

FOREIGN PATRONAGE MECHANISMS
IN THE CONTENTIOUS EPISODE IN SYRIA: 2011-2012

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
OF
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

BY

MUSTAFA KAYA

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SCIENCE
IN THE PROGRAM OF
MIDDLE EAST STUDIES

SEPTEMBER 2015

Approval of the Graduate School of Social Sciences

Prof. Dr. Meliha Altunışık
Director

I certify that this thesis satisfies all the requirements as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science.

Prof. Dr. Özlem Tür
Head of Department

This is to certify that we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science.

Assoc. Prof. Erdoğan Yıldırım
Supervisor

Examining Committee Members

Assist. Prof. Cenk Saraçoğlu (A.Ü. İLEF)

Assoc. Prof. Erdoğan Yıldırım (METU, SOC)

Assist. Prof. Çağatay Topal (METU, SOC)

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

Name, Last name : Mustafa Kaya

Signature :

ABSTRACT

FOREIGN PATRONAGE MECHANISMS IN THE CONTENTIOUS EPISODE IN SYRIA: 2011-2012

Kaya, Mustafa

M.S., Middle East Studies

Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Erdoğan Yıldırım

September 2015, 168 pages

This thesis aims to understand the effect of the foreign patronage networks on particular Syrian contentious actors during 2011-2012, the episode which is characterized as the formative period of Syrian uprising. Tracing the Charles Tilly's contentious politics approach, in this thesis three main mechanisms, co-optation, outside certification, and coalition formation which are combined into foreign patronage process, are examined throughout three main currents of the Syrian opposition. Although it is expected that articulating to foreign patronage mechanisms extended the contentious actor's capabilities to develop contentious campaigns further; in Syrian case these mechanisms contrarily prompted the demobilization effect on the local Syrian population in terms of participating these contentious actors against Syrian regime.

Keywords: syria, contentious politics, social movements, demobilization, foreign patronage networks

ÖZ

SURİYE’DEKİ ÇEKİŞMECİ SÜREÇTE YABANCI PATRONAJI MEKANİZMALARI: 2011-2012

Kaya, Mustafa

Yüksek Lisans, Orta Doğu Araştırmaları

Tez Yöneticisi: Doç. Dr. Erdoğan Yıldırım

Eylül 2015, 168 sayfa

Bu tez, Suriye’deki ayaklanma süreci bakımından oluşum evresi olarak karakterize edilen 2011-2012 yılları içinde yabancı patronaj ağlarının Suriye’deki çekişmeci aktörler üzerindeki etkisini anlamayı amaçlamaktadır. Charles Tilly’nin çekişmeci siyaset yaklaşımını izleyen bu tezde Suriye muhalefetine üç ana akımı üzerinden belirli bir dizilim içinde bir araya geldiklerinde yabancı patronajı sürecini oluşturan işbirliği tayini, dış onay ve koalisyon oluşturma mekanizmaları incelenmektedir. Yabancı patronajı ağlarına eklenmenin çekişmeci aktörlerin olanaklarını genişleterek çekişmeci mücadele süreçlerini ileriye taşıması beklenirken Suriye örneğinde, bu mekanizmalar yerel Suriyeli nüfusun Suriye’deki rejime karşı çekişmeci aktörlere katılımını engelleyen bir etkide bulunmuştur.

Anahtar kelimeler: suriye, çekişmeci siyaset, toplumsal hareketler, demobilizasyon, yabancı patronaj ağları

Dedicated to my mother, in memoriam

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First of all, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my supervisor Assoc. Prof. Dr. Erdoğan Yıldırım for her patient guidance, and useful critiques. I would specially like to thank to Assist. Prof. Çağatay Topal and Assist. Prof. Cenk Saraçoğlu for their comments, corrections and precious contributions during the jury. My special thanks to my dear wife İlkay. Without her endless support during my study this thesis could not be completed. Finally, I would like to thank to my dear friend Özge Dinç Cavlak to her patient support and warm help on the last weeks of my study.

The data which this thesis draws on took the root from grievous experiences of the honourable and patriotic Syrian people. Hoping to find an end to murderous armed conflict in Syria, I would like to thank first and foremost to Syrians who showed me a great hospitality during my trip to Syria.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PLAGIARISM	iii
ABSTRACT	iv
ÖZ.....	v
DEDICATION	vi
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	vii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	viii
CHAPTER	
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
2. CONCEPTUALIZING FOREIGN PATRONAGE MECHANISMS	9
2.1 Contentious Politics Approach.....	9
2.2 Mobilization and Demobilization.....	17
2.3 Articulation Mechanisms to Foreign Patronage.....	23
3. DEFINING THE CONTEXT IN SYRIAN UPRISING.....	33
3.1 Pulse of Arab Spring to the Existing Opposition Structures	33
3.2 Initial Phase of Syrian Uprising	38
3.3 Response of the Syrian Regime	44
3.4 Escalation of Conflict into Armed Struggle	47
4. ARTICULATION TO FOREIGN PATRONAGE NETWORKS	55
4.1 Practices of the Foreign Patronage Networks	55
4.2 Syrian Opposition Blocks vis-a-vis Co-optation, Outside Certification and Coalition Formation Mechanisms	80
4.2.1 Non-violent Umbrella Organizations	80

4.2.1.1	Local Coordination Committees	80
4.2.1.2	Syrian National Council.....	97
4.2.2	Armed Opposition Groups	95
5.	CONCLUSION	109
5.1	Scope for Further Research.....	119
	REFERENCES.....	123
	APPENDICES	151
A.	CHORONOLOGY OF THE SYRIAN UPRISING, 2011-2012	152
B.	MAP OF SYRIA	154
C.	CONTENTIOUS POLITICS DIAGRAM	155
D.	TURKISH SUMMARY	156
E.	TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU	168

