

Description for the general public in English:

Ankara balancing between Washington and Moscow.

Turkish-American and Turkish-Soviet bilateral relations in the years 1945-1952

The aim of the project is to analyse the issue of bilateral relations between Turkey and USA as well as these between Turkey and USSR during the first years after the Second World War in the eve of the Cold War and during its initial period, i.e. between 1945–1952. Thanks to the strategic position of Turkey, two blocks of influences were interested in the preponderance in this state. The Soviets hoped that the Allied states, disillusioned with Turkey's attitude during World War II, would not come to with the help and demand the revision of the Treaty of the Straits signed at Montreux, referring to the fate of Bosphorus and Dardanelle straits. In a different geopolitical situation Washington could have "sacrificed" Ankara in order to improve the American relations with the Kremlin. It is just an alternative story, as the Cold War broke out and USA started to support Turkey and gained an ally in the Middle East.

The issue of the Cold War has been largely developed in historiography. However, historians focus on its two major players (the USA and the USSR) or on European countries. It is frequently forgotten how strategically important was the Middle East and how important was the place of Turkey in this area. Comparing to the dominant perspective on previous monographs, my analysis will be distinguished by a new research perspective and examination on US-Turkish and Soviet-Turkish relations in a comparative approach and not distinctly as usually it has been done previously. The driving force for the Turkish rapprochement with the USA was fear of the claims of Soviet Union. That is why pretend that the relations between Turkey and USA and between Turkey and USSR need to be analysed in common.

In addition, the project's goal is to examine the past as the point of reference for a deeper analyse of the contemporary relations between Washington, Ankara and Moscow, which will allow us to see if certain past patterns are repetitive and could be helpful in analyses of contemporary international relations.

The applied research method will provide a critical analysis of the historical sources, mainly of the archival materials. The most important documents which will be subjected to the detailed research are these detained in the National Archives in Washington, DC, in the State Archive of the Russian Federation (Государственный архив Российской Федерации) and in the State Archives of the Republic of Turkey in Ankara (T.C. Devlet Arşivleri Ankarada).

In addition, the analysis and source interpretation will cover American, Soviet and Turkish press materials from that period as well as memoirs and diaries of politicians who were associated with one of the block of influences during the examined period. It will allow us to reconstruct the Turkish-Soviet and Turkish-American relations, to place them within a proper geopolitical context and to understand what interested the politicians in the states considered.

The expected results will constitute a significant contribution to the new knowledge about the history of Cold War. This research not only broaden the knowledge of the history of the Republic of Turkey and of the Middle East, but also broaden the knowledge about the history of diplomacy and international relations. A modern approach - analyzing US-Turkish and Turkish-Soviet relations in common and in the comparative approach will allow to look at the issue of US-Soviet rivalry in the Middle East from a new perspective. The use of historical knowledge in forming analyzes for the future will also be very important. The US-Russian rivalry in Turkey search, and in balancing Turkish politicians between Washington and Moscow, researchers may find many similarities between the past and the present.