



THE EFFECTS OF THE COMMON HISTORY BETWEEN TURKS-GEORGIANS IN PRE-SECOND WORLD WAR PERIOD ON THE FUTURE RELATIONS

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ABSTRACT

The present article provides an analysis of the longstanding relations between Türkiye and Georgia, encompassing various dimensions such as diplomatic, economic, social, cultural, and military. The historical background of Turkish-Georgian relations can be traced back to the Seljuks Conquest and the period of Ottoman Empire's rule in the Caucasus region through its diplomatic, economic, social, and cultural relations with Georgian region. The historical impact of the Seljuk and Ottoman Empires on Georgian's economic growth as a trading partner in the Black Sea, Caucasians and the Mediterranean is noteworthy. However, the extent of Ottoman's influence was curtailed by the dominance and sway of Russia. Following the Independence War of Türkiye, diplomatic ties were restored through the establishment of the Republic of Türkiye before the annexation of Georgia by the Soviet Union. After the Soviet occupation of Georgia, Türkiye faced a challenging situation, as the political system recently established in Georgia exhibited a strong alignment with the Soviet Union, a geopolitical entity that Türkiye perceived as a possible menace to its own security. Georgia's independence ushered in a new era in Turkish-Georgian ties after the Cold War ended. The two nations now cooperate in political, economic, social, and cultural areas, with recent years seeing a rise in military ties as well. This article explores the correlation between political interdependence and cultural interactions, with a particular focus on historical events such as the Russo-Turkish War, the Battle of Sarikamish, and the Status of City of Batumi. In this context, it will be investigated whether the Turkish-Georgian relations in the pre-World War II period are the main determining factor in the following period. As an assumption, the hypothesis that well-founded Turkey-Georgia relations will help resolve regional crises will be defended.

Keywords: Türkiye, Georgia, Ottoman Empire, Russian Empire

İKİNCİ DÜNYA SAVAŞI ÖNCESİ DÖNEMDE TÜRK-GÜRCÜ ORTAK TARİHİNİN GELECEK DÖNEM İLİŞKİLERİNE ETKİLERİ

ÖZ

Bu makale, Türkiye ve Gürcistan arasındaki uzun süredir devam eden ilişkileri diplomatik, ekonomik, sosyal, kültürel ve askeri gibi çeşitli boyutlarıyla analiz etmektedir. Türk-Gürcü ilişkilerinin tarihsel arka planı, Selçukluların bölgeyi fethine ve Osmanlı Devleti'nin Gürcistan bölgesi ile diplomatik, ekonomik, sosyal ve kültürel ilişkileri aracılığıyla Kafkasya bölgesindeki hakimiyet dönemine kadar uzanmaktadır. Selçuklu ve Osmanlı İmparatorluklarının Karadeniz, Kafkaslar ve Akdeniz'deki ticari ortağı olarak Gürcistan'ın ekonomik büyümesine olan tarihi etkisi dikkat çekicidir. Ancak, Osmanlı tesiri, Rusya'nın egemenliği ve etkisi nedeniyle sınırlı kalmıştır. Kurtuluş Savaşı'nın ardından, Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nin kurulması ve Gürcistan'ın Sovyetler Birliği tarafından ilhakından kısa bir süre önce diplomatik ilişkiler yeniden tesis edilmiştir. Gürcistan'ın Sovyet işgalinden sonra, Türkiye zorlu bir durumla karşı karşıya kalmıştır, çünkü Gürcistan'da yeni kurulan siyasi sistem, Türkiye'nin kendi güvenliği için olası bir tehdit olarak algıladığı jeopolitik bir varlık olan Sovyetler Birliği ile güçlü bir uyum sergilemiştir. Soğuk Savaş'ın sona ermesinin ardından Gürcistan'ın bağımsızlığı, Türkiye-Gürcistan ilişkilerinde yeni bir dönemi başlatmıştır. İki ülke artık siyasi, ekonomik, sosyal ve kültürel alanlarda işbirliği yapmaktadır ve son yıllarda askeri bağlarını da artırmıştır. Bu makale, siyasi bağımlılık ile kültürel etkileşim arasındaki ilişkiyi, özellikle Rus-Türk Savaşı, Sarikamış Muharebesi ve Batum Şehri'nin Statüsü gibi tarihi olaylara odaklanarak araştırmaktadır. Bu kapsamda, 2. Dünya

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The Effects of The Common History Between Turks- Georgians in Pre-Second World War Period on The Future Relations

Savaşı öncesi dönemdeki Türk-Gürcistan ilişkilerinin sonraki dönemde temel belirleyici faktör olup olmadığı konusu araştırılacaktır. Bir varsayım olarak, sağlam temellere dayanan Türkiye-Gürcistan ilişkilerinin bölgesel krizlerin çözümüne yardımcı olacağı hipotezi savunulacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Türkiye, Gürcistan, Osmanlı Devleti, Rus İmparatorluğu

Introduction

The historical background of Turkish-Georgian relations can be traced back to the Seljuks Conquest and the period of Ottoman Empire's rule in the Caucasus region, where the Ottoman Empire established diplomatic, economic, social, and cultural relations with Georgian region.

The Seljuk Empire, which dates back to Central Asia, founded a formidable empire that extended from Central Asia to Anatolia and Persia, and exerted a notable influence on the region's historical structure. The Ottomans extended assistance to the Georgian monarchs in their struggles against adversaries, while the Ottoman-Georgian relationship was influenced by the strategic significance of Georgian position as a buffer zone against the expansion of the Safavid Empire of Persia and the Russian Empire.

Up to the Russian Empire's growth and rule over Georgia, the Ottoman Empire still had an important presence in the region. Georgia's connections with Turks were restricted under the Russian rule as a result of Russian control and influence.

The Ottoman Empire played a major role in the development of Georgian reigns as a trading partner in the Caucous and the Black Sea, which enabled the emergence of novel industries such as carpet weaving and silk production. The Russo-Turkish War of 1828-29, where the Ottoman Empire and Principality of Abkhazia formed an alliance and the Turks provided military assistance to the Georgian forces. In 1877-78, a significant conflict between Türkiye & Russia concerning the governance of the Balkans resulted in a triumph for Russia and the formation of an autonomous Bulgaria in the Balkans and Russian influence over Georgia has significantly increased. However, the Ottoman Empire and Georgia found themselves on the same side during the First World War, which resulted in some coordination and cooperation in the Caucuses. During the Great War, Türkiye sought to gain autonomy through pressure from France and Great Britain, while the Russian Empire was attempting to gain dominance over the Caucasus region.

Relations with Georgia were re-established with the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire and the founding of the Republic of Türkiye. Relations became tense after the Soviet Union occupied Georgia, and Türkiye's influence in the area was very small expect City of Batumi. Georgia's independence ushered in a new era in Turkish-Georgian ties after the Cold War ended. The two nations now cooperate in political, economic, social, and cultural areas, with recent years seeing a rise in military ties as well.

The main objective of this essay is to present a thorough examination of the background history and present situation of Turkish-Georgian relations. It will briefly examine the historical foundation of relations, interactions with Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA) and the new Turkish Republic up until the Second World War, and interactions following the Second World War, Cold War up to the present. This paper will shed light on these elements by analyzing how they affect the complexity, difficulties, and present level of collaboration in Turkish-Georgian relations. In this context, it will be investigated whether the Turkish-Georgian relations in the pre-World War II period are the main determining factor in the following period.

As an assumption, the hypothesis that well-founded Turkey-Georgia relations will help resolve regional crises will be defended.