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

After armed rebels in Homs ambushed a government military checkpoints as the hatreds had already brew on either side of the avenues that divide the conflict-torn city, Homs, Syrian army launched one of the most blistering offensive campaign against armed groups throughout the beginning of the 2012.¹ Ironically the government shelling of the rebel targets in Homs neighborhoods began on the 30th anniversary of the Hama crackdown which was known as a critical date when Syrian Army besieged the town of Hama for 27 days in order to quell the uprising which was remarkable for the anti-Baath riot of the Syrian branch of Muslim Brotherhood. Syrian army forces' offensive began by artillery bombardment and continued with the ground operation to retake control of the Baba Amr neighborhood which had already became a safe haven for the rebel fighters.² On 1 March 2012, Syrian elite army units gained the control of Baba Amr and most of the armed groups declared their "tactical retreat" from the Baba Amr neighborhood as they run out of the weapons and ammunition.³ Despite impossibility to confirm exact number of the casualties it was certain that the Homs operation resulted in the death of the more than a hundred people and more than wounded and also tens of thousands of people displaced.⁴ Syrian Government described the situation as criminal acts that "perpetrating heinous crimes that claimed the lives of hundreds of civilians, booby-trapping private buildings, kidnapping and looting private and public properties" and

¹ "City of Homs Becomes Focus of Syria's Uprising", <http://news.yahoo.com/city-homs-becomes-focus-syrias-uprising-203508408.html>, (accessed on 10.02.2012)

² "Syrian Troops Bombard Sealed-off Suburb of Homs", <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/feb/09/syrian-troops-suburb-homs>, (accessed on 10.02.2012)

³ "Syrian Rebels Quit Besieged Homs Stronghold", (<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/03/01/syria-idUSL5E8DTB7I20120301>), (accessed on 04.03.2012)

⁴ "Local Coordination Committees", <http://www.lccsyria.org/6032>, (accessed on 6.02.2012)

“the competent authorities practiced the utmost self-restraint and gave terrorists a number of opportunities to return to the road of right.. but they refused and escalated their terror instigated by foreign sides.. all of this pushed the authorities to intervene and deal with them to restore security and stability to Homs”⁵ According to opposition groups there was no excuse for Syrian government to launch that sort of brutal military operation.⁶ On the other hand Homs operation was rendered as turning point for the Syrian government's position in the face of international community by the various western countries and a group of Gulf States. The governments of Turkey and France described the attack as a "massacre"⁷ United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon stated that he received "grisly reports" that Syrian government forces were arbitrarily executing, imprisoning and torturing people in Homs after opposition fighters in the city retreated.⁸ After these condemnations from a range of countries, including Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman and the United Arab Emirates, Germany, Spain, Belgium, France decided to withdraw their ambassadors from Damascus, and expel the Syrian ambassadors to their respective countries.⁹

However a leaked e-mail of the then Syrian National Council President Burhan Ghalioun's inbox which included a report which recapped a meeting with al-Haj Khodr al-Halwani, who was known as the leader of fighters in the Khalid Ibn al-

⁵ “Syrian Interior Ministry: Terrorist Groups in Homs Escalated Aggressions Against Citizens”, <http://www.champress.net/index.php?q=en/Article/view/112549>, 02.03.2012, (accessed on 04.03.2012)

⁶ “Syria Clashes: Homs Death Toll Soars to 350”, <http://news.sky.com/story/924312/syria-clashes-homs-death-toll-soars-to-350>, 04.02.2012, (accessed on 06.02.2012)

⁷ “Press Release Regarding the Latest Attacks Perpetrated by the Syrian Administration Against the People of Homs”, Turkish Foreign Ministry, No:37, http://www.mfa.gov.tr/no_37_-4-february-2012_-press-release-regarding-the-latest-attacks-perpetrated-by-the-syrian-administration-against-the-people-of-homs.en.mfa, 04.03.2012, (accessed on 06.03.2012); “Russia and China Block U.N. Action on Crisis in Syria”, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/05/world/middleeast/syria-homs-death-toll-said-to-rise.html>, 04.02.2012, (accessed on 06.02.2012)

⁸ “U.N. Chief Criticises Atrocious Homs Assault”, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2012/03/2012334752803236.html>, 03.03.2012, (accessed on 06.03.2012)

⁹ “Syria Crisis: Gulf Arab States Expel Syrian Ambassadors”, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-16932556>, 07.02.2012, (accessed on 08.02.2012)

Waleed's Grandchildren Battalion in old Homs, Hamidiyeh, and Bustan al-Diwan, Abu Qais, and a number of leaders of different groups in Homs revealed a different account of the Homs events which framed as a "massacre of the brutal Syrian regime" without considering the role of armed groups which had close links to foreign patronage networks:

"The leaders of the aforementioned brigades (means other armed groups which operated in Homs without allegiance to Al-Farouq Brigade) met repeatedly in the past few days and put together a document consisting of nine points in which they criticize the mechanism of work and behavior of the al-Farouq Battalion. They criticize the al-Farouq Battalion for its monopoly over decision-making in its areas, its attempts to subjugate whoever is outside its command by force, and adopting what they call a "big stick policy" in dealing with other fighters. In addition, they accuse them of unjustified violence against their adversaries and other anti-regime groups that are not subsumed under the rubric of al-Farouq Battalion resulting in a heavy human toll. (For example, al-Farouq's mild punishment/warning to fighters in Bab al-Sibaa led to the death of five martyrs.) They insist that certain groups within the Syrian opposition and external/regional forces have pushed fighters in Homs to this divided state of affairs but that it is possible to overcome this crisis if political and financial support is made available. Even though the young men are convinced that the regime started the arming of civilians by using Alawite thugs (shabiha). They explain that they are aware of the difference between civilian regime loyalists and armed killers, and they condemn the few armed men in Homs who have committed violence against civilians in neighborhoods loyal to the regime. They stress that such actions were the result of younger men making decisions on their own in line with the language of violence popularized by al-Farouq Battalion and made possible through generous external financial support. (..) They blame international actors for delaying intervention and hold them responsible for having to take up arms. They did not want to take up arms originally and they blame the political opposition (SNC) for not quickly playing an active role in helping them. (...) The 24 brigades have started to work on creating a common committee. In principle, they need counsel, support, and some mediation between them. They need someone to mediate between them and the leaders of Al-Khalidiyeh neighborhood to end a big discord that has been exacerbated by al-

