2307/3013558>.
- Flanagan, Stephen J. 2012. "The Turkey–Russia–Iran Nexus: Eurasian Power Dynamics." *The Washington Quarterly* 36 (1): 163–78. doi:10.1080/0163660x.2013.751656.
- George, Susannah. 2022. "Taliban Signs Deal to Hand Control of Afghan Airports to UAE Company." *The Washington Post*, May 24. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2022/05/24/afghanistan-uae-airports-kabul/>.
- Glyptis, Leda-Agapi. 2006. "Which Way to the Future? Kemalis Westernisation for the Millenium." *Studia Diplomatica* 59 (1): 185–98. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/44838299>.
- Gözen, Ramazan. 2005. "Causes and Consequences of Turkey's out-of-War Position in the Iraq War of 2003." *Milletleraras XXXVI*: 74–99. doi:10.1501/intrel_0000000103.
- Gürsoy, Yaprak, and Ilke Toygür. 2018. "Turkey in and out of NATO? An Instance of a Turbulent Alliance with Western Institutions." *Elcano Royal Institute*, June, 1–7.
- Güvenç, Serhat, and Soli Özel. 2012. "NATO and Turkey in the Post-Cold War World: Between Abandonment and Entrapment." *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* 12 (4): 533–53. doi:10.1080/14683857.2012.741845.

Haugom, Lars. «Turkish Foreign Policy under Erdogan: A Change in International Orientation?» *Comparative Strategy* 38, n. 3 (4th of may 2019): 206–23. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01495933.2019.1606662>.

Hendrickson, Ryan C. «The Enlargement of NATO: The Theory and Politics of Alliance Expansion». *European Security* 8, n. 4 (December 1999): 84–99. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09662839908407428>.

Herz, John H. 1950. “Idealist Internationalism and the Security Dilemma.” *World Politics* 2 (2): 157–80. doi:10.2307/2009187.

Hill, Fiona, and Omer Taspinar. 2006. “Turkey and Russia: Axis of the Excluded?” *Survival* 48 (1): 81–92. doi:10.1080/00396330600594256.

Howe, Jonathan T. 1991. “NATO and the Gulf Crisis.” *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy* 33 (3): 246–59. doi:10.1080/00396339108442593.

Hurriyet daily news. 2014. “Turkey Outlines Locations for Potential Safe Zone in Syria - Türkiye News.” *Hürriyet Daily News*. hurriyetdailynews.com. October 17. <https://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkey-outlines-locations-for-potential-safe-zone-in-syria-73054>.

Imai, Kohei. 2021. “Afghanistan Offers an Opportunity to Repair Turkey-NATO Relations.” *Insights on Turkish Affairs* 5 (4): 1–5. <https://dayan.org/content/afghanistan-offers-opportunity-repair-turkey-nato-relations>.

İnanç, Gül, and Şuhnaz Yılmaz. 2012. “Gunboat Diplomacy: Turkey, USA and the Advent of the Cold War.” *Middle Eastern Studies* 48 (3): 401–11. doi:10.1080/00263206.2012.661372.

Isler, Cansu. 2022. “War in Ukraine: A View from Turkey.” *Www.conferenceboard.org*. <https://www.conference-board.org/topics/geopolitics/war-in-ukraine-view-from-turkey>.

Jervis, Robert. “Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma.” *World Politics* 30, no. 2 (1978): 167–214. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2009958>.

Kara, Mehtap. 2022. “Turkish-American Strategic Partnership: Is Turkey Still a Faithful Ally?” *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies*, June, 1–21. doi:10.1080/14683857.2022.2088081.

Katsaitis, Oysseus, and George Zombanakis. 2021. "Assessing the Cost of Friction between NATO Allies." *Security and Defence Quarterly* 36 (4): 25–48. doi:10.35467/sdq/143276.

Kaya, Karen. 2011. Issue brief. *Army University Press*.
https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Portals/7/militaryreview/Archives/English/MilitaryReview_20110831_art012.pdf.

Keating, Joshua. 2022. "How Turkey Is Turning the War in Ukraine to Its Own Advantage." *Grid News*. Grid News. June 8. <https://www.grid.news/story/global/2022/06/08/how-turkey-is-turning-the-war-in-ukraine-to-its-own-advantage/>.

Kemal, Levent. 2021. "Turkey's Role in Afghanistan: A Major Risk." *Al Jazeera Center for Studies*. August 26. <https://studies.aljazeera.net/en/analyses/turkeys-role-afghanistan-major-risk>.