Political History of Georgian Reigns

In the 7th century, Muslim Arabs entered the South Caucasus and captured Tiflis with a peace agreement. The Tbilisi Arab Emirate was established in the Kartli region, and over time, this emirate separated from the caliphate and turned into an independent Muslim Georgian Emirate. As a result of successful preaching activities during these periods, some of the Georgian people became Muslims and Islam spread from there to the North Caucasus. In the 9th century, Ashot I from the Bagrat dynasty took advantage of the weakness of the Byzantines and the Arabs in the region and became the King of Kartli. Bagrat united the principalities in Eastern and Western Georgia under the roof of a state. The city of Kutaisi became the capital of this state (Jones, 2004).

Starting from the second half of the 11th century, Georgia's western neighbor, Byzantium, was replaced by the Seljuks. In the 12th century, David Agmashenebeli (David IV, also known as David IV the Builder) ensured the unity of the country. He captured Tbilisi from Muslims in 1122 and the capital became Tbilisi again. King David, who worked for the cultural and economic development of the country, also gave importance to scientific studies and art (Ruffin et al, 1996).

The brightest period in Georgian history was the reign of George III's daughter Tamara (1184-1213). The borders of the state stretched from Azerbaijan to the North Caucasus, from Erzurum to Ganja, making Georgia a Caucasian empire. During this period, the welfare level of the country increased, and many works were produced in the fields of architecture, sculpture and painting. This brilliant period of the Georgian kingdom continued for about a hundred years until the arrival of the Mongols in the region. Starting from the first half of the 13th century, the Mongols began to enter Georgia. Eastern Georgia came under the rule of the Ilkhanate descendants of Hulagu in Iran, but the Imereti region remained under the rule of the Bagratid princes and remained in a semi-independent position (Toumanoff, 1971).

Although George V, who became king in the 14th century, restored the integrity of the country, Georgia came under the rule of Timur in the last period of this century. Georgia could not be united under a central government, especially in the 15th century, due to the feudal wars it was involved in. Due to the feudal structure, Georgian kingdoms were short-lived throughout history. In the first half of the 15th century, Georgian king Alexander I divided his country into three: Imereti, Kakheti and Kartli, sharing it among his three sons. By the 16th century, the country was divided into the kingdoms of Kartli (central Tbilisi), Kakheti (central Zagemi), Imereti (central Kutaisi) and Samtskhe-Saatabago (Samtskhe, Javakheti, Shavsheti, Klarjeti and Tao) (Kortepeter, 1966).

Georgian history is intertwined with the Ottoman and Iranian histories for a period of nearly 350 years, from the mid-15th century to the mid-19th century. In the wars between the Ottomans and Iran, Georgian kings and princes sometimes sided with the Ottomans and sometimes with Iran. Especially the Muslim Georgian lords of the Meskhetian and Adjara regions and the Christian lords of Guria, Imereti and Megrelia sided with the Ottomans. The Muslim khanates on the Caspian coast and the kingdoms of Kartli and Kakheti, whose majority were Christians, remained under Iranian rule (Hitchins, 2023).

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Georgians became border neighbors with the Ottomans after Fatih Sultan Mehmet conquered Trabzon in 1461. Ottoman-Georgian relations began to develop positively during the period of Yavuz Sultan Selim's governorship of Trabzon, and during the Chaldiran campaign of 1514, Mirza Chabuk, one of the Georgian lords, expressed his friendship to the Ottomans by providing logistical support to the Ottoman army. During the reign of Bayezid II, Yavuz Sultan Selim and Suleiman the Magnificent, the southern and southwestern regions came under Ottoman rule. In 1578, Tbilisi was captured by the Ottomans and made the provincial capital. Starting from the 16th century, the people of Western Georgia became partly Muslim and local Muslim Georgians from Adjara were brought as the rulers. During this period, Georgia was divided into four provinces by the Ottomans: Tbilisi, Kakheti, Eresh and Sukhumi Province. Some of the people of Eastern Georgia were exiled to Iran by the Iranian ruler Shah Abbas in 1615 and 1616. Between 1632 and 1744, Eastern Georgia was ruled by pro-Iranian Muslim Georgian kings. With the agreement made in 1746, the Iranians appointed Teimuraz as the King of Kartli and his son Heraclius in Kakheti. Taking advantage of the gap in authority that arose after the death of Nadir Shah in 1762, King Heraclius (Heraclius II, also known as Erekle II, The Little Kakhetian, Erekli Khan) united the kingdoms of Kartli and Kakheti under one administration (Jones, 1987).

As a result of the struggle for influence between the Ottomans, Iran and Russia in Georgian geography between 1762 and 1783, the Georgian kingdom turned towards Russia. In 1783, King Heraclius signed an agreement with Russian Tsarina Katerina II on the condition that their political independence was recognized and they became Russian protectorates. Following this development, in 1795, the Shah of Iran, Agha Mohammad Khan, captured the city of Tiflis and deported some of its people to Iran. Leaving Georgian entities alone in the face of Iranian attacks, Russia annexed Kartli and Kakheti in 1801. Russia disregarded Georgia's state structure and turned the country into a province of Russia. Georgian princes and nobles tried to re-establish the Georgian kingdom, but their efforts were unsuccessful. Uprisings by Georgians against Russian rule in the first half of the 19th century ended in failure. In order to take Georgian geography completely under control, the Russian government abolished the Georgian kingdoms and principalities, exiled the members of the Georgian dynasty to various regions of Russia and executed some of them. Russians tried to eliminate the Georgian language and closed Georgian schools and churches. The most important of these rebellions are the 1812 Kakheti, 1820 Imereti, 1828 Guria, and 1832 Georgian rebellions (Kotchikian, 2004).

In 1915-1916, the Caucasus Committee, consisting of Georgian, Azeri and northern Caucasian delegates, made contacts in Europe, especially Berlin and Vienna, and initiated a confederative state effort consisting of Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia and the Northern Caucasus for the liberation of the Caucasus. On April 9, 1918, the Transcaucasian Federative Republic, consisting of Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia, declared its independence. However, this Federation did not last long and Georgia declared its independence on May 26, 1918. A Menshevik government was established under the chairmanship of Noe Zhordania. With the agreement signed with Bolshevik Russia on May 7, 1920, Georgia's independence was recognized by the Russians. Despite this, Georgia was annexed by the Soviet administration on February 25, 1921. Svaneti revolted against the Soviet rule in 1922, Mtilueti in 1923, and the whole of Georgia in 1924 for independence. Georgians were the first to fight against communism during the Soviet period. The rebellion movement, which was a continuation of the 1924 uprising and launched on March 6-10, 1956, was bloodily suppressed by the Russians (Lough, 2021).

The Historical Basis of Turkish-Georgian Relations

The Republic of Georgia boasts a significant historical legacy that can be traced back to antiquity. According to Jones (2012), the initial inhabitants of the region were the Colchians and Iberians, and subsequently, it was governed by several empires including the Persians, Greeks, and Romans. During the mediaeval era, Georgians underwent a transformation into a Christian monarchy and fostered a unique culture, language, and artistic expression (Rayfield, 2012).

Throughout its history, the country has been subject to invasion and occupation by various empires and kingdoms, including the Mongols, Ottomans, and Persians (Suny, 2015). The year 1918 marked the declaration of independence by Georgia from the Russian Empire, leading to its establishment as a democratic republic. However, the Soviet Union occupied Georgia in 1921, as noted by Hewitt (2013).

Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, Georgia proclaimed its sovereignty and transitioned back to a democratic republic (Hansen, 2014). Subsequent to that period, the nation has undergone noteworthy political, economic, and societal transformations, and has emerged as a pivotal participant in the South Caucasus locality (Javakhishvili, 2018).

The historical relations between Türkiye and Georgia have a lengthy and intricate past that can be traced back to ancient eras. The basis of the relationship has been influenced by a variety of factors, including political, economic, cultural, and religious considerations.

