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TURKEY'S PERCEPTION FOR ARAB SPRING EXPERIENCE OF SYRIA

Abstract

Having the civil commotions which started by the beginning of year 2010 in Tunisia, make influence in countries such as Egypt, Libya, Syria; has become factors which started the Arab Spring process in the Middle East. Having Hasan Akleh set himself on fire in 2011 constitutes a start-up phase of this process for Syria. As result of the violence that Assad regime applies on the opponents and civilian population in the country, attracted the focus of international actors on the region. Turkey is one of the countries which is influenced from the civil war in Syria. Turkey experiences refugee crisis and border security problems because of having the longest land border with Syria. Turkey has been imposed with great duties in the context of taking measures to these problems. By Russia's inclusion in the civil war in Syria, the number of actors on the region has increased more. The steps which may be taken in order to establish a security zone and a provisional government constitute the main headlines which are prepared for Syria.

Keywords: Syria, Civil War, Turkey, Refugee Crisis, Assad

SURIYE’NİN ARAP BAHARI DENEYİMİNE TÜRKİYE’NİN YAKLAŞIMI

Özet

Tunus’ta 2010 yılında başlayan halk hareketlerinin Mısır, Libya, Suriye gibi ülkelerde de etkisini göstermeye başlaması, Ortadoğu coğrafyası için Arap Baharı sürecini başlatan gelişmeler olmuştur. 2011 yılında Hasan Akleh’in kendini ateşe vermesi, bu süreçin Suriye için başlangıç aşamasını oluşturur. Ülkede Esad rejiminin muhaliflere ve sivil halka uyguladığı şiddet neticesinde, uluslararası aktörlerin bölgeye olan ilgileri yoğunlaşmıştır. Suriye’deki iç savaşın etkilenen ülkelerin başında Türkiye gelmektedir. Türkiye; Suriye ile en uzun kara sınırına

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Anahtar Kelimeler: Suriye, İç Savaş, Türkiye, Mülteci Krizi, Esad.

INTRODUCTION

Turkey had been avoided from pursuing an active policy in the Middle East after World War I. However, there were some exceptional circumstances in Turkey’s Middle East policy. Two Iraq interventions and Afghanistan intervention made by USA and further conversions which occurred by Arab Spring, caused Turkey to change its policies in this geography (Davutoğlu, 2012: 397). Ahmet Davutoğlu emphasizes his thoughts in his book named "Strategic Depth" about how the relations with this geography must be, as (Davutoğlu, 2012: 401); “Each step to be taken in the region from this moment on, will cause a dynamic counter balance. Turkey must incline for a behavior of an active intervening actor in short term progresses of the balance equations, more than constant tension and alliance policies.” While traditional Middle East policy of Turkey is predicting to approach to the region, the policy that is pursued by the country today is to subsist in the area actively, including the solutions of the problems experienced in the Middle East geography (Özcan, 2010: 371).

Middle East has been into a conversion process since 2011. The Arab Spring which is seen in Syria has taken an important place in international politics maneuvers of Turkey because the two countries share a 910 kilometers of borderline. Though Bashar al-Assad who governs Syria since 2000 asserted that Arab Spring would not influence his country, he wasn't successful in this foresight. Justice and Development Party (AK Party) which came into power in 2002 in Turkey took important steps in order to improve "Zero Problem with Neighbors" policy and the relations with Syria. Reciprocal visits of leaders and the trade agreement signed between two countries have ensured the elimination of the problems occurred in the past. However the increasing violence of civil war in Syria; and Assad regime’s being increased the pressure on civil population and not showing a positive approach to the diplomatic solutions, removed the applicability of the visions specified as “zero problems with neighbors” in international policy of Turkey. Furthermore, Turkey which supports Syrian opponents, specified the details of Train-Equip Program which covers the training of opponents, with USA.