Kibaroglu Mustafa. 2019. Working paper. *On Turkey's Missile Defense Strategy: The Four Faces of the S-400 Deal Between Turkey and Russia*. SAM Papers.

Kireyev, Sergey. «George Liska's Realist Alliance Theory, And The Transformation Of Nato». Electronic Theses and Dissertations, 2004-2019, 1st january 2004. <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/etd/201>.

Kusa, Iliya. 2022. "Turkey Quietly Positions Itself between Ukraine and Russia, with a View to Boosting Its Regional Leadership." *Wilson Center*. February 9. <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/blog-post/turkey-quietly-positions-itself-between-ukraine-and-russia-view-boosting-its-regional>.

Kusa, Iliya. 2022. "Turkey's Goals in the Russia-Ukraine War." *Wilson Center*. June 13. <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/blog-post/turkeys-goals-russia-ukraine-war>.

Lamont, Christopher K. *Research methods in international relations*. 1st edition. Los Angeles: Sage, 2015.

Levy, Jack S. 2008. "Case Studies: Types, Designs, and Logics of Inference." *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 25 (1): 1–18. doi:10.1080/07388940701860318.

Lindgaard, Jakob. 2020. Publication. *TURKEY'S NATO FUTURE: Between Alliance Dependency, Russia, and Strategic Autonomy*. Copenhagen: DIIS.

- Manhoff, Tim. 2017. "Turkey's Foreign Policy Towards Syria ." *Konrad-Adenauer Stiftung*, 6–15.
- Mann, Stephen F. 2001. "The Greek-Turkish Dispute in the Aegean Sea: Its Ramifications for NATO and the Prospects for Resolution." Thesis, Monterey: Calhoun. Naval Postgraduate School.
- McKeown, Timothy. 2014. "Neorealism." *Oxford Bibliographies Online Datasets*. doi:10.1093/obo/9780199743292-0037.
- Mehta, Aaron. «Turkey Officially Kicked out of F-35 Program, Costing US Half a Billion Dollars». Defense News, 17th July 2019. <https://www.defensenews.com/air/2019/07/17/turkey-officially-kicked-out-of-f-35-program/>.
- Moens, Barbara, Sarah Anne Aarup, and Paola Tamma. 2022. "Erdoğan Walks a Fine Line as the Ukraine War's Double Agent." *POLITICO*. POLITICO. August 18. <https://www.politico.eu/article/turkey-recep-tayyip-erdogan-fine-line-ukraine-russia-war/>.
- Nachmani, Amikam. 2003. "Turkey and the Gulf War." Essay. In *Turkey: Facing a New Millennium: Coping with Intertwined Conflicts*, 5–29. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Nato. 2022. "Greece and NATO - 1952." *NATO*. Accessed May 18. https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/declassified_181434.htm.
- NATO. 2022. "NATO - Topic: NATO and Afghanistan." *North Atlantic Treaty Organization*. April 19. https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_8189.htm.
- Nato. 2022. "Türkiye and NATO - 1952." *NATO*. Accessed September 30. https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/declassified_191048.htm?selectedLocale=en.
- Oğuzlu, Tarık. 2012. "Turkey's Eroding Commitment to NATO: From Identity to Interests." *The Washington Quarterly* 35 (3): 153–64. doi:10.1080/0163660x.2012.706578.
- Oğuzlu, Tarık. 2013. "Making Sense of Turkey's Rising Power Status: What Does Turkey's Approach within NATO Tell Us?" *Turkish Studies* 14 (4): 774–96. doi:10.1080/14683849.2013.863420.

Oğuzlu, Tarik. 2021. "Turkish Heritage." *Turkey's NATO Membership Is an Asset for Both Turkey and the Alliance*. <https://www.turkheritage.org/en/publications/analysis-by-tho-contributors-and-liaisons/turkeys-nato-membership-is-an-asset-for-both-turkey-and-the-alliance-9620>.

Önal, Tekin, and Abdullah Özdağ. 2016. "Körfez Savaşı Ve Türk Dış Politikasına Etkileri." *Journal of Turkish Studies* 11 (Volume 11 Issue 16): 53–53. doi:10.7827/turkishstudies.9950.

Öniş, Ziya, and Şuhnaz Yılmaz. 2009. "Between Europeanization and Euro-Asianism: Foreign Policy Activism in Turkey during the AKP Era." *Turkish Studies* 10 (1): 7–24. doi:10.1080/14683840802648562.