The Georgian geography is situated in the Caucasus region, an area that has historically served as a hub for diverse cultures and civilizations. The region was denoted as Colchis by the ancient Greeks, renowned for its gold mines and the mythical Golden Fleece. The area has been governed by a multitude of empires throughout its history, such as the Persian, Roman, and Byzantine empires. The Turkish people, whose ancestral roots can be traced back to Central Asia, made their initial appearance in the region during the 11th century. The Seljuk Turks founded a formidable empire that extended from Central Asia to Anatolia and Persia. The Seljuk Empire exerted a notable influence on the historical trajectory of the surrounding area, including the nation of Georgia. During the 11th century, the Seljuk Empire conducted a military campaign in Georgian territory which actually resulting in their first governance of the area (Brox, 2017).

The historical interactions between the Georgian and Seljuk entities were not consistently characterized by hostility. David IV, who was also referred to as David the Builder, established a cooperation with the Seljuks to confront the Persian Muslim leaders. According to Kakabadzade's (2019) account, the alliance between the Seljuks and the Georgians was effective in repelling the Persian invaders and achieving victory. David IV successfully established his authority over Georgian landscape and extended the territorial boundaries of the Georgian realm. The Seljuk-Georgian relations experienced a decline as time progressed, culminating in the defeat of the Seljuks by the Mongols during the 13th century. The Mongol Empire exerted its dominion over the territory of Georgia and its environs, encompassing Anatolia. Subsequent to the Mongol dominion, the Timurid Empire emerged under the leadership of Timur, who was alternatively referred to as Tamerlane. The Timurid Empire had a brief existence and was subsequently succeeded by the confederations of Kara Koyunlu and Ak Koyunlu, both of Turkic origin. The Kara Koyunlu dynasty exercised dominion over Azerbaijan, Iraq, and certain regions

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of Anatolia, whereas the Ak Koyunlu dynasty held sway over Persia and Iraq. The Kara Koyunlu and Ak Koyunlu were involved in persistent military conflicts, resulting in a decline in their governance over the area.

The relations between the Ottomans and Georgians can be characterised as a multifaceted blend of rivalry and collaboration, which indicates the intricate geopolitical situation of the Caucasus area. The 16th century saw the Ottoman Empire's territorial expansion towards the Caucasus region, which had a noteworthy impact on the region's historical trajectory. Georgia's involvement in this expansion was of crucial importance. Despite the persistent conflict between the Ottoman Empire and the Kingdoms of Georgia, the Ottomans extended assistance to the Georgian monarchs in their struggles against enemies, again with the imposition of tribute payments upon the Georgians. The Ottoman-Georgian relationship was influenced by the strategic significance of Georgian position as a buffer zone against the expansion of the Safavid Empire of Persia and the Russian Empire. The Ottomans perceived Georgian reigns as a mechanism to safeguard their interests in the region (Babayán & Aghajanian, 2004).

The Battle of Chaldiran in 1514 stands out as a momentous occurrence in the historical interactions between the Ottoman and Georgian entities. In this conflict, King David X of Kartli provided military assistance to the Safavid Empire of Persia and engaged in combat alongside the Persian forces in opposition to the Ottomans. The Ottoman Empire emerged triumphant in the aforementioned conflict, signifying the onset of the Safavid Empire's decline. The event marked a significant shift in the diplomatic ties between the Ottoman Empire and Kartli, as it showcased the former's military might and its capacity to extend its influence beyond its territorial boundaries (Andrews, 2015).

The period of Ottoman hegemony in Georgian geography was marked by notable transformations in the region. The Ottoman Empire introduced the Islamic faith to the area and founded various religious establishments, including mosques, madrasahs, and tekkes. The proliferation of Islamic culture and education in Georgian communities had a noteworthy influence on the region's language, culture, and religion. During the period of Ottoman rule, the Georgian language underwent a process of lexical enrichment through the assimilation of numerous terms originating from Turkish, Arabic, and Persian languages (Aslan, 2021).

The impact of Ottoman culture on Georgian literature during this era was significant, resulting in the creation of numerous literary works that were influenced by Ottoman traditions. The impact of the Ottoman Empire on Georgian art and architecture is noticeable, as evidenced by the presence of numerous structures in Georgian geography that are built in the Ottoman style. The mentioned structures serve as evidence of the architectural heritage of the Ottoman Empire and their impact on the cultural landscape of Georgia. The influence of the Ottoman Empire on the art and architecture of Georgia is evident in the structural composition of various notable edifices, including the Tbilisi Mosque and the Orbeliani Baths (Piwko, 2021).

Nevertheless, the Ottoman Empire's governance over Georgian reigns was not devoid of obstacles. The Georgian aristocracy frequently engaged in rebellions against the Ottoman governance, necessitating the Ottoman authorities to employ coercive measures to suppress these insurrections. Furthermore, the Ottoman Empire was confronted with extrinsic challenges, exemplified by the Safavid Empire, which similarly harboured ambitions for the Caucasus area. During the 18th century, the diplomatic ties between the Ottoman Empire and Kingdom of Kartli-Kakheti had high tensioned. The Ottoman Empire experienced a gradual decline in their

influence in the Caucasus region due to internal conflicts and instability. Together with, the Russian Empire initiated a southern expansion towards the Caucasus region. As per the analysis of historian Ronald Grigor Suny (2015), the competition between Russian and Ottoman Empires in the Black Sea area and the Eastern Mediterranean was a significant aspect of global politics during the 18th century. Consequently, Georgian powers was utilized as a tool in this power struggle for the supremacy between the Ottoman Empire and the Russian Empire. The Caucasus region witnessed multiple conflicts between the Ottoman Empire and the Russian Empire, culminating in the latter's triumph over the former. In 1783 with the Treaty of Georgievsk, Kingdom of Kartli-Kakheti came under the Russian Empire protectorate which effectively brought an end to the Georgian monarchy was a milestone in the relations. The Georgian people was permitted to preserve their distinct language and cultural practices, together with, they were compelled to assume the status of subjects within the Russian Empire.

The significant influence of the Ottoman Empire on Georgian history and culture has been widely recognized. The impact of Ottoman governance on some part of Kingdom of Imereti was extensive, encompassing its linguistic, religious, economic aspect in the relation between them. Ottomans played a crucial role in the development of Georgian reigns as a significant trading partner in the Middle East and the Black Sea, which subsequently facilitated the emergence of novel industries such as carpet weaving and silk production together with the trade of the goods from Central Asia. Additionally, the Ottoman-the reigns Georgian relations facilitated a cultural interchange during the Ottoman rule. Georgian culture was enriched by the exposure of the Georgians to novel ideas, art, and literature from the Ottoman Empire. Simultaneously, the Ottoman Empire was subject to the influence of Georgian culture, specifically in the domains of music and dance, the Georgian and Caucus roots of culture became very popular (Tsurtsumia, 2009).

The influence of the Ottoman Empire on Georgian community extended beyond the duration of the Ottoman Empire's governance. Following the expulsion of the Ottomans from the area by the Russians, a significant number of Georgians migrated to the Ottoman Empire, with a particular concentration in Istanbul. The Istanbul Georgians was a noteworthy group of Georgians who exerted a considerable influence on the cultural and political landscape of the Ottoman Empire. A significant number of Georgians residing in Istanbul attained important positions as politicians, diplomats, and intellectuals during the Ottoman Empire (Eldem, 2016).

Notwithstanding the instances of discord between the Ottoman Empire and the Georgian Kingdoms, there were also intervals of collaboration and reciprocal advantage which as a result of their cultural ties. An instance of diplomatic collaboration can be observed in the Russo-Turkish War of 1828-29, where the Ottoman Empire and the Circassians in Georgian geography formed an alliance. During that period, the Georgians, who were under the governance of the Russian Empire, perceived the Ottoman Empire as a reliable alliance in their efforts to counter the Russian influence. The Ottoman Empire perceived Georgian reigns as a valuable and strategic alliance in their efforts to counter the Russian expansionism, and thus extended military assistance to the Georgian forces during the war (Zviadadze, 2018).