Turkey warned Bashar al-Assad regime about making democratic reforms, but when it has seen that there is not such an action taken in Syria, then Turkey started to interpret the reactions of Opponents on the basis of human rights. The Arab Spring is democratic claims which are realized by civil population against the authoritative regimes for Turkey. For this reason, Turkey comprehended the Opponents in Syria and the civilians who escape from there. On the other hand this approach caused Turkey to pay a price; tens of people lost their lives as result of the explosions happened in the territories such as Reyhanlı, Cilvegözu, Akçakale. An open-door policy has been applied for the refugees coming from Syria into Turkey, and living areas have been provided to the refugees by the established camps in the regions that are close
The Journal of Academic Social Science Yıl: 4, Sayı: 26, Mart 2016, s. 158-169

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to the borderline. It is decided by the negotiations done by European Union (EU) to make 3 billion Euros of contribution to Turkey which suffered economic problems by the increasing number of refugees. Prime Minister Davutoglu stated that the incoming amount would not be spent for Turkey but would be spent for Syrian refugees. In this study, the attention will be attracted first on improving relations between Turkey and Syria in the first half of 2000s, and then the way, how the relations between two countries broke away, will be analyzed over the reactions of Turkey towards human drama occurred in Syria, which experienced Arab Spring and is still having politic upheavals and civil war.

1. A Brief Overview on the Relations of Turkey with Syria Before Arab Spring

Turkey-Syria relations pursued a tensed progress for long years because of the Syria’s support to terror and the borderline problems. Their relations were problematic because Turkey thinks that Syria was supporting Armenian, Kurdish and Arab terror organizations with armor and logistics in 1980s (Pehlivanoğlu, 2002: 113). When it was 1990s, their connections gained acceleration towards improvement. The two countries, which supported the territorial integrity of Iraq as a result of the Gulf Crisis that started in this period, made agreement on some matters such as preventing border crossings and smuggling (Ayata, 2011: 181).

In 1998, Turkey asked Syria to deport the leader of PKK Terror Organization. Turkey started to store military troops on the borderline and the international press started to give headlines about a war might arise between two countries. The headline of Hürriyet Newspaper in 7th of October 1998 was: "We across there". Moreover, Turkey performed a military exercise on İskenderun Gulf. Syria sent Abdullah Ocalan to Greece in order not to increase the tension, and the dose of the tension between the parties so decreased. When two countries signed Adana Protocol on 20th of October 1998, Turkey-Syria relations have achieved a positive atmosphere (http://www.aljazeera.com.tr/dosya/turkiye-suriye-iliskileri-inisler-ve-cikislar).

Bashar al-Assad who came into power in Presidency of Syria in 2000; did not touch in oath-taking ceremony on the Hatay Problem which is an important cause between Turkey and Syria; and he took a step which will realize end up of the Hatay problem by accepting the current situation of the borders in an official visit that he did to Turkey in year 2004 (Toraman, 2015: 50). Another matter which is worth to be mentioned in the relations developed in 2000s was the attendance of Ahmet Necdet Sezer, the President of Republic of Turkey in that period, in the funeral ceremony of Hafiz Assad (Ayata, 2011: 181).

Turkey-Syria relations made progress more than ever in the period of governments of AK Party. Syria has an important place within the "Zero Problems with Neighbors" policy of AK Party and Turkey attached importance in persistence of bilateral relations. The visit of Assad in 2004 to Turkey, and the visit of Erdogan, as the Prime Minister of Republic of Turkey in that period, to Syria in the same year; were the steps which are taken about getting relations to gain acceleration. Also President Ahmet Necdet Sezer has made a visit to Syria. A Free Trade Agreement which is signed between two countries in 2007, caused relations which were gaining acceleration in political aspect, to reflect also on economy(Toraman, 2015: 52).