Öniş, Ziya, and Şuhnaz Yılmaz. 2015. "Turkey and Russia in a Shifting Global Order: Cooperation, Conflict and Asymmetric Interdependence in a Turbulent Region." *Third World Quarterly* 37 (1): 71–95. doi:10.1080/01436597.2015.1086638.

Onis, Ziya. 2011. "Multiple Faces of the 'New' Turkish Foreign Policy: Underlying Dynamics and a Critique." *Insight Turkey*, January. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/265824825>.

Öniş, Ziya. 2015. "Monopolising the Centre: The AKP and the Uncertain Path of Turkish Democracy." *The International Spectator* 50 (2): 22–41. doi:10.1080/03932729.2015.1015335.

Özertem, Hasan Selim. 2017. "Turkey and Russia: A Fragile Friendship." *Turkish Policy Quarterly*.

Özpek, Burak Bilgehan, e Nebahat Tanriverdi Yaşar. «Populism and Foreign Policy in Turkey under the AKP Rule». *Turkish Studies* 19, n. 2 (15th march 2018): 198–216. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14683849.2017.1400912>.

Pachomcik, Oksana. 2018. "Alliance Durability and Intra-Alliance Security Dilemma: a Case Study of the U.S.- Japan Alliance in the Light of Rising China ." Thesis, Tartu: Johan Skytte Institute of Political Studies. University of Tartu. <https://dspace.ut.ee/handle/10062/60599>.

Panke, Diana. 2018. *Research Design and Method Selection: Making Good Choices in the Social Sciences*. London: Sage Publishing Ltd.

Pavel , BAEV. «Russia and Turkey Strategic Partners and Rivals». No 35, Maio de 2021. President of Turkey. Speech. Presented at General Assembly Seventy-fifth session, United Nations, 22nd september 2020. <https://undocs.org/en/A/75/PV.4>.

Pedersen, Rasmus Brun, and Derek Beach. 2011. "What Is Process-Tracing Actually Tracing? The Three Variants of Process Tracing Methods and Their Uses and Limitations." *Research Gate*, December, 1–30. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228162928>.

Person, and Tuvan Gumrukcu. 2022. "Erdogan Says Nato, Western Reaction to Russian Attack Not Decisive." *Reuters*. Thomson Reuters. February 25. <https://www.reuters.com/world/erdogan-says-nato-western-reaction-russian-attack-not-decisive-2022-02-25/>.

Piccoli, Wolfango. 1999. Working paper. *Alliance Theory: The Case of Turkey and Israel*. Copenhagen Peace Research Institute.

Pierini, Marc. 2020. "How Far Can Turkey Challenge NATO and the EU in 2020?" *Carnegie Europe*, January.

Rabar, Ruwayda Mustafah. 2011. "What Is the Kurdish Question?" *OpenDemocracy*. September 23. <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/what-is-kurdish-question/>.

Radchenko, Sergey, Timothy Andrews Sayle, and Christian Ostermann. 2020. "Introduction to the Special Issue, NATO: Past & Present." *Journal of Strategic Studies* 43 (6-7): 763–68. doi:10.1080/01402390.2020.1831714.

Rfe/rl. 2022. "Erdogan Says Russia's Invasion of Ukraine Is 'Unacceptable,' but Is Keeping Ties with Both Nations." *RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty*. Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty. March 1. <https://www.rferl.org/a/erdogan-russian-invasion-unacceptable-ukraine/31728802.html>.

Rose, Michel. 2019. "Macron Says Time for Turkey to Clarify Ambiguous Stance on Islamic State." *Reuters*. Thomson Reuters. December 3. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-nato-summit-macron-turkey-idUSKBN1Y71VE>.

Salt, Jeremy. 2018. "Turkey and Syria: When 'Soft Power' Turned Hard." *Middle East Policy* 25 (3): 80–96. doi:10.1111/mepo.12363.

Schmitt, Michael N. 1996. "Aegean Angst: The Greek-Turkish Dispute." *Naval War College Review* 49 (3): 42–72. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/44642903>.

Seha, Esther. 2016. "Case Study Analysis." Essay. In *Handbook of Research Methods and Applications in Political Science*, edited by Ferdinand Müller-Rommel, 419–29. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited.

Siccardi, Francesco. 2021. Working paper. *How Syria Changed Turkey's Foreign Policy*. Brussels: Carnegie Europe.

Snyder, Glenn H. «The Security Dilemma in Alliance Politics». *World Politics* 36, n. 4 (July 1984): 461–95. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2010183>.