Russian Hegemony and Growing Challenges

The breaking-even points and diverse in the basis of the relations between Türkiye and Georgia during the period of Russian dominance spanning from the latter half of the 18th century up until the onset of the Great War in 1914 was very determined and important. The historical era under consideration was marked by dynamic alliances and recurrent enemies, as the Ottoman Empire and Georgian reigns endeavoured to preserve their sovereignty and self-governance amidst the expansionist ideas of the Russian Empire. In this context, an examination will be continued on the basic characteristics of the relations between the Ottoman Empire and Georgian reigns during the specified time frame. This will encompass an analysis of their diplomatic and military engagements, economic associations, and cultural interchange. This part aims to analyse the effects of Russian hegemony on the diplomatic ties between the Ottoman Empire and Georgian reigns. Additionally, it will explore the responses of both entities to this external pressure which gathered around the mathematics of the Great War's itself.

During the latter part of the 18th century and the beginning years of the 19th century, the Ottoman Empire experienced a period of deterioration, characterised by its efforts to sustain its extensive domains and resist the advances of the European powers such as the British Empire and the French Empire. Alongside, the Russian Empire was experiencing significant territorial growth, as it extended its reach towards the southern regions of the Caucasus and Central Asia. In the late 18th century, Georgian geography was the site of military conflict between Russian, Ottoman and Persian troops. In the year 1801, the Russian Empire undertook the annexation of Kingdom of Kartli and Kakheti, thereby ending its sovereignty and placing it under the control of the Russian governance. Notwithstanding this, Georgia sustained a strong sense of national identity and a yearning for autonomy. During the 19th century, Georgian intellectuals and activists endeavoured to advance Georgian culture and language, while simultaneously opposing Russian efforts to integrate them into the Russian Empire. The Ottoman Empire's territorial expansion towards the south into the Caucasus region prompted its consideration of Georgian reigns as a prospective ally in countering Russian expansionist tendencies and threats (Sakhuja, 2015).

The historical record indicates that the Ottoman Empire provided military and financial assistance to Solomon II of Imereti during its efforts to achieve independence from Russia in the 1800s, as documented by Stromquist (1992). Although the Ottoman Empire had its own economic and military problems, it maintained diplomatic relations with Georgian reigns throughout the 19th century, even if the often-strained relationship due to Russian interference. Both the Ottoman Empire and Georgian reigns (Kingdom of Kartli and Kakheti, Kingdom of Imereti, Principalities of Guria, Svaneti, Mingrelia, Abkhazia) aimed to improve their relations with other European powers in the late 19th century, seeking recognition and support for their respective independence movements. Georgian reigns hoped to gain autonomy through pressure from the France and the Great Britain, while the Ottoman Empire sought to resist Russian expansionism with alliances with Germany and Austria-Hungary in the Balkans and Caucus region to prevent to reach Middle Eastern oil fields. Armed conflicts between nations or groups, often involving the use of military force and resulting in violence and casualties, are commonly referred to as military conflicts (Jones, 2012).

During the 19th century, there existed recurrent military confrontations among the Ottoman Empire, Georgian reigns, and Russia. During the 1820s and 1830s, the Ottoman Empire

and Principality of Abkhazia engaged in a number of military campaigns against Russian forces in the Caucasus, all of which ultimately proved to be unsuccessful. During the years 1877-78, a significant conflict ensued between the Ottoman Empire and Russia creating a hegemony and the governance of the Balkans. The outcome of the war resulted in a triumph for Russia and the formation of an autonomous Bulgaria. Georgian reigns had aspired to attain autonomy subsequent to the war, however, the result was not in its favour, leading to its persistent opposition against the governance of Russia. During the beginning decades of the 1900s, there was a notable increase in tensions between the Ottoman Empire and Russia due to their competing interests in the Caucasus region. In the year 1904, the Ottoman Empire entered into a military alliance with Germany. This action was perceived as a direct affront to the prevailing Russian influence in the surrounding area. The year 1914 marked the conclusion of the era characterized by fluctuating alliances and armed confrontations due to the onset of the Great War (Smith, 2009).

During this period, the dominant factor that affected the relationship between the Ottoman Empire and Georgian reigns was the regional hegemony of the Russian Empire. The geopolitical influence of Russia over Georgian geography had a constraining effect on the Ottoman Empire's capacity to provide assistance to Georgian separatist movements, resulting in recurrent military confrontations between the Ottoman Empire and Russia. The influence of Russian imperialism on Georgian culture and society was notable, as the Russian authorities endeavoured to quell Georgian national identity and integrate the Georgian populace into the Russian Empire.

The Pre-World War I Relationship between the Ottoman Empire and Georgia and The Great War

The historical significance of the relationship between the Ottoman Empire and Georgia during the Great War (1914-1918) is a subject worthy of academic inquiry. The basic relationship between the two nations was influenced by their mutual historical, geographical, and strategic concerns. This section endeavors to examine the character of the relationship between the Ottoman Empire and Georgia in the context of the Great War, scrutinizing the political, military, and economic determinants that influenced their engagements. Furthermore, will examine the historical background of the Great War, including the various military conflicts, military operations, and overall framework of the era.

According to Hobsbawm (1994), the global conflict known as the Great War exerted a significant influence on the political, economic, and social spheres, ultimately leaving a lasting impact that persisted for several decades. The global conflict commonly referred to as World War I occurred between 1914 and 1918, and involved numerous major powers that were divided into two opposing factions, namely the Allies and the Central Powers. The origins of the war can be traced back to a convoluted network of alliances, territorial conflicts, and imperial competitions that had emerged in Europe during the preceding years. The assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria-Hungary in 1914 served as the catalyst that initiated a series of events culminating in the onset of war. The Great War was distinguished by the implementation of trench warfare, the emergence of novel technologies, and substantial loss of life, with an approximate 8.5 million military fatalities and 13 million civilian fatalities.

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According to Jones (2017), the Ottoman Empire's relationship with Georgia stretches back to the 16th century, when they seized the country. Georgia was conquered by the Ottoman Empire, but its rulers retained some autonomy after the annexation. Tensions and disputes marked Georgia's relationship with different imperial powers, notably Persia, Russia, and the Ottoman Empire. During the 19th century, Georgia was caught in the middle of the Great Game, a geopolitical conflict between the Russian and British empires for dominance and territorial control in the region. The relationship between the Ottoman Empire and Georgia changed in the early 20th century as Georgia sought to gain independence. Georgia adopted a parliamentary system and declared itself a constitutional monarchy in 1906. Because they saw Georgia as an integral part of their empire, the Ottoman rulers fought Georgia's wish at independence. However, Georgian nationalists' efforts to gain independence continued uninterrupted, and this fact greatly contributed to the conditions that led to the First World War.

At the outbreak of World War I, Georgia was still a part of the Russian Empire and a member of the Allies. The Ottoman Empire, on the other hand, had joined the Central Powers led by Germany and Austria-Hungary. Because of its location between two rival coalitions, Georgia found itself in a difficult situation. Ottoman officials saw Georgia as a potential ally and worked to enlist the country in their army. To this end, the Ottoman Empire offered Georgia a deal in which, in exchange for its loyalty, Georgia would be allowed a degree of autonomy. The Ottoman Empire made some efforts to use Georgia as a base for its military operations in the Caucasus region. In an effort to wrest control of the Caucasus region from the Russian Empire, the Ottoman forces launched a series of invasions. There was a string of victories and defeats for the Ottoman army throughout their military campaign in the Caucasus. But by establishing a foothold on the Black Sea coastline, the Russian army and navy gained a considerable advantage after seizing the vital port of Trabzon in 1915. Besides, a military stalemate and subsequent end to hostilities had followed the Ottoman Empire's inability to advance farther into Russian territory. A rift sprung up in Georgian society about which empire to pledge loyalty to, the Ottoman or the Russian. Some Georgians saw Russia as the guarantor of Georgian freedom, while others saw the Ottoman Empire as a potential ally in the face of Russian persecution. While Georgia was formally a member of the Russian Empire, its government maintained an official attitude of neutrality. Georgia's neutrality was constantly tested as the Ottoman Empire and Russia fought for control of the country (Lang, 2012).

The Battle of Sarikamish was a significant occurrence in the diplomatic interactions between the Ottoman Empire and Georgia in the period of the Great War. During December of 1914, the Ottoman military initiated a military operation aimed at the Russian Empire in the region of the Caucasus. Enver Pasha, the Ottoman commander, held the belief that a rapid triumph in the Caucasus region would compel Russia to retreat from the conflict, thereby enabling the Ottoman Empire to fortify its eastern boundary. Nonetheless, the campaign ultimately proved to be unsuccessful due to the Ottoman army's inadequate preparation and the adverse winter weather conditions. The military forces of the Ottoman Empire incurred significant casualties, resulting in the conclusion of the campaign through a withdrawal. The historical event known as the Battle of Sarikamish had a noteworthy influence on the diplomatic ties between the Ottoman Empire and Georgia. The Ottoman military had also utilized the services of Georgian soldiers, who were perceived to exhibit greater allegiance to the Ottoman Empire in comparison to Russia. Nonetheless, the Georgian military forces incurred significant losses during the military operation, prompting a growing number of individuals to scrutinize the prudence

of endorsing the Ottoman Empire. The outcome of the battle at Sarikamish served as a pivotal moment in the course of the war, as it signalled the realization that Türkiye's aspirations for a conclusive triumph in the Caucasus were unattainable. So, the Battle of Sarikamish underscored the constraints of Turkish military might and influenced Georgian nationalism (Kieser, 2017).

Although a portion of the Georgian population remained loyal to the Ottoman Empire, a significant number grew disenchanted with the notion of backing a foreign authority that exhibited minimal concern for their domestic concerns. The formation of the Georgian National Council in Tbilisi during October of 1917 was a response to the increasing sense of national identity and the aspiration for greater autonomy. The council was composed of a diverse range of members from various sectors of Georgian society, encompassing political parties, trade unions, and religious organizations. The principal objective of the initiative was to attain enhanced political self-governance for Georgia while remaining a constituent part of the Russian Empire (Melvin, 2018).

The tumultuous events of the Great War had resulted in a state of disarray within the Russian Empire. The February Revolution of 1917 resulted in the dethronement of Tsar Nicholas II and the formation of a provisional government in Russia during the month of March. The provisional government's inability to reinstate order or garner the backing of the populace ultimately led to its downfall at the hands of the Bolsheviks in October of 1917 (McMeekin, 2017).

The dissolution of the Russian Empire had a significant influence on the political landscape of Georgia (Koç, 2023). Following the weakening of the central authority in Moscow, Georgian nationalists commenced a more assertive advocacy for increased autonomy. In May of 1918, the Georgian National Council made a declaration of independence from Russia for Georgia. Georgia, upon gaining independence, encountered various obstacles such as territorial conflicts with adjacent nations and internal political fragmentation. Nevertheless, the state was successful in establishing itself as a feasible entity, with a well-operating governance system and a robust perception of a collective national character. The attainment of independence by Georgia had significant ramifications for the bilateral relations between the Ottoman Empire and Georgia. At first, Ottoman Empire had served as a guarantor of Georgian independence within the Russian Empire and had aspired to sustain an amicable association with the emerging Georgian state. But then, the emergence of an autonomous Georgia presented a possible challenge to Ottoman concerns in the Caucasus region. During the month of May in the year 1918, the Ottoman Empire initiated a military operation targeting Georgia, with the objective of consolidating its presence in the Caucasus region. The campaign proved to be successful at the outset, as the Ottoman army managed to seize considerable portions of Georgian land. With that, the campaign proved to be futile as the Georgian military was able to launch a triumphant counteroffensive and recapture the majority of the previously lost territory. The military operation conducted by the Ottoman Empire in Georgia had a significant and enduring influence on the diplomatic ties between the Ottoman Empire and Georgia. Following the conclusion of the war, the two nations managed to establish diplomatic ties, albeit with a persistent undercurrent of mutual distrust and suspicion. Georgia perceived the Ottoman Empire as a great actor to its territorial sovereignty, whereas the Ottoman Empire regarded Georgia as a viable platform for the proliferation of Russian expansionism (Khalid, 2019).

Diplomatic Relations between the Turkish Grand National Assembly / Turkish Republic and Georgia

The Great War resulted in notable alterations to the global political terrain. The Treaty of Sèvres, which was signed in 1920, emerged as a direct outcome of the Ottoman Empire's defeat, and it facilitated the formation of novel states in the Middle East (Shaw, 2016). The treaty imposed stringent terms on the Turkish government, resulting in the Turkish War of Independence. Türkiye was successful in establishing alliances with neighboring nations, such as Georgia, which significantly contributed to the triumph of the Turkish War of Independence (Togan, 2017). Mustafa Kemal spearheaded the Turkish War of Independence subsequent to the Treaty of Sèvres, assuming the leadership of the Turkish nationalist movement. Mustafa Kemal deemed the treaty to be unacceptable and consequently launched the Misak-ı Milli, also known as the National Pact, with the objective of safeguarding Turkish territories from external hostilities. On May 19, 1919, the individual in question arrived in Samsun and proceeded to embark on a journey to Amasya, Erzurum, and Sivas. During this journey, a series of congresses were held which played a significant role in laying the groundwork for the Turkish nationalist movement (Balkan, 2017). According to Karpaz (2018), the leadership of Mustafa Kemal played a pivotal role in mobilizing the Turkish populace to wage a struggle for their autonomy and fostering a collective consciousness of national identity. The inception of the Turkish Grand National Assembly on the 23rd of April in 1920 represented a pivotal juncture in the Turkish War of Independence. The establishment of the assembly was a reaction to the Turkish nationalist movement and its location was situated in Ankara. Following the establishment of the Republic of Türkiye, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk assumed the position of the head of the government, while the assembly effectively functioned as the government of the nation. The formation of the assembly provided the Turkish nationalist movement with a valid political forum and contributed to the unification of the Turkish opposition against external hostilities.

Kazım Karabekir's leadership of the Eastern Front during the Turkish War of Independence played a crucial role in safeguarding Türkiye's eastern borders. This was achieved through his successful efforts in repelling Armenian forces and engaging in diplomatic negotiations with neighboring nations. In 1921, the Treaty of Moscow was signed, which acknowledged the Turkish Grand National Assembly by the Soviet Union and denoted the conclusion of the Turkish-Soviet War. Furthermore, the Treaty of Gümrü (Alexandropol), which was signed in 1920, served to establish amicable relations between Türkiye and Armenia. The Treaty of Kars, which was signed in 1921, acknowledged the sovereignty of Georgia and facilitated the establishment of a harmonious association between Türkiye and Georgia (Kasaba, 2017).

The Misak-ı Milli, also known as the National Pact, constituted a collection of fundamental principles that delineated the boundaries and autonomy of the Türkiye. According to the Misak-ı Milli, Türkiye's territorial boundaries encompassed the regions where Turkish populace resided, comprising Eastern Thrace, Istanbul, and Anatolia. On January 28, 1920, the Grand National Assembly approved the declaration, which subsequently served as the foundation for Türkiye's territorial assertions. The Misak-ı Milli, which was ratified by the Turkish Grand National Assembly in 1920, assumed a pivotal role in the Turkish War of Independence. The Misak-ı Milli was a declaration that established the boundaries of Turkish territory and sought to safeguard Turkish lands against external incursions. The said document served as a representation of Turkish nationalism and played a significant role in bringing together the Turkish

populace towards a shared objective. The Misak-ı Milli has exerted a notable influence on the formulation of Turkish foreign policy, particularly with regard to its neighboring nations (Hanioglu, 2010)

The Misak-ı Milli had significant implications for the diplomatic relations between Türkiye and Georgia either. The declaration encompassed territorial assertions that incorporated areas with a historical association to Georgia, including Batumi, a city that was under Russian governance during that period. The assertion of territorial ownership by both Georgia and Türkiye resulted in strained relations between the two nations. The city of Batumi, situated within the borders of Georgia, emerged as a contentious matter during the period of the Turkish War of Independence, contributing to the diplomatic discord between the two countries. The urban centre in question held significant importance as a port of strategic value on the Black Sea. Prior to its transfer to Russia in 1878, it had been under the dominion of the Ottoman Empire. The Turkish nationalist movement regarded the city as an emblem of Turkish authority and insisted on its restitution. The resolution of the issue between Türkiye and Georgia was a matter of great dispute, ultimately culminating in the signing of the Treaty of Kars in 1921. The treaty acknowledged the sovereignty of Georgia and conferred upon Türkiye restricted privileges to access the Batumi port. The successful resolution of the Batumi issue marked a noteworthy milestone in the diplomatic ties between Türkiye and Georgia, contributing to the establishment of a harmonious and nonviolent relationship between the two nations (Kieser, 2017).

The time span from 1919 to 1923 holds great importance in the history of Türkiye. The conclusion of the Great War and the ratification of the Treaty of Sèvres signified the commencement of a phase of political and societal turbulence within Türkiye. The period of the Turkish War of Independence, under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, holds immense importance in the history of Türkiye, as it played a pivotal role in the formation of the contemporary Turkish state. In this timeframe, Türkiye successfully established partnerships with adjacent nations, such as Georgia, thereby consolidating its autonomy. The Turkish-Georgian relations witnessed significant milestones with the establishment of the Turkish Grand National Assembly, the Misak-ı Milli, and the resolution of the Batumi issue (Aksakal, 2013).

The signing of the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation in 1926 between Türkiye and Georgia is regarded as a significant landmark in the progression of Turkish-Georgian relations, as noted by. The treaty was designed with the objective of enhancing economic, cultural, and political connections between the two nations, and encompassed clauses for reciprocal support in the event of an assault on either party. The proclamation of the Republic of Türkiye had noteworthy consequences for the diplomatic ties between Türkiye and Georgia. The nascent Turkish administration displayed a strong interest in forging diplomatic ties with the Soviet Union, which had extended formal recognition to the newly formed republic. Georgia, being a former Soviet republic, was perceived as a prospective collaborator in this context. During the initial years of the republic, a number of agreements were entered into by the two nations, which included a treaty pertaining to amicable relations and collaboration in 1926. The treaty facilitated the expansion of commercial activities between Türkiye and Georgia. The economies of the two nations were complementary, as Türkiye primarily exported manufactured goods to Georgia while importing agricultural products, including tea, hazelnuts, and citrus fruits. The initiation of bilateral trade connections between the two nations facilitated the promotion of economic expansion and advancement in the locality. Apart from the economic collaboration,

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the treaty also encompassed provisions for reciprocal cultural interchange between Türkiye and Georgia. The two nations had a shared past and cultural legacy, and the interaction among artists, writers, and intellectuals facilitated the development of enhanced comprehension and admiration of each other's cultures. With that the favourable advancements in the bilateral relations between Türkiye and Georgia in this timeframe, there were also obstacles encountered. The geopolitical impact of the Soviet Union on Georgia resulted in strained relations with Türkiye, which exhibited apprehension towards Soviet expansionist policies. Furthermore, the ongoing territorial disagreements between Türkiye and Georgia concerning the Batumi area persist as a significant point of contention between the two nations (Kavakli, 2019).

The Soviet Union's occupation of Georgia in 1921 was a pivotal moment in the historical trajectory of Turkish-Georgian relations. The inception of the Soviet Georgian Socialist Republic resulted in the unification of the two nations under a common political framework, albeit with the emergence of fresh obstacles in their bilateral ties.

The present part of the study aims to examine the evolution of Turkish-Georgian relations during the time frame between the Soviet annexation of Georgia and the onset of the Second World War, with a particular emphasis on the pivotal political, economic, and cultural determinants that influenced their engagements. After the Soviet occupation of Georgia, Türkiye was faced with a challenging situation. The political system recently established in Georgia exhibited a strong alignment with the Soviet Union, a geopolitical entity that Türkiye perceived as a possible menace to its own security. During this period, Turkish-Soviet relations experienced tension, as Türkiye pursued a cautious and pragmatic approach in its interactions with the Soviet Union. Regarding Georgia, Türkiye upheld its acknowledgement of the nation's sovereignty, however, it encountered limitations in extending substantial assistance as a result of its domestic political and economic predicaments. Türkiye faced economic and political difficulties that constrained its capacity to pursue foreign policy endeavors. The aforementioned factors have led to a phase of comparatively secluded state for Türkiye, characterized by restricted interaction with its neighboring countries in the Caucasus region. The restricted scope of Turkish-Georgian relations during the specified period can be attributed to the Soviet Union's influence on Georgia's foreign policy. Due to its status as a Soviet republic, Georgia faced significant limitations in pursuing autonomous foreign policy endeavors and was instead beholden to the priorities and interests of the Soviet Union. The constraints imposed upon Georgia had a restrictive impact on its capacity to interact with Türkiye, thereby posing challenges for the two nations to identify areas of shared concern (Kaplan, 2011).

The political tensions and territorial disputes that arose during the Soviet occupation of Georgia led to a deterioration of the Georgian-Turkish relationship, as noted by. The establishment of a sustainable foundation for cooperation between the Soviet Union and Georgia was hindered by the territorial dispute over Batumi and the Soviet Union's control over Georgia's foreign policy, despite limited cooperation in trade and diplomacy. Despite external challenges, the resilience of the Georgian-Turkish relationship is evidenced by its persistence during this period (Duman, 2017).

Effects of The Previous Term Turkish-Georgian Relations on The Current Period

The chapter is about the geopolitical landscape of the Caucis region during and after the Cold War era, with a particular focus on the concept of Russian hegemony. The discussion will

also delve into the fundamental aspects of the relationship between the Caucous region and Georgia and after the relations with Georgia which gained independence from the Soviet Union.

The Caucasus region has been a significant area of geopolitical tensions, marked by a series of conflicts and power struggles throughout its history. Following the conclusion of World War II, the aforementioned region became embroiled in the geopolitical tensions of the Cold War, as the Soviet Union and its affiliated nations endeavored to assert their dominance over the area. The Second World War had a significant influence on the geopolitical configuration of Europe and the international area. According to Westad (2012), the Soviet Union had gained substantial global power and exerted significant influence in Eastern Europe and other regions by the conclusion of the war in 1945. The Soviet Union's post-war agenda involved a concerted effort to extend its sphere of influence into the Caucasus region, which it deemed to be of significant strategic value due to its economic and geopolitical significance. Following its emergence from the war, Türkiye assumed the role of a significant regional power. However, it encountered a challenging situation as it became entangled in the conflicting interests of the Soviet Union and the Western powers. In the aftermath of World War II, the Soviet Union commenced its efforts to exert control over the Caucasus region. The Soviet Union's requests for territorial concessions from Türkiye and other neighboring nations prompted apprehension regarding the Soviet Union's motives, as numerous individuals were apprehensive that it was endeavoring to enlarge its territory and assert more influence over the area.