Prime Minister Erdogan made two official visits to Syria in 2009. The University of Aleppo awarded Prime Minister Erdogan with a title of honorary PhD in July, 2009. In the ceremony, Prime Minister Erdogan used these statements in his speech (Türkiye Bülteni, 2010a: 42): "Can brothers be apart from each other’s? They must come together. Muslims are brothers,
but brotherhood cannot be realized with words, a practice is required”. The visa application for the citizens of two countries has been reciprocally removed in October, 2009 (Türkiye Bülteni, 2010a: 31-32). The heading "Two Brother Countries: Turkey-Syria" has been used in the official publication organ of the AK Party entitled "Turkish Bulletin" in November-December 2010 issue. Prime Minister Erdogan's visit to Syria dated 11th of October 2010 has been referred under this heading. While Assad, the President of Syria, was defining the situation between two countries as "a strategical relation", Prime Minister Erdogan was stating that two countries are in a good coordination especially for struggling with terrorism (Türkiye Bülteni, 2010b: 40-41). Moreover, the trade volume between two countries was on improvement in these years. Erdogan's salutation to Assad as "brother" during the foundation of friendship-dam on Orontes River in 2011, reflects the positive atmosphere of the relations (Toraman, 2015: 52).

2. Arab Spring and its Effects in Middle East

The civil commotion which overthrew the dictators in a couple of months who were in power for long years and who made sense that they would fulfill the persistence of this task unless there is no intervention to them; is named Arab Spring (Kibaroğlu, 2011: 26). The reason for using Spring term here is the thought of Northern Africa and Middle East folks, who realized a political conversion, have entered in a positive progress in the aspect of human rights. Democracy is a western experience. Once western world built parliamentary tradition against the absolute monarchy, it assumed itself superior to the rest of the world in the terms of rights and duties. In this context, anybody who is not familiar with democracy in political aspect, and with liberalism in economical aspect, is undeveloped for them. Democracy claim of these undeveloped communities is affirmed for this reason and these conversion movements which are generally realized gorily, are tagged as "progressive" events. There is nowhere in where the Arab Spring is experienced but no civil deaths and human rights violations have happened, however this is a spring for them because of western type of political and economic order has been achieved.

Muhammed Buazizi having himself set on fire in 2010 in Tunisia and the next progresses, constituted the start of the events, changing the lives of millions of people in the Middle East. Dictator Zine El Abidine Ben Ali has left his country and Hosni Mubarak has left the government. Events are spread in Libya and Syria with a domino effect (Dinçer and Kutlay, 2012: 2).

3. Spread of Arab Spring in Syria

Bashar al-Assad has been in government of Syria by the death of his father in July 2000. By this government type of Syria which is handed down from father to the son, a "Presidency Monarchy" has been established. Assad, who was chosen again by the election done in 2007, asserted that the Arab Spring which emerged in 2010 would not influence his country (Şen, 2013: 58). However, upon Buazizi having himself set on fire in Tunisia, also Hasan Ali Akleh having himself set on fire caused the start of commotions on 26th of January 2011 in Syria (http://www.milliyet.com.tr/2-yillik-ic-savaskronolojisi/dunya/dunyadetay/07.01.2013/1652039/default.htm). The protests which were started on 17th of March 2011 in Dera town for first; were spread in towns such as Laskia, Hama, and Humus. When Arab Spring approached from the aspects of human drama and violence, Syria reflects the most gorily image to the world. The main factors which accelerate the civil commotions in Syria were the economic difficulties in
the country, the authoritarian government of Assad which is deprived of taking politically
democratic steps and intolerant society against these circumstances (Şen, 2013: 59).

The opponents, who took as an example for themselves the government changes that
happened in Tunisia and Egypt, were gathered around a claim of a political change from Assad
(Tüysüzoglu, 2015: 106). The civil commotions which started as peace purposes at first,
become a civil war after Assad imposed an authoritarian government with security concerns. By
the increase in the civil war in Syria, military officers who were disturbed from the behavior of
regime towards civil population have resigned from their duties in the army in order to support
opposing party. This opposing group would establish the structure which is known as Free
Syrian Army in a short while (Ulutaş et.al., 2015: 7).

Bashar al-Assad came up before the folk after approximately four months in University of
Damascus on 10th of January 2012 and accused external powers for the chaos situation in which
the country was. Assad, attaching attention on parliament’s being opened for first in 1917 in
Syria, evaluated the ongoing events as a "test in which the loyalty of the society is measured". The
most striking comment of Assad was the statement of that he wasn't fighting against his
own nation, but against the mindset behind these people (Hürriyet, 2012). Though Assad
applied some measures, by considering the countries which are under influence of Arab Spring,
and in order to prevent the reactions which might come up in his country, such as petrol support
to the retired people, monetary support to the needy families, to take back the raises which are
made on the medicines; these policies did not work because of the change claim of the nation
and thus authoritative policies were started (Şen, 2013: 69).

The factor that Bashar al-Assad didn't consider; was these commotions having
accelerated in his country, constituted a social ground. As Syria is heterogeneous from the
aspect of sects, establishment of national-state was painful. Nation is established over common
language, common religion, perception of history and common place. Assad family is Nusayri
and he made assignments to the administrative level from his entourage during his governments.
As Sunni nation cannot find a place for themselves in political ground, they participated in
Muslim Brotherhood Organization and constituted the opposing party. While Syrian Kurds were
mentioning their autonomy claim, this will of them has disturbed Sunni Arabs. The nation
which is divided on the ground of sects and races, was far from establishing a Syrian nation.
When radical Islamist organizations, such as ISIS and Al-Nusra that observed the leadership
gap in the region by Arab Spring, were added on this schema; civil war of Syria became more
complicated. Moreover, the country has insufficient economical sources. The economy which is
indexed to agriculture, reached a stalemate because of the drought and war circumstances.
Petrol production of the country which was already undeveloped in terms of industrialization
was decreasing. This schema was setting forth why peace was not established in the country
(Tüysüzoğlu, 2015: 107-117; Dışişleri Bakanlığı, http://www.mfa.gov.tr/suriye-
ekonomisi.tr.mfa).

4. Groups Which Support and Dissent the Regime in Syria

The most important actor that Syria Government used in civil war is the army. Though a
great number of soldiers have passed in the opposing party from Syrian Army as result of the
civil war, the army is still keeping its power. Another efficient group that is used by the
government, is an organization which is named as "National Defense Power" and is known that
it has around 100.000 participants (Tüysüzoglu, 2015: 121). Besides those, there is a group as
well which is known as Shabihas and is trained by Hisbullah-Iran Revolutionary Guards. Shabih, which means ghost in Arabic; is comprised of military officers who resigned from army and the policemen. Shabihas who are an Unconventional Warfare Organization was actually established after Syria's 1975 Lebanon intervention, and it still subsists (Çelik, 2013; http://www.Aljazeera.com.tr/haber/sebbihalarin-hayati; http://www.sabah.com.tr/galeri/dunya/esadin-olum-sebekesi-sebbiha-kimlerdenolusuyor). It is known that Shabihas are Shia oriented (Dinçer, 2012: 6).

Syria National Council is the main organization among the organizations taking place in the opponent wing. Syria National Council was established on 23rd of August 2011 in Istanbul. It contains Kurdish and Salafi groups (Şen, 2013: 65). Then in 2012 Syria National Coalition was established in Qatar, and pursued an aim to embody all opponents. After a while, Syria National Council was included in the organization. Also the structure which is mentioned as Free Syria Army subsists by undertaking the protection of Syria National Coalition as a part of them in the protest demonstrations of the opponents. Though Syrian Kurds are one of the names to be mentioned in relation to the opposition against regime, they didn't take place in the Syria National Coalition. The reason of that is, the self-government discussions taking place between Sunni sections (Tüysüzoğlu, 2015: 123, 125).

Another group which is seen as opponent to the Syria regime is Al-Nusra Front. This organization, which is known as being adhered to Al-Qaeda, invites Syrians to revolt against the regime. This group, which includes some radical Islamists apart from the Salafis, caused concerns in international society. It constitutes 2-3% of the Syrian opponents (http://www.haberturk.com/dunya/haber/959258-el-nusra-cephesi-kimdir-el-nusra-teror-Orgutune-zaman-kuruld). If the probability of Assad regime's cession of administration becomes real in the future, the concern is the probability of having Al-Nusra Front impose their thoughts upon the society (Abuhasan, 2013: 72). Leader of Al-Nusra Ebu Muhammed el-Culani stated in an interview he has given to Al-Jazeera in 2013, that they fight off with Assad regime and Hizbullah and they don't target Western countries (http://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler/2015/05/150528_el_nusra_cephesi_suriye).

The result, which came out from all events happened in Syria, is Syrian opposition is not as efficient as it was in Egypt and Libya. In Egypt and Libya examples, the army could unite around a certain aim in the form of opposition. In Syria there is not a strong organization which can create an alternative regime (Şen, 2013: 69).

5. The Attitude of International Arena Against the Progress Experienced in Syria

The progress in Syria has shown to the western world and to the countries existent in the region that movement and revolt may happen also in Muslim countries when conditions are available (Dinçer and Kutlay, 2012: 3). The crisis in Syria caused changes in the international policies of international system and big powers. It caused determinant effects not only in the Middle East geography but also in global aspect (Ulutaş et.al, 2015: 13). The first country of which we can show as the most important supporter of Syria regime is Iran. Iran which increased its efficiency by using Hezbollah, supports Syria regime in order to increase its power in the Middle East (Ulutaş and Hoca, 2014: 11). Assad does not have anything in common with Iran because Assad is in Nusayris which is a branch of Shia (Oğuzlu, 2011: 36).
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Russia supported Assad government against the developments in Syria. Russia’s aim is to increase its effect in the region over Syria and to get back its image it lost in Cold War years and its power in the international system (Ulutaş and Hoca, 2014: 11). The military base that Russia has in Tartus is a quite important strategic location in order to increase its efficiency on Mediterranean. This military base has a big importance especially in order to prevent the increasing efficiency of NATO on the region. For this reason, Russia's support to Syria comes up as an incontrovertible fact (Has, 2012: 4-5).

USA shown a passive behavior to the civil war that emerged in Syria since beginning. Behind this action, there is an aim of creating position in its favor by retaining the rival party as a friend, instead destroying it, in accordance with the strategy-change that it applied as result of the experiences it experienced and obtained in Iraq (Kibaroğlu, 2011: 27).

In the other hand, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Jordan, Qatar, Turkey, USA, England, France, Germany and Italy came together and established an organization named "Group of Friends of the Syrian People". This organization takes decisions in the meetings they hold, such as imposing sanctions to the Syrian regime and increasing the support to the opponents (Şen, 2013: 73). Also National Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces has attended in their meeting that they held in Paris on 12th of January 2014 which was hosted by Minister of International Affairs of France, Laurent Fabius. It is stated in the meeting that the right of Syrian society to determine their own fate and their right of protecting themselves against violation, were supported (Dışişleri Bakanlığı, http://www.mfa.gov.tr/suriye-halkinin-dostlari-cekirdek-grup-toplantisi-paris-te-gerceklestirildi.tr.mfa).

Qatar and Turkey which sought solution for the crisis in Syria by applying diplomatic ways, started supporting opponents because of the increasing violence level of the crisis. Both countries want a solution without Assad because they thought Assad regime has lost the legitimacy because of the massacre he did (Ulutaş et.al., 2015: 19). The countries have been aligned like that in the seek for solution in Syria: While Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Jordan, by receiving support also from western countries, were requiring the change of Baas regime in Syria with a Sunni-Salafi approach; Iran, Russia, central Iraq Administration and Lebanon were constituting an anti-western axis and anti-western block by putting Shiah forward on identity basis (Ertuğrul, 2012: 1).

6. The Steps Taken by International Actors in the Crisis of Syria

A Conference has been held in Geneva on 30th June 2012 and participations have been realized in the level of Minister of International Affairs from USA, Russia, China, England and France which are regular members of UN Security Council as well as Iraq, Kuwait, Turkey. Koffi Annan proposed a provisional government which is comprised of Assad supporters and opponents, in a speech that he held. But a certain date is not predicted for the establishment of this provisional government (http://www.aljazeera.com.tr/dosya/ilk-cenevreden-bugune). It is seen that civil war is becoming more violent by Assad regime after Geneva Conference. As a result of the massacres that are experienced, parties have diverged. Having the actors, which were supporting the resolution of civil war, gliding to other fields because of the progresses happened in that period such as Ukraine crisis (Tüysüzoğlu, 2015: 129), caused the crisis resolution to get to a difficult situation.
A second conference has been held in Geneva on 22nd of January 2014. It is declared that Assad regime used chemical guns on the Eastern Guta region of Damascus on 21st of August 2013 and 1500 people whose 450 were kids, had lost their lives in the attack. Upon this, Conference of Geneva II has been held by the participation of Ministers of International Affairs and representatives of approximately 40 countries. Destruction of chemical guns has been accepted by Assad regime in the conference and it is aimed to establish a provisional government by making contact with opponents. The negotiations between Assad regime and opponents have started on the third day of the conference, but no solution could be achieved. Though there was no solution achieved, the importance of the conference was having Assad who lost the legitimacy in the international sphere, being addressed and having Assad regime sharing the same environment with opponent wing (Semin, 2014).

When silence environment could not be established between the parties in Syria, it is decided to start "Train-Equip Program" for Syria between USA and Turkey. There are two options foreseen in Syria for a regime without Assad; first is an international operation. Second option is having opponents being winners against Assad regime. It is aimed to train Syrian opponents by this program that is signed between Turkey and USA. By this way, opponents may be more efficient in fighting off with ISIS and regime-supporter powers. As a result of the program, they tried to ensure second option of the regime without Assad. It is aimed to get the program to be hosted by Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Qatar as well as USA (Kurt, 2015: 4).

7. Turkey-Syria Relations During Arab Spring

Assad regime's use of excessive armed force on the civil population because of the civil war that started in Syria as result of the Arab Spring, caused Turkey to support opponent party and the breakdown of the relations became inevitable (Balci, 2012: 9). The meeting between Davutoğlu-Assad in August, 2011 was the last meeting between two countries (http://www.milliyet.com.tr/2-yillik-ic-savasin-kronolojisi/dunya/dunyadetay/07.01.2013/1652039/default.ht). During Arab Spring, the democracy emphasis in the statements of both, Prime Minister of the period, Recep Tayyip Erdogan and the Minister of International Affairs of the period, Ahmet Davutoğlu; has an evidence-characteristic of how much they provide support to this process (Yıldırım, 2014: 63). Leaders in Turkey, as a country of the region, have shown the steps to be taken, to the leaders of the countries which has been experiencing the Arab Spring such as Libya, Egypt and Syria. The support given to the civil commotions resonated with the community of the region and Turkey has acquired the sympathy of the communities living in this area (Kibaroğlu, 2011: 31).

It is known that Turkey, which is closely follower of the civil commotions started in Syria, warned Assad about leaving the administration. Turkey, which took steps at first by the thought of this crisis may be prevented, did not close dialogs with Assad. However, losses of lives, which were increased by the policies of Assad in that progress and the concomitant developments, led Turkey to think (Ulutaş and Hoca, 2014: 13). The policy of using diplomatic ways with Assad has been applied on opponent wing as well and as result of this, opponents were provided with the opportunity to hold a conference in Istanbul; and Syria National Coalition has been established in which opponents were united (Toraman, 2015: 54).

The probabilities are evaluated for the "Security Zone" which is an argument that is mentioned often by Turkey in the context of Syria crisis in recent years. This aim, which was emphasized for first in the meeting which is done by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan with
Deputy President Joe Biden within the USA visit, has taken its place in the form of an agenda item as an area on which many studies must be done. It is thought to establish this security zone, which is aimed to be created, on Azzez-Cerablus line at Syria side and on an area which cannot be controlled by Kurdish powers (Taşçı, 2015).

In the other hand, it is seen that the Turkmen group which is often mentioned with Syria crisis, felt themselves closer to Turkey and is under the influence of identity awareness which is awakened together with the revolution. The group, which is organized by the revolution, established the "Syria Democratic Turkmen Movement". Turkmens uphold the idea of acquiring idiosyncratic rights in Syria lands by the probability of a new regime to be established (Balçı, 2012: 14).

8. Influences of Syria Civil War on the Security of Turkey

After the influence of Arab Spring to Syria, it is seen that the armed conflagrations that emerged in the country, have influenced also Turkey (Abuhasan, 2013: 83). Having the longest borderline with Syria and the geographic structure which is as a natural extension of Anatolia, show that Turkey needs to increase its measures against threats and risks (Dinçer, 2012: 3). When the security problems that Turkey encounters after the start of civil war, are examined; a Turkish jet has been shot by regime powers in June, 2012 and Turkey responded to this attack. Bodies of the martyr pilots have been reached in July. 5 Turkish citizens lost their lives as a result of the commence of fire to the Akçakale town of Şanlıurfa province in October, 2012 (http://www.milliyet.com.tr/2-yillik-ic-savasin-kronolojisi/dunya/dunyadetay/07.01.2013/1652039/default.htm). Again in October, conveyance of Turkish Armed Forces to the foreign countries accepted by Turkish Grand National Assembly and military troops started to be conveyed to the Syria borderline (21. Yüzyıl Türkiye Enstitüsü, 2013).

Owing to the explosion of the bomb-laden-vehicle in Çilvegözü border gate on 12th of February 2013, 14 people; and due to the explosion in Reyhanlı town of Hatay which is located at Syria border on 11th of May 2013, 52 people lost their lives (http://www.aljazeera.com.tr/kronoloji/kronoloji-suriyede-isyandancsavasa). Peshmerga started to pass to Syria over Turkey in order to fight off with ISIS in October, 2014 (http://bianet.org/bianet/siyaset/163049-suriye-ic-savasinda-dort-yilda-neler-oldu). The most tensioned event happened between Turkey and Syria was "Shah Fırat Operation". The reason of the operation which launched in the night of 21st of February, was the conflicts which increased in the region where the mausoleum located and the probability of mausoleum's affection from this. This probability is an unignorable fact which will lead Turkey to the conflicts. The region where the mausoleum located is important because of being the only piece of land belonging to Turkey located out of its borders. At the end of the operation, the mausoleum moved to Eşme, where is a close region to the Turkish borderline (Kurt, 2015: 1-3).

By inclusion of Russia into the civil war on 30th of October 2015, it is seen that Bayır bucak Turkmens have been targeted. Location and height of Bayır bucak shows that the area is located on a strategically important location in specifying the direction of civil war and this is a reason for Bayır bucak to be targeted. Many Turkmens have lost their lives as result of the intense Russian bombardment that increased in November, and remaining thousands of Turkmens have come to the borderline of Turkey (Acun, 2015). The size of Syria Civil War was changed all of a sudden on 24th November 2015 by getting Russian warplane shot down. The
reason for shooting down the warplane was violation of Turkish air space according to the explanations done by General Military Staff and Presidency (Kaya, 2015). By this event, relations of Turkey with Russia have tensed up.

9. The Problem of Syrian Refugees in Turkey

Immigrations of the refugees, who were affected in a negative way from the civil war that happened in Syria, and who escaped from the conflicts in their countries and took refuge in neighbor countries such as Turkey and Lebanon, have realized in two surges. The Syrian citizens who immigrated to the neighbor countries have been lodged primarily in these places. The first surge of the refugee crisis was started in the summer of 2015. Refugees, who changed their directions to the European countries by thinking they cannot benefit from education and health services in neighbor countries, were immigrating to the European countries over Mediterranean coasts in surges (Kutlay and Akçalı, 2015: 1-2).

Syrian refugees, who entered into Turkey first on 29th April 2011, maintain their lives in the camps founded on the borderline. In these camps which are founded for refugees, various facilities have been established such as elementary and secondary/high schools, health clinics, supermarkets, social domains, playgrounds from which they can cater (Dinçer et.al., 2013: 7-19). Prime Minister Erdogan has charged AFAD and Kızılay to get Syrian refugees to lodge in Turkey and to get necessary infrastructures to be realized. In the same time, the visa exemption application, which started before, has been maintained in order to facilitate refugees to enter in Turkey (Ulutaş and Hoca, 2014: 31). The latest data show the number of Syrian refugees exceeded 4 million 185 thousand, and this number is 2 million 72 thousand in Turkey as of October (http://www.aljazeera.com.tr/haber/suriyeli-multecilerin-sayisi-4-milyon-185-bine-ulasti).

The problem of Syrian refugees catches both Turkey and EU countries wrong-foot. Turkey let them to enter in the country unrestrainedly, by considering this situation as a human drama. Turkey emphasizes that they extended a hand for its Muslim friends. On the other hand the behavior of EU countries was not like Turkey's. While Prime Minister of Germany, Angela Merkel, stated that her country might open its doors for Syrian refugees, who are in the capacity of qualified employee, the thing what she actually has done is human discrimination. This approach of Merkel founded snarky by Turkey. Yet, refugees are still losing their lives in Aegean Sea in order to reach at Europe continent. Turkey tries to integrate Syrian refugees in Turkish nation by providing them with right to employment. But the passing from Syrian borderline into the Turkey lands, actually constitutes a risk for internal security of Turkey.

Conclusion

Syria crisis stalemates the policies of Turkey in the region as well as constituting the threat of removing tolerance of Turkey on the region and the savings that have "soft power" content. Moreover the international politic rules which are summarized as "Zero Problem with Neighbors" lost the validity. The democracy emphasis that Turkey is stating since beginning, was considered as the sole solution for the stability to be ensured in the region. The efforts of international actors in order to establish a provisional government in Syria, remained inconclusive.

Putting the economic affection on Turkey aside, that is caused by refugees; when social problems they caused are considered, their influence on the country progresses in a negative
way. Somehow EU, which started to concern by having refugees who came to Turkey turning their directions towards other European countries, stated that they would provide financial assistance about refugee issue. Though a hospitable behavior is mentioned by open-door policy, the 910 km. of borderline with Syria requires not considering the border passing only in the context of refugees who escape from the war. Because having many factors available in the region which will commit malpractices, has an importance in the terms of not creating an environment which is available for threat also for Turkey.

Participation of a country such as Russia, having economic and military capacity, in this crisis in September 2015 increases the complication of this situation more. Russia's eagerness coming from past for "Warm Waters" and its idea to achieve this whim by today's Syria, covered it up with a supporter structure of Assad regime. Russia increases its efficiency in this geography by its Laskia and Tartus fleets. It is obvious that relations also between Turkey and Russia was changed recently in the context of Syria crisis. The support of Russia for Assad regime and having Russian warplane being shot down by Turkey on the grounds of air space violation, are main factors which laid the groundwork for occurrence of a negative atmosphere in bilateral relations. However, in consideration of these developments, the current situation in the region must be read carefully and the steps which are required to be taken must be developed in the direction of ending up the human drama which is happening here. By saying "War cannot be without Egypt and peace cannot be without Syria" years ago; Henry Kissinger provided the actors, who are seeking peace today, with a point to which they should pay more attention.

SOURCES