Snyder, Glenn H. 1991. "Alliances, Balance, and Stability." *International Organization* 45 (1): 121–42. doi:10.1017/s0020818300001417.

Somer, Murat. 2016. "Understanding Turkey's Democratic Breakdown: Old vs. New and Indigenous vs. Global Authoritarianism." *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* 16 (4): 481–503. doi:10.1080/14683857.2016.1246548.

Somer, Murat. 2018. "Turkey: The Slippery Slope from Reformist to Revolutionary Polarization and Democratic Breakdown." *The American Academy of Political and Social Science* 681 (1): 42–61. doi:10.1177/0002716218818056.

Sözen, Ahmet. 2010. "A Paradigm Shift in Turkish Foreign Policy: Transition and Challenges." *Turkish Studies* 11 (1): 103–23. doi:10.1080/14683841003747062.

Stein, Aaron. 2022. Publication. *Turkey's Response to the Russia-Ukraine Crisis*. Foreign Policy Research Institute.

Talukdar, Indrani, and Omair Anas. 2018. Working paper. *The Astana Process and the Future of Peaceful Settlement of the Syrian Crisis: A Status Note*.

Tang, Shiping. 2009. "The Security Dilemma: A Conceptual Analysis." *Security Studies* 18 (3): 587–623. doi:10.1080/09636410903133050.

Tannenwald, Nina. 2015. "Process Tracing and Security Studies." *Security Studies* 24 (2): 219–27. doi:10.1080/09636412.2015.1036614.

Tapia, Felipe Sánchez. 2022. Working paper. *The Balancing Act of Turkish Foreign Policy and the War in Ukraine*. Instituto Español de Estudios Estratégicos.

Tekines, Hasim. 2022. "Turkey's Clumsy Juggling between the United States and Russia." *The Washington Institute*. March 10. <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/turkeys-clumsy-juggling-between-united-states-and-russia>.

"Turkey and NATO." 2019. *Strategic Comments* 25 (9): x-xii. doi:10.1080/13567888.2019.1703305.

"Turkey- NATO Together for Peace and Security Since 60 Years." 2022. *Turkey- NATO Together for Peace and Security since 60 Years / Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Foreign Affairs*. Accessed October 2. <https://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkey-nato-together-for-peace-and-security-since60-years.en.mfa>.

Tüysüzöğlü, Göktürk. 2014. "Strategic Depth: A Neo-Ottomanist Interpretation of Turkish Eurasianism." *Mediterranean Quarterly* 25 (2): 85–104. doi:10.1215/10474552-2685776.

Tziarras, Zenonas. 2012. "Turkey's Syria Problem: A Talking Timeline of Events." *Turkish Policy Quarterly* 11 (3): 129–38. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/261986507_Turkey's_Syria_Problem_A_Talking_Timeline_of_Events.

UNCTAD. 2016. Rep. *THE IMPACT ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE WAR IN UKRAINE*.

Weisband, Edward. 2015. *Turkish Foreign Policy, 1943-1945*. Princeton University Press.

Yellice, Gurhan. 2017. "The American Intervention in the 1964 Cyprus Crisis and the Greek Political Reaction (February-August 1964)." *Journal Of Modern Turkish History Studies* XVII (35): 367–401.

Yeşil, Bilge. 2016. *Media in New Turkey: The Origins of an Authoritarian Neoliberal State*. Urbana etc.: University of Illinois Press.

Yeşil, Bilge. 2018. "Authoritarian Turn or Continuity? Governance of Media through Capture and Discipline in the AKP Era." *South European Society and Politics* 23 (2): 239–57. doi:10.1080/13608746.2018.1487137.

Yılmaz, Hakan. 2011. "Euroscepticism in Turkey: Parties, Elites, and Public Opinion." *South European Society and Politics* 16 (1): 185–208. doi:10.1080/13608741003594353.

Yılmaz, Ihsan, and Galib Bashirov. 2018. "The AKP after 15 Years: Emergence of Erdoganism in Turkey." *Third World Quarterly* 39 (9): 1812–30. doi:10.1080/01436597.2018.1447371.

Yılmaz, Ihsan, Mehmet Efe Caman, and Galib Bashirov. 2019. "How an Islamist Party Managed to Legitimate Its Authoritarianization in The Eyes of the Secularist Opposition: The Case of Turkey." *Democratization* 27 (2): 265–82. doi:10.1080/13510347.2019.1679772.