Farouq's monopoly over decision-making in Al-Khalidiyeh, which resulted in the neighborhood being targeted with strong artillery strikes due to what some saw as recklessness in attacking Al-Matahen checkpoint (which has continued for days along with shelling Al-Khalidiyeh). This has resulted in the shelling of Al-Khalidiyeh and the displacement of hundreds of its residents because certain people, exercising exclusive control over decision-making, made an irresponsible decision. (...) The basis of the crisis in the city today is groups receiving uneven amounts of money from direct sources in Saudi Arabia some of whom are urging the targeting of loyalist neighborhoods and sectarian escalation while others are inciting against the SNC. They are not national, unifying sources of support. On the contrary, mature field leaders have noted that receiving aid from them [Saudi Arabia] entails implicit conditions like working in ways other than the desired direction."¹⁰

This long citation from the reports of the opposition leaders in Homs at the time of heavy clashes between armed groups and Syrian army units in Baba Amr neighborhood delineated the position of Syrian opposition movements which operated under the influence of foreign patron countries and directed their acts in line with the description of them. The main concern of this thesis is to understand the operation mechanisms of that sort of foreign patronage networks -as one instance is above mentioned in detail- in Syrian uprising throughout the 2011 to the end of the 2012, between which the Syrian opposition structures passed through transformation period from non-violent protest movement towards armed struggle against Syrian regime, and also the effects of these networks on the contentious episode and the diffusion of the opposition groups on the local population of the Syria.

As the term "foreign patronage", in the context of demobilization factors for the development of particular contentious episodes, has not been draw so much attention in the social movement literature in this thesis "foreign patronage" mechanism is tried to conceptualize throughout the second chapter. In that sense Charles Tilly's contentious politics approach is taken as a theoretical framework which enables the broader understanding of protest movements and social uprisings.

¹⁰“SNC Emails: Clinton, Kilo, and Al-Farouq Batallion”, <http://english.al-akhbar.com/node/6921>, 03.05.2012, (accessed on 10.05.2012)

In the second chapter the answers are explored to the questions of "What kind of mechanisms and processes in Tilly's contentious politics approach provide us proper grasp of the effects of the foreign patronage mechanism on social movement actors; how these networks shape the strategic preference of the contentious movement organizations and actors; how collective action agents articulate with the foreign patrons; and finally what would be the result of these interactions with foreign patronage networks for opposition structures as whether these contentious movements fell into demobilization trend. Throughout this chapter, three dimensions of the foreign patronage mechanism, namely *co-optation*, *certification* and *coalition formation*, are elaborated in the context of Tilly's contentious politics approach.

In the third chapter, Syrian uprising is tried to be placed in broader context of social movement waves which began at the end of the 2010 with Tunisian experience, generally called as "Arab Spring". As existing ideological divisions became blurring within the process of Arab Spring particular rhetorical positions took the scene which was characterized with the slogan, "fall of the regime", appeared to be a common phrase that linked different sections of the political spectrum of a particular country. In that sense the third chapter mainly deals with clarification of Syrian case while understanding the context of broader Middle Eastern protest movements as a "master frame". The initial mobilization structures of the Syrian opposition movements are examined in comparison with the Syrian regime's response to the collective demands of the opposition and limited reform packages which was initially implemented by the Syrian government. Despite the efforts of the Syrian regime to alleviate the volume of the protest movement throughout the end of the 2011 almost all parts of Syria which experienced a wave of protest movement began to witness more armed conflict between security forces and unidentified armed groups. With the escalation of the armed conflict a shift was observed in the repertoires of contention as the Syrian opposition groups with close ties to foreign patronage networks suddenly turned to more disruptive and violent forms of contention. Throughout the third chapter the transformation of the non-violent opposition movement into armed rebellion is reviewed in an episodic way.

Fourth chapter mainly focuses on the articulation processes of the Syrian opposition structures to foreign patronage networks. The principal opposition groups in Syria which were retained proximate relationship with the foreign patronage networks is examined in detail throughout the forth chapter. Distinguishing the Syrian opposition groups linked to foreign patronage networks into two category, as non-violent umbrella organizations and armed groups, in the forth chapter the connection mechanisms of the foreign patronage networks to the opposition groups are tried to trace in order to reveal the actual effects of these connections to the ideological frames and daily practices of particular opposition groups. In that context three dimensions of the articulation to foreign patronage mechanism are tested throughout the main currents of Syrian opposition groups, Local Coordination Committees, Syrian National Council, and armed groups which were established at the beginning of the Syrian uprising. These three mechanisms, namely *co-optation* of the Syrian opposition by the means of resource provision and strategic information sharing; *certification* of the particular opposition groups in the face of international community through Friends of Syria meetings and opposition gatherings; *coalition formation* to provide a feasible ground for opposition groups to establish the widest front against Syrian regime, provide a fertile ground on which the effects of the articulation to foreign patronage mechanism can be analyzed. Co-optation, certification, and coalition formation mechanisms were mainly employed by the foreign patrons to mobilize Syrian opposition structures in line with their respective interest definitions. However, as it can be seen in the fourth chapter, these three dimensional foreign patronage mechanisms created adverse effects on the mobilization of the Syrian population against Syrian regime.

Finally, in the concluding chapter an overview of the main arguments of the thesis about the effects of mechanism of the articulation to the foreign patronage networks on mobilization/demobilization processes of the opposition groups in Syria is provided.

Due to the fogginess of conflict in Syria, it is impossible to determine the veracity of reports coming out of the country nevertheless this thesis depended

largely on the ground reporting and interviews with rebel leaders, commanders, and soldiers by journalists; eyewitness statements; and public statements by rebel groups, either through traditional media channels through their official websites and social network profiles.

The writer of this thesis had a chance to visit Syria several times. In June 2011 and January 2012, the writer visit Damascus, Latakia and Aleppo as these visits provided more grounded view of the conflict in Syria. There was also opportunity to meet with a handful of senior Syrian government officials who enabled the writer to grasp first-hand account of the Syrian government's position as regards to gradually escalating conflict in Syrian cities. Although the conversations with the government officials were not structured priorly the main theme of the dialogue was mostly the envisaged response of the Syrian government corresponding to the protest movement spanning throughout the whole country. At the same time the writer conducted non-structured interview with the residents of the conflict-ridden neighborhoods of Damascus and Aleppo, such as Qaboun and Sheikh Maksud. Considering the Syrian case, there was unfavorable opportunity that the writer could meet several opposition figures and Syrian nationals who chose to remain bystander in Turkey's border cities, even in Istanbul and Ankara which were located far from the Syrian border. In this thesis all these experiences, dialogues, observations from the ground and arguments which were obtained directly from the party of the Syrian uprising tried to introduce into the study without direct reference; but where needed exact citation for the test of argument and information it was referred.