In response to the perceived Soviet threat, the Turkish government sought to enhance its relations with Western powers, with a particular focus on the United States. Türkiye took an active role in the Korean War as a response to the escalating Soviet threat, deploying its military personnel to participate in the conflict alongside the United States and other Western nations. This development solidified Türkiye's status as a significant partner of the Western nations and a stronghold against the expansionist efforts of the Soviet Union in the area. Nonetheless, the aforementioned event exacerbated the pre-existing animosity between Türkiye and the Soviet Union, as the latter perceived Türkiye's involvement in the conflict as a direct affront to its objectives. Türkiye's accession to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1952 solidified its status as a significant Western partner in the area. This action was perceived as a direct affront to the Soviet Union's sway in the Caucasus, thereby exacerbating the already tenuous relationship between Türkiye and the Soviet Union. During the period spanning the 1950s and 1960s, the relationship between Türkiye and the Soviet Union was characterized by a state of tension, which was punctuated by sporadic instances of violence and aggression along their shared border (Gönlübol, 2017).

The dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 constituted a pivotal moment for the region, and its ramifications have been extensively examined in scholarly literature. As per the assertion made by Professor Sarah E. Mendelson (2018), the disintegration of the Soviet Union had a profound impact on the Caucasus region, leading to the emergence of fresh prospects for regional powers to establish their dominance and pursue their objectives. This progress had noteworthy consequences for the diplomatic ties between Türkiye and Georgia, as both nations were situated in a predicament where they had to navigate the conflicting interests of the Western powers and Russia. Türkiye endeavored to preserve its strong relations with the United States and other Western nations, while simultaneously cultivating stronger connections with Georgia and other regional powers. Nonetheless, achieving equilibrium was challenging due to

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the persistent instability and volatility of the area, characterized by enduring power struggles and conflicts.

Türkiye and Georgia have maintained a mutually beneficial and collaborative partnership since the inception of their diplomatic ties in 1992. The foundation of this relationship is rooted in a common history, cultural ties, and mutually beneficial strategic objectives within the region. Türkiye has established significant economic relations with Georgia, resulting in Türkiye's emergence as Georgia's second most prominent trading partner, following Russia. Furthermore, noteworthy military, social, and cultural interactions have taken place between the two nations. The establishment of diplomatic relations between Türkiye and Georgia dates back to 1992, which coincided with Georgia's independence from the Soviet Union. Subsequently, there have been periodic exchanges at the upper echelons of government between the two nations, encompassing the presence of heads of state, heads of government, and other dignitaries. Türkiye has demonstrated robust backing for Georgia's ambitions to become a part of the Euro-Atlantic community, encompassing its endeavors to accede to the European Union and NATO. As per Oğuz's (2017) statement, Türkiye has been actively supporting Georgia's endeavours towards Euro-Atlantic integration and has been regarded as Georgia's closest partner in the region.

According to Kakachia and Kandelaki (2016), Georgia's political system is characterised as a semi-presidential representative democratic republic, while its economy has undergone notable advancements in the establishment of a free market. The nation has placed significant emphasis on its association with the European Union and NATO, and has been actively striving towards assimilation into both entities (Sturua, 2017).

Georgia has demonstrated noteworthy advancements in its economy during the recent years. According to the World Bank (2021), the nation has managed to attract substantial foreign investment due to its streamlined business registration process, liberalised trade regime, and relatively low tax burden. Georgia is a country that exhibits a positive trade balance, as it exports more goods and services than it imports. Notably, its primary exports comprise copper ores, vehicles, wine, and nuts, as reported by the International Trade Centre in 2022.

According to the Georgian National Tourism Administration (2022), the nation boasts a flourishing tourism sector, which draws in tourists due to its abundant cultural legacy, picturesque landscapes, and welcoming people.

In recent years, there has been an increase in economic relations between Türkiye and Georgia. Türkiye has emerged as one of the leading investors in Georgia. Turkish companies have made significant investments in diverse sectors including construction, energy, and banking. Furthermore, the report underscores that there has been a noteworthy surge in bilateral trade between the two nations, amounting to \$2.8 billion in 2022, with Türkiye having exported a diverse array of commodities to Georgia. The social and cultural connections between Türkiye and Georgia exhibit a robust bond. There have been noteworthy interactions between the two nations in the domains of education, tourism, and cultural legacy. The Turkish government has granted scholarships to students from Georgia, enabling them to pursue higher education at Turkish universities. Additionally, cultural events and festivals showcasing Georgian traditions have been organized in Türkiye. Furthermore, there has been a noteworthy surge in tourism activity between the two nations, as evidenced by the annual influx of thousands of Turkish visitors to Georgia (Janjgava, 2023).

Currently, there has been a notable increase in military relations between Türkiye and Georgia. The Georgian military has received training and equipment from Türkiye, and the two nations have engaged in collaborative military exercises. Furthermore, Türkiye has participated in endeavors aimed at enhancing the defence capabilities of Georgia, such as the NATO-Georgia Joint Training and Evaluation Centre. In general, the association between Türkiye and Georgia is founded on a mutual aspiration for a secure and thriving locality. Türkiye has emerged as a significant trading partner for Georgia, with the two nations forging strong economic bonds. Furthermore, noteworthy social and cultural interactions have taken place, alongside an increasing level of military collaboration. The promising outlook for Turkish-Georgian relations is attributed to the mutual dedication of both nations to enhancing their partnership. Türkiye and Georgia have collaborated extensively in addressing regional security concerns, with a particular focus on combating terrorism and organized crime in recent times (Saari et al., 2021).

Georgia's geographical location at the intersection of Europe and Asia renders it a crucial transit point for energy resources originating from the Caspian and Central Asian regions. Türkiye, being a significant regional power, has provided vital support to Georgia's endeavors to establish itself as a significant transportation and energy center. This has been achieved through the funding of infrastructure initiatives, including the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline and the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway. There has been an escalation in the collaboration between Türkiye and Georgia in the energy domain, particularly in the development of pipelines and transmission lines, leading to a rise in the transit capability of the area.

Additionally, both nations exhibit a robust dedication to advancing regional stability and security. Türkiye has demonstrated a robust support for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Georgia, particularly in light of the persistent conflicts in the region, including the Abkhazia and South Ossetia conflicts. The recognition of Türkiye's endorsement of Georgia's integration into Euro-Atlantic institutions has been acknowledged by other parties. Türkiye has significantly contributed to the advancement of Georgia's NATO membership through the provision of military aid, the facilitation of joint military drills, and the exchange of intelligence with Georgia. The potential for enhanced collaboration in domains such as education, tourism, and environmental preservation exists as the two nations endeavor to fortify their alliance. Türkiye and Georgia are favorably situated to further develop a robust and prosperous partnership, given their mutual dedication to advancing peace, stability, and economic growth in the area.

Conclusion

The history of Turkish-Georgian relations dates back to the Seljuks and the Ottoman era. The Russian occupation of Georgia transformed these relationships, and the Ottoman Empire's role became crucial for Georgia's independence after World War I. After the formation of the Soviet Union, Türkiye recognized Georgia's independence and resumed diplomatic relations with Georgia.

Georgia was under Russian hegemony during the Cold War, and relations between Türkiye and Georgia remained tense. However, following the dissolution of the Soviet Union and Georgia's independence in 1991, relations between the two countries were re-established, and both countries sought to strengthen economic, social, and cultural cooperation.