In addition, various reports which prepared by the United Nations Human Rights Council, especially subsequent reports of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic, are appreciated as these reports include accumulation of the first-hand account of the conflict in Syria. And finally the vast literature on social movement theories are tried to integrate into this thesis as far as possible.

CHAPTER 2

CONCEPTUALIZING FOREIGN PATRONAGE MECHANISMS

2.1 Contentious Politics Approach

The term, social movement, is mostly used in substitution for all events where collective action and contention overlap. However from the point of view of the contentious politics approach, the social movements appear to be a distinct sub form of the contentious politics having a unique historical background.¹¹ According to Tilly, social movements combine sustained campaigns of claim making; an array of public performances; repeated public displays of worthiness, unity, numbers, and commitment; and finally they draw on the organizations, networks, traditions, and solidarities that sustain these activities.¹² All these features are the products of a specific historical process, namely the political and economic transformation of the eighteenth century.

The broader understanding of the claim making requires more comprehensive and applicative term enabling the meaningful comparison across different types of claim making processes. Hence this approach lends the term, social movement, sharper definition. A broader concept of the making claim, contentious politics, which the great master is Charles Tilly, proves to be convenient approach to comprehend complex and fluid nature of the making claims.

Contentious politics positions itself on the convergence of three area, contention, collective action and politics. Contention contains making claims which

¹¹ Charles Tilly and Sidney G. Tarrow, *Contentious Politics*, Paradigm Publishers, Boulder, Colombia, 2007, p. 8

¹² Ibid. , 8

has an effect on someone else's interest. Claims involve at least one subject's reaching visibly toward at least one object. Contention always brings together subjects, objects, and claims.¹³

Mancur Olson defines collective action with its relation to provision of public good.¹⁴ Olson tries to explain when people act together to achieve particular common goals. For the contentious politics approach collective action contains more generic means, as coordinating efforts on behalf of shared interests or programs.¹⁵ In that sense, every collective action does not necessarily involve contention.

The presence of states, as a rule-making and rule-implementing with a monopoly of coercion, in a social life changes the essence of the contention and collective action. The states, with their agents, economic capacity, social networks, military capabilities and political hegemony run into the realm of contentious action not as a catalyzer, but as main determinants of the equation. However politics cannot be restricted to the reach of states and governments. Political interaction between various actors takes place in every aspect of the social life directly or indirectly. Therefore the processes which occur seemingly outside the realm of the state should be considered as a contentious of politics due to these processes' scope and social settings.¹⁶ The states appear as a subject, monitors, regulators, objects, or guarantors of the claim making processes.

Tracing the above mentioned aspects Mcadam, Tarrow and Tilly reaches the following definition:

"Contentious politics refers to episodic, public, collective interaction among makers of claims and their objects when at least one government is a claimant, an

¹³ Ibid. , 5

¹⁴ Mancur Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action; Public Goods and the Theory of Groups*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1965, p. 9

¹⁵ Charles Tilly and Sidney G. Tarrow, *Contentious Politics*, Paradigm Publishers, Boulder, Colombia, 2007, p. 5

¹⁶ Ibid. , 6

object of claims, or a party to the claims and the claims would, if realized, affect the interests of at least one of the claimants."¹⁷

In this context, contentious politics approach tries to understand different forms of contentious collective actions through identifying recurrent mechanisms and processes with varying sequences and conditions. Contentious politics encompasses social movements, lethal conflicts, revolutions, civil wars as well as different sorts of group struggles while revealing similar mechanisms and processes.

This study tries to understand Syrian uprising in an interactive way to take full account of the fundamentally social/relational nature of human existence.¹⁸ No wonder that the social bases of the uprising, political opportunity structures, mobilization capabilities, social networks, cultural frames and identities are of crucial importance but the processes and mechanisms through which particular variations and contingencies take place are deserved more attention. Contentious politics approach deals more with the mechanisms and processes that involve challengers, their targets, public authorities, and third parties like the media and the public in sequences of interaction.¹⁹

The mechanisms are explained as a delimited class of events that alter relations among specified sets of elements in identical ways. The processes consist of the regular combinations and sequences of mechanisms that produce similar transformation of the given elements.²⁰ Mechanisms and processes comprise the episodes which are defined as bounded sequences of continuous interaction.²¹

¹⁷Doug McAdam, Sidney Tarrow and Charles Tilly, *Dynamics of Contention*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2001, p. 5

¹⁸Mario Diani and Doug McAdam, *Social Movements and Networks: Relational Approaches to Collective Action*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2003

¹⁹Charles Tilly and Sidney G. Tarrow, *Contentious Politics*, Paradigm Publishers, Boulder, Colombia, 2007, p. 11

²⁰Ibid. , 29

²¹Ibid. , 36

The distinction between mechanisms and processes depend on level of observation. One can find different smaller-scale mechanisms within the various mechanisms and processes. Particular mechanisms operate in a distinct set of sites of contention and conditions. Initial conditions play crucial roles for the direction of similar mechanisms which result in different processes. Various sequences, combinations, integrations and confrontations of the mechanisms and processes determine the streams of contention. Processes assemble mechanisms so that produce larger-scale outcomes than any single mechanism.²² Dividing the episodes into particular mechanisms and processes enables us to detect underlying sections of the contentious politics and the way through which contention operates.

Tilly and Tarrow²³ identify some of the mechanisms as attribution of similarity, boundary activation, boundary formation, boundary shift, brokerage, certification, co-optation, defection, diffusion, emulation, and repression; and processes as actor constitution, coalition formation, collective action, commercialization, competition, contention, coordinated action, democratization, disillusionment, escalation, framing, globalization, identity shifting, institutionalization, internationalization, involution, mobilization, new coordination, polarization, radicalization, scale shift, self-representation, and social appropriation.

Different type of mechanisms may combine into distinct processes which transform the previous form of mechanisms. Emulation, deliberate repetition within a given setting of a performance observed in another setting, may well interacts with the mechanism boundary formation with the result of the process of new coordination. However these same mechanisms may combine with different mechanisms which change the outcome. For instance, boundary activation can impede the new coordination due to effects of the mechanism boundary formation.

To understand how similar mechanisms and processes produce distinctive political trajectories and outcomes contentious performances and repertoires are of

²² Ibid. , 206

²³ Ibid. , 215-217

crucial importance. These performances and repertoires link at least two actors, namely the claimant and an object of claims.²⁴ Every collective claim making uses various kinds of performances from non-violent ways such as presentation of a petition and demonstration to violent acts such as strikes and armed raids. Contentious performances and repertoires have been established historically through making use of previous instances and cultural frameworks in an innovative way.

Contentious performances are defined as relatively familiar and standardized ways in which one set of political actors makes collective claims on some other set of political actors.²⁵ The definite set of contentious performances constitutes the contentious repertoires. Given political regime and social institutions restrict available array of performances and repertoires through regulations, rules, laws and violence means. Social setting conditions the repertoires but also innovative performances adjust the social setting. Connections between claim making and everyday social organization, cumulative creation of a signaling system by contention and operation of the regime, as a regime sorts performances into prescribed, tolerated, and forbidden categories, appear as a major causes of the contentious performance and repertoires change.²⁶

Contentious politics involves a complex web of interactions among claimants, the objects of the claim, and interested third parties such as observers, sympathetic bystanders. Contentious performances and repertoires operate as a link between various actors in contentious politics. These convey the messages of grievances, response, reaction and submission mutually. Interaction does not only occur among those who demonstrate, rather the task of demonstrators is to turn sympathizers into participants, neutralize opponents, and turn indifferent onlookers into sympathizers.²⁷

²⁴Ibid. , 12

²⁵Ibid. , 11

²⁶ Ibid. , 22

²⁷ Ibid. , 70

Political identities and boundaries play an important role in defining the interactive relations among different actors. Various political identities and boundaries have existed prior to contentious processes and episodes but particular mechanisms can create novel identities and boundaries throughout the contention. Political identities include boundaries, relations across the boundaries, relations within the us and within the them, plus accumulated meanings assigned to the boundaries and relations.²⁸ The actors in contentious politics get in touch with these functions intermittently and generate more original ones. The contentious mechanisms and processes become a way of creating and transforming these identities and boundaries.

Without more refined definitions different types of contention cannot be separated properly. The question "what is a social movement" is a very stimulating one but it has not been answered deservedly so far.²⁹ However, Tilly's categorizations of contentious politics provide some potential that enable better understanding of the definitions, transitions and the historical positions of various types of contentious politics.³⁰ Sorting out social movements from lethal conflicts, revolutions, and civil wars makes possible to catch on dynamic interactions of contentious politics.

The social movement is a particular historical form of contentious politics.³¹ Social movements, as a particular form of contentious politics, consist of campaigns, forms of association and action, and public self-representations. Sustained and

²⁸Ibid. , 79

²⁹Karl-Dieter Opp, *Theories of Political Protest and Social Movements: A Multidisciplinary Introduction, Critique, and Synthesis*, Routledge, New York, 2009, p. 79

³⁰Charles Tilly and Sidney G. Tarrow, *Contentious Politics*, Paradigm Publishers, Boulder, Colombia, 2007, p. 114

³¹ Ibid. , 119

organized efforts of claim making with regular display of unity, worthiness, number and commitment comprise the main elements of social movements.³²

On the other hand the distinctive feature of the social movements is the modularity of its performances.³³ Social actors in social movements mostly employ the similar forms of contention in different settings and targets such as demonstration, petition and street march. All these modular performances are directed to public, bystanders and common audiences. Social movement actors try to achieve their goal by influencing the decisions of targets.³⁴ Therefore public self-representation of actors and aims through modular performances becomes a way of convincing broader set of population.

Social movements involve some degree of violence from challengers or governments. However social movement repertoires mostly consist of non-violent performances such as demonstrations and marches.³⁵ As a result of the dynamic nature of social processes social movements bring about occasional and responsive violent acts. A government may intervene violently against demonstrators due to threat perception of the government officials or some part of the demonstrators may dare to attack some government buildings. In all instances violence does not appear as a systematic and sustained campaign. But in lethal conflicts violence occupies the central position.

Large-scale lethal conflicts in which the violence do not occur chiefly as a by-product of nonviolent claim making but forms part of claim making's central rationale.³⁶ Lethal conflicts have some implications that separate them from other

³² Charles Tilly, *Social Movements, 1768-2004*, Paradigm Publishers, Boulder, 2004

³³ Charles Tilly and Sidney G. Tarrow, *Contentious Politics*, Paradigm Publishers, Boulder, Colombia, 2007, p. 120

³⁴ Karl-Dieter Opp, *Theories of Political Protest and Social Movements: A Multidisciplinary Introduction, Critique, and Synthesis*, Routledge, New York, 2009, p. 40

³⁵ Ibid. , 45

³⁶ Charles Tilly and Sidney G. Tarrow, *Contentious Politics*, Paradigm Publishers, Boulder, Colombia, 2007, p. 136

forms of contentious politics. First of all, large scale lethal conflicts involve a high degree of violence that raises the cost of sustaining of the claim making. Secondly, unlike recruiting people for more peaceful social movement repertoires such as demonstrations and petitioning sustaining an armed asset requires extensive resources.³⁷

On the other hand the same mechanisms and processes operate in lethal conflicts also. For instance mechanisms of certification and upward object shift regularly increase coordination, as outside authorities lend recognition to one or more participants in violent interactions.³⁸ The same mechanism, certification, can easily create result in opposite direction while promoting more peaceful means of action. Therefore similar mechanisms and processes with different sequences, combination and initial conditions have the potential to turn a non-violent movement into a violent one.

Political entrepreneurs and specialists in violence play a great role in determining the course of mechanisms and processes. By means of activation, connection, coordination, and representation political entrepreneurs and violent specialists employ a great variety of contentious mechanisms in order to benefit their capability of use of violence. Violent specialists may be a government official or leader of the local gangs as well as a suicide bomber. The distinctive feature of them is their violence centered social experiment. The complex but central position of violent specialist has three implications. First of all, it render possible to make distinctions between casual constituents of the lethal conflicts and more active actors. Secondly, specialists in violence do not simply serve the interests of the larger entities rather they have their own logic also. Lastly, the character of relations between governments and specialists in violence strongly affects the extent and locus

³⁷ Ibid. , 137

³⁸ Charles Tilly, *The Politics of Collective Violence*, Cambridge University Pres, Cambridge, 2003, p. 226

of collective violence within a regime.³⁹ In large-scale lethal conflict, two dramatic possibilities loom larger than in social movement campaigns, regime split and transfer of power.⁴⁰

2.2 Mobilization and Demobilization

How people who at a given point in time are not making contentious claims start doing so is a central question of the mobilization studies.⁴¹ However mobilization has been seen as an elusive process by the most of the social movement scholars due to Olson's hypothesis on collective action problem. Mancur Olson, in his book *The Logic of the Collective Action*, claims that majority of the people prefer to refer all the hardship of the collective action to those who take the frontline throughout the struggle as once the aim was accomplished they would get benefit of the success.⁴² This explanation produces the paradox that many claims with genuinely strong support will remain unrealized because the mobilization needed to gain satisfaction for them is missing.⁴³

To solve this paradox social movement scholars focus more on the mechanisms that eliminate that sort of obstacles such as selective incentives, opportunity structure, framing, and collective identity. In that sense mobilization appears as key process which varieties main approaches of the social movement theories. According to resource mobilization perspective, mobilization is the process by which a group secures collective control over the resources needed for collective

³⁹ Ibid. , 40

⁴⁰ Charles Tilly and Sidney G. Tarrow, *Contentious Politics*, Paradigm Publishers, Boulder, Colombia, 2007, p. 139

⁴¹ Doug McAdam, Sidney Tarrow and Charles Tilly, *Dynamics of Contention*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2001, p. 34

⁴² Mancur Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action; Public Goods and the Theory of Groups*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1965

⁴³ Charles Tilly and Sidney G. Tarrow, *Contentious Politics*, Paradigm Publishers, Boulder, Colombia, 2007, p. 90

action.⁴⁴ Opp adds another factor, individual, to this definition. Mobilization refers to activities of a movement organization or of an individual actor to gain more control over goods that contribute to achieve the goals of the movement organization or the individual actor.⁴⁵

Protesters' major aim is to mobilize adherents in order to put pressure on third parties like government.⁴⁶ Hence they need a process which enables them to persuade broader segment of the population. According to Goffman, frames, as a mental model which consists of cognitive elements, function to organize experience and guide action.⁴⁷ By frame alignment processes social movement actors create linkages of individual and social movement organizations' interpretive orientations with their values, activities, goals, and ideologies.⁴⁸

Melucci's answer to the question of when individuals act together lies on the premises of collective identity. Melucci mainly focuses on the processes in which the actors produce meanings, communicate, negotiate, and make decisions.⁴⁹ His approach links the identity to mobilization through collective meaning production processes and spread of collective identities via different sorts of interaction.

Contentious politics approach does not set aside various explanations of mobilization on the contrary takes the stock of their particular contribution to

⁴⁴J. Craig Jenkins, "Resource Mobilization Theory and the Study of Social Movements", *Annual Review of Sociology*, August 1983, Vol. 9, p. 532

⁴⁵Karl-Dieter Opp, *Theories of Political Protest and Social Movements: A Multidisciplinary Introduction, Critique, and Synthesis*, Routledge, New York, 2009, p. 140

⁴⁶ Ibid. , 89

⁴⁷ Erving Goffman, *An Essay on the Organization of Experience*, Harper and Row, New York, 1974, p. 464

⁴⁸David A. Snow; E. Burke Rochford, Jr. ; Steven K. Worden; Robert Benford, "Frame Alignment Processes, Micromobilization, and Movement Participation", *American Sociological Review*, Vol.51, No. 4. August 1986, p. 466

⁴⁹ Alberto Melucci, *Challenging Codes: Collective Action in the Information Age*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1996, p. 72

mobilization studies.⁵⁰ However more dynamic and interactive explanation of the mobilization is needed. Therefore contentious politics approach combines all these contributions into the sets of distinct mechanisms.

Mobilization concatenates a number of interacting mechanisms and passing through mechanisms such as attribution of opportunity and threat, social appropriation, framing of the dispute, and arraying of innovative forms of collective action.⁵¹ The actors take part in contentious politics perceives the threats and opportunities and give them a particular meaning. Thus threats and opportunities do not have an objective meaning and cannot be understood a priori. Similarly, frames are created throughout the contention. Therefore instead of using frame the term "framing" seems to be more appropriate to realize the dynamic nature of guiding action. Innovative forms of collective action highlight the innovative shifts in the locus, forms, and meaning of collective action that occur at the onset of a contentious episode.⁵²

Mobilization processes in various episodes bring together different types of contentious mechanisms. Identification of a political actor as the same with others, attribution of similarity, can well combine with the mechanisms of brokerage, production of a new connection between previously unconnected or weakly connected sites. This combination provides a fertile ground for mobilization. However attribution of similarity may constitute an obstacle for the mobilization as boundary activation can show itself over the course of contentious episodes.

It is a challenger's capacity to appropriate sufficient organization and numbers to provide a social/organizational base which makes mobilization possible.⁵³ In that sense the challengers mostly employ the mechanism of scale shift

⁵⁰Doug McAdam, Sidney Tarrow and Charles Tilly, *Dynamics of Contention*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2001

⁵¹Ibid. , 28

⁵²Ibid. , 48

⁵³Ibid. , 47

to increase mobilization potential. Scale shift is a complex process that not only diffuses contention across space and or social sectors, but creates instances for new coordination at a higher or a lower level than its initiation.⁵⁴ Scale shift has mainly bidirectional trend that is upward and downward. With upward scale shift local contentious events gain more common character. Social movement actors make new alliances, employ new type of contentious repertoires and produce novel meaning structures. Available social networks interact with mobilizing structures constantly. Mobilizing structures can be preexisting or created in the course of contention but in any case need to be appropriated as vehicles of struggle.⁵⁵ Tilly and Tarrow point out two main routes through which upward scale shift can operate. A direct diffusion route which passes through individuals and groups whose previous contacts or similarities become the basis of their mobilization, and a mediated route through brokers who connect people who would otherwise have no previous contacts.⁵⁶ Most of the time these two mechanisms intersect closely and combine into new mechanisms such as new coordination. Contentious actors adjust themselves to the new conditions through get in touch with other actors and contentious sites.

Mobilization processes have been drawing a great deal of attention in the social movement studies contrary to demobilization.⁵⁷ In fact demobilization processes are more prevalent than it is thought. In its initial phase contentious movements broaden social base and increase the reach of its constituents. However without sufficient resources and organizational capabilities contentious movements begin to involute incrementally. In that point various mechanisms play crucial role. Competition among different sources of support, defection, disillusionment,

⁵⁴Ibid. , 94

⁵⁵Ibid. , 45

⁵⁶Charles Tilly and Sidney G. Tarrow, *Contentious Politics*, Paradigm Publishers, Boulder, Colombia, 2007, p. 95

⁵⁷Ibid. , 97; Karl-Dieter Opp, *Theories of Political Protest and Social Movements: A Multidisciplinary Introduction, Critique, and Synthesis*, Routledge, New York, 2009

repression and some degree of institutionalization gives way to demobilization among contentious movement constituents.⁵⁸

Demobilization is a dynamic process as mobilization. A popular movement with robust mechanisms of upward scale shift may well fall into the situation of demobilization due to changing conditions of political structure. Tarrow proposes five significant mechanisms that result in the demobilization of the contentious processes:

- “- Repression or, more generally, control of contention,
- Facilitation, which satisfies at least some of the claims of contenders, who may also retreat from the struggle because of,
- Exhaustion, the simple weariness of being in the streets or, more subtly, irritation and the strains of collective life in a movement,
- Radicalization - the shift of social movement organizations, or parts of them, toward increased assertiveness,
- Institutionalization – the incorporation of some other organizations or parts of them into the routines of organized politics.”⁵⁹

Syrian case provides critical contribution to that list of demobilization processes as disillusionment of the potential constituencies in Syria due to detrimental effects of the foreign patronage on Syrian opposition became a central motif of the Syrian contentious episode beginning from March 2011. As elaborated in this thesis in Syrian uprising, opposition groups with close links to foreign patronage networks reduced the Syrian people who should be the main agents of the contentious episodes into a strategic tool which can be sacrificed when the conditions required. In addition, for the armed opposition groups which were primarily funded by foreign patron countries and private donors local people regardless their attitude towards these groups as they may be potential recruits, sympathizers or bystanders was not accepted as a main concern rather they were seen as a temporary instrument

⁵⁸Charles Tilly and Sidney G. Tarrow, *Contentious Politics*, Paradigm Publishers, Boulder, Colombia, 2007, p. 98

⁵⁹Sidney G. Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1998, p. 190

to achieve their respective goals. The counterproductive role of the opposition movements with close links to foreign patronage networks reflected in the fourth United National Human Rights Council Reports on Syrian conflict as follow:

“The intervention of external sponsors has contributed to the radicalization of the insurgency as it has favored Salafi armed groups such as the al-Nusra Front, and even encouraged mainstream insurgents to join them owing to their superior logistical and operational capabilities. The support provided by external sources usually depends on the operational effectiveness of the groups and their willingness to embrace the language and symbols of their sponsors. Anti-Government armed groups have improved their access to weaponry, albeit unequally. Besides the military equipment looted from army bases, weapons and ammunition have also been provided by external sources and smuggled in across borders with neighboring countries in significant quantities and on an increasingly regular basis.”⁶⁰

Another point in the report which revealed the dismissive attitude of these opposition groups on local population was stated as:

“By operating from within civilian objects, anti-Government armed groups endanger the civilian population and violate their obligation under international humanitarian law to avoid positioning military objectives within or near densely populated areas, to the extent feasible. The use of snipers to control the movement of people and assert control over areas has caused considerable civilian casualties as snipers fail to distinguish between civilians and those participating in hostilities. The targeting of individuals from concealed positions in urban areas imbues the civilian population with terror. Staging attacks with improvised explosive devices in predominantly civilian areas spreads terror among the civilian population and is in flagrant violation of international humanitarian law, amounting to the war crime of attacking civilians.”⁶¹

As it can be inferred from these statements the opposition groups which did not concern properly the main constituencies of the contentious episodes, namely

⁶⁰Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, “ 4th Report of Commission of Inquiry on Syria –A/HFC/22/59”, 5 February 2013, p. 8

⁶¹Ibid. , 20

local population in Syria, caused the disillusionment of the local people regardless of their ideological affiliations. The alienation of the potential constituencies of the opposition structures resulted in demobilization of the movement in Syrian case. As the volume of the violence increased in Syrian conflict the local people were forced to fled the conflict area although they had the opportunity to live in rebel zone.⁶²

2.3 Articulation Mechanisms to Foreign Patronage

The notion of patronage is generally understood by political sociologist as the distribution of resources by political officeholders or political candidates in exchange for political support.⁶³ Herein patronage is defined in the border of casual political cycle. Even from the point of view of the contentious politics patronage relations primarily refers to current domination networks existing in-between the contentious actors directly. If the main actors of the contentious episode are citizens and the government patronage relations will be principally searched among government officials and particular citizens. However this study's main concern has been different from that perspective.

In this study the term "foreign patronage" is used to point out hegemonic relations between challengers in a contentious episode and the external stakeholders of this contention. Foreign patronage involves an unequal interrelation among parties which try to increase their respective resource and control over contentious situation. The main sides of this relation are "patron" and "client".

⁶²Ibid. ; "Syrian Flee to Turkey, Telling of Gunmen Attacking Protesters", http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/09/world/middleeast/09syria.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0 08.06.2011, (accessed on 12.06.2011); "In Aleppo Christians Fleeing Rebel-held Areas", <http://www.news.va/en/news/asiasyria-in-aleppo-christians-fleeing-rebel-held->, (accessed on 12.06.2011); Internal Displacement Monitoring Center, "Global Overview 2014: People Internally Displaced by Conflict and Violence", Inter-agency Information Sharing Portal, 3 May 2014, p.64

⁶³Herbert Kitschelt and Steven I. Wilkinson, "Patrons, Clients and Policies: Patterns of Democratic Accountability and Political Competititon, Cambridge University Press, New York, p. 2; Javier Auyero, Pablo Lapegna and Fernanda Page Poma, "Patronage Politics and Contentious Collective Action: A Recursive Relationship", Vol. 51, No. 3, Fall 2009, p. 2-7

While patron refers to foreign individual, group, and state who continuously seek to affect contentious episodes through patronage networks; client generally implies internal and subordinate contentious actors with respect to foreign individuals, groups, and states. Despite having a stake in contentious movement the patron does not prefer to participate in contentious struggle directly. Instead of this foreign patron puts crucial resources to the use of challengers in order to have control over the course of episodes. These resources can be materials such as money, arms, communication mechanisms as well as moral supports such as certification of protest movement, affirmation by the religious authorities. In all cases there is an exchange. Patron expects a variety of outcomes in return for its investments.

At the initial phase of contentious episodes challenging groups are generally in scarcity of resources to defy their position against superior power holders. Therefore they try to move their respective constituents into the action, reinvigorate previous solidarity networks, mobilize material and moral resources, get the benefit from possible alliances in domestic arena, and employ a variety of contentious repertoires.⁶⁴ However most of the time all these efforts prove to be insufficient to wage a struggle against a high capacity oppressive government. At this point foreign support becomes a way of surpassing these deficiencies. Creating horizontal support networks and reliable organizational bases give an impetus to challenger's resource mobilization efforts. As being external to severity and hardship of the conflict foreign supporters provide more consistent and sustained resources to the challenging groups. Contentious actors strive to get benefit from that sort of support through manipulating and overplaying of various foreign actors. This process generates clientelist relations which are highly selective and diffuse that characterized by the simultaneous exchange of various resources and services.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy, Mayer N. Zald, *Comparative perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Cultural Framings*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1996, p. 15-16

⁶⁵ Javier Auyero, Pablo Lapegna and Fernanda Page Poma, "Patronage Politics and Contentious Collective Action: A Recursive Relationship", Vol. 51, No. 3, Fall 2009, p. 4

However the relation between foreign patron and challenging groups does not necessarily exclude the domination of one part. The term, "patron" itself implies a type of hegemonic interplay between various parties. Although "patron" has not capability of ordering and direct-control of the course of events on the ground with the deliberate strategies of manipulation, it can designate the route of challenging groups. In fact it is a very complex interaction with up and downs. If we separate every interaction between foreign patron and challenging groups into subsequent cycle of clientelist relationships we will see the changing nature of this interaction. The objective definition of the calculation of the actors does not give away expected outcomes. On the contrary these calculations consistently change during the cycle of clientelist interaction.

Articulation to foreign patronage should not be confused with the mechanism of internationalization. Internationalization refers to a combination of increasing horizontal density of relations among states, governmental officials, and non-state actors with increasing vertical ties between these and international institutions or organizations.⁶⁶ Mechanism of internationalization in Tilly and Tarrow's definition points more on the expansion of resource network. With the participation of international actors and institutions, domestic political actors link to transnational contentious politics. However this line of analysis leaves the questions how internationalization process operates and what kind of relation it establishes unanswered yet it is of crucial importance.

In Syrian case, articulation to foreign patronage mechanism proceeded over the three dimensions, namely *co-optation* of the Syrian opposition by the means of resource provision and strategic information sharing; *certification* of the particular opposition groups in the face of international community through Friends of Syria meetings and opposition gatherings; *coalition formation* to provide a feasible ground for opposition groups to establish the widest front against Syrian regime. Co-

⁶⁶Charles Tilly and Sidney G. Tarrow, *Contentious Politics*, Paradigm Publishers, Boulder, Colombia, 2007, p. 216

optation, certification, and coalition formation mechanisms were mainly employed by the foreign patrons to mobilize Syrian opposition structures in line with their respective interest definitions.

Throughout the Tilly and Tarrow's analysis, *co-optation* mechanism is described as "incorporation of previously excluded political actor into some centre of power"⁶⁷. Co-optation gains its meaning in the hegemonic nature of patronage relations. Dominant part of that relation, patron, exerts its influence throughout the symbolic means as well as material opportunities it possesses. While patron provides a series of incentives in order to keep the opposition group under its influence sphere at the same time it strive to ensure that the opposition group remains to be encounter its strategic demands. The mechanism, co-optation, does not have an demobilization effect in itself; on the contrary it may open a feasible opportunities for the opposition groups which are under-equipped at the time. However, as it can be inferred from the Syrian case, co-optation of the opposition organizations by the patron entities can create a fertile ground on which demobilization process rise up. By co-optation, subjugated contentious actors begin to loose their interior strategic preference list at the risk of alienating recruitment base and bystander public.

Another mechanism which enables the patron entities to integrate opposition structures into their domain appears to be *certification* mechanism. In contentious politics literature certification mechanism is defined as "an external authority's signal of its readiness to recognize and support the existence and claims of a political actor".⁶⁸ Tilly and Tarrow gave a historic example of this mechanism from the foundation of Israel. They reveals that when the state of Israel was proclaimed in 1948, both superpowers, USSR and the United States, lent it certification by voting to recognize its creation in the United Nations. However that example of Israel which took place on the state level seems to be less striking than the instance of Zapatistas

⁶⁷ Charles Tilly and Sidney G. Tarrow, *Contentious Politics*, Paradigm Publishers, Boulder, Colombia, 2007, p. 35

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 34

movement. Tilly and Tarrow, delineate the effect of certification mechanism as follows:

“The Zapatistas benefited from certification mechanism. Certification occurs when a recognized external authority signals its readiness to recognize and support the existence and claims of a political actor. If the authority has international visibility and heft, its signal broadcasts the likelihood that the authority would intervene to support the new actor in future claims. Certification thus changes both the new actor’s strategic position and its relation to other actors that could become its oppressors, rivals, or allies. The Zapatistas gained leverage within Mexico both from the country’s long indigenista tradition and from their extensive certification by external organizations –nongovernmental organizations, the foreign press, even some governments urging Mexican government to avoid a bloodbath. These external organizations could and did exert pressure on that government to recognize and bargain with the Zapatistas.”⁶⁹