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Today, Türkiye and Georgia enjoy a mutually respectful and cooperative strategic partnership. They've established solid diplomatic, economic, social, and cultural ties. In addition to supporting each other in numerous international organizations, bilateral military cooperation has also increased.

Regional and global politics have influenced the evolution of Turkish-Georgian relations over a period of history. Nevertheless, both countries have maintained a positive relationship, which has become a significant pillar of regional stability and cooperation.

The Caucasus region has been a significant area of geopolitical tensions throughout its history, especially later on, with the EU and NATO and its affiliated nations endeavoring to assert their dominance over the area after World War II. Türkiye has established significant economic relations with Georgia, resulting in Türkiye's emergence as Georgia's second most prominent trading partner and has provided significant support for its efforts to become a part of the Euro-Atlantic community. Türkiye supports Georgia's efforts to establish itself as a significant transportation and energy center and has contributed to the advancement of Georgia's NATO membership. They have also opened up opportunities for further collaboration in domains such as education, transportation, economy, tourism, and environmental preservation. In that case, Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline, Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway, the Georgian workers which are seasonal workers working in Türkiye, the ease of travel with ID cards and huge investment in all over the Georgia can be given as an example.

As a result, it would not be wrong to say that the Turkish-Georgian relations in the pre-World War II period were the main determining factor in the following period. For this reason, the effects of this period, when the foundations of good neighborly relations were laid, are still felt today. As an assumption, it stands out that well-founded Turkey-Georgia relations will help solve regional crises. The situation in question has also manifested itself in crises in the relevant geography and has been tested. During this period, while maintaining its relations with Russia, Turkey also supported Georgia by criticizing Russia's aggressive interventions. For this reason, it is predicted that long-term relations will continue based on past conditions.

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Türkiye and Georgia have a long historical past in their relations which dating back to the Seljuks Conquest and the period of Ottoman rule in the Caucasus region. The Ottoman Empire established diplomatic, economic, social, and cultural relations with Georgia, but their influence was limited in the period of Russian control and influence. After the Turkish Independence War, relations between the two nations were re-established with the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire and the founding of the Republic of Türkiye. But with the annexation of Georgia by the

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Soviet Union as another aspect, relations were frozen until the Georgia got the independence from the Soviet Union.

On the paper, also examined the relationship between economic ties and cultural exchanges, and the interrelated events and circumstances that have occurred. With that, the study examined the evolution of Turkish-Georgian relations during the time frame between the Soviet annexation of Georgia and the onset of the Second World War, with a particular emphasis on the pivotal political, economic, and cultural determinants that influenced their engagements.

The Seljuk Empire, which dates back to Central Asia, founded a formidable empire that extended from Central Asia to Anatolia and Persia, and exerted a notable influence on the region's historical structure. The Ottomans extended assistance to the Georgian monarchs in their struggles against adversaries, while the Ottoman-Georgian relationship was influenced by the strategic significance of Georgia as a buffer zone against the expansion of the Safavid Empire of Persia and the Russian Empire. The Battle of Chaldiran in 1514 marked a shift in the diplomatic ties; introducing the Islamic faith to the area and establishing various religious establishments, as well as influencing the art and architecture of Georgia. The most important details of the phrases Turkish, Georgian, Ottoman Empire, Russian Empire, and Caucasus are that the Ottoman Empire has historically been largely peaceful, with no hostile relations between them in the region.

This period of Ottoman rule had a significant impact on the regions, leading to the assimilation of numerous terms from Turkish, Arabic, and Persian languages, as well as the alteration of language, culture, and religion. The Ottoman Empire played a major role in the development of Georgia as a trading partner in the Caucasus and the Black Sea, which enabled the emergence of novel industries such as carpet weaving and silk production. The Russo-Turkish War of 1828-29, where the Ottoman Empire and Georgia formed an alliance and the Turks provided military assistance to the Georgian forces. In 1877-78, a significant conflict between Türkiye & Russia concerning the governance of the Balkans resulted in a triumph for Russia and the formation of an autonomous Bulgaria in the Balkans and Russian influence over Georgia has significantly increased. During the Great War, Türkiye sought to gain autonomy through pressure from France and Great Britain, while the Russian Empire was attempting to gain dominance over the Caucasus region.

The Battle of Sarikamish was a major factor in the diplomatic interactions between Türkiye and Georgia during the Great War, with the Ottoman military initiating a military operation aimed at the Russian Empire in the region of the Caucasus. The outcome of the battle served as a pivotal moment in the course of the war, as it signaled the realization that Türkiye's aspirations for a conclusive triumph in the Caucasus were unattainable. Mustafa Kemal led the Turkish War of Independence and Misak-ı Milli, also known as the National Pact, which established the boundaries of Turkish territory and sought to safeguard Turkish lands against was ratified on the Meclis-i Mebusan.

The conclusion of the First World War and the ratification of the Treaty of Sèvres signified the commencement of a phase of political and societal turbulence within Türkiye, leading to the formation of the contemporary Turkish Republic.

Georgia was a key ally of Türkiye during the First World War, contributing to its victory with the Treaty of Kars in 1921, signed by the Republic of Türkiye, acknowledging the sovereignty of Georgia and granted restrictions on Türkiye's access to the Batumi and city ceded to the Georgia already.

The Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation in 1926 between Türkiye and Georgia is seen as a significant milestone in the progression of Turkish-Georgian relations. The two nations had a shared past and cultural legacy, and the interaction among artists, writers, and intellectuals facilitated the development of enhanced comprehension and admiration of each other's cultures. However, there were obstacles encountered due to the geopolitical impact of the Soviet Union on Georgia and the ongoing territorial disagreements between the two nations.

After the Soviet occupation of Georgia, Türkiye faced a challenging situation, as the political system recently established in Georgia exhibited a strong alignment with the Soviet Union, a geopolitical entity that Türkiye perceived as a possible menace to its own security. Despite external challenges, the resilience of the Georgian-Turkish relationship is evidenced by its persistence during this period.

The Caucasus region has been a significant area of geopolitical tensions throughout its history, especially later on, with the EU and NATO and its affiliated nations endeavoring to assert their dominance over the area after World War II. Türkiye has established significant economic relations with Georgia, resulting in Türkiye's emergence as Georgia's second most prominent trading partner and has provided significant support for its efforts to become a part of the Euro-Atlantic community. Türkiye supports Georgia's efforts to establish itself as a significant transportation and energy center and has contributed to the advancement of Georgia's NATO membership. They have also opened up opportunities for further collaboration in domains such as education, transportation, economy, tourism, and environmental preservation. In that case, Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline, Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway, the Georgian workers which are seasonal workers working in Türkiye, the ease of travel with ID cards and huge investment in all over the Georgia can be given as an example.

Georgia has a population of around 3.7 million people, with Tbilisi being the principal and most populous city. The nation has seen notable advancements in the establishment of a free market and has managed to attract foreign investment due to its streamlined business registration process, liberalized trade regime, and relatively low tax burden. Georgia is a country with a positive trade balance, exporting more goods and services than it imports, and its primary exports include copper ores, vehicles, wine, and nuts. With this growing partner, Türkiye-Georgia trade amount to be reached up to 5 million US \$ and that interdependency will ensure the stability in the region.

As a result, it would not be wrong to say that the Turkish-Georgian relations in the pre-World War II period were the main determining factor in the following period. For this reason, the effects of this period, when the foundations of good neighborly relations were laid, are still felt today. As an assumption, it stands out that well-founded Turkey-Georgia relations will help solve regional crises. The situation in question has also manifested itself in crises in the relevant geography and has been tested. During this period, while maintaining its relations with Russia, Turkey also supported Georgia by criticizing Russia's aggressive interventions. For this reason, it is predicted that long-term relations will continue based on past conditions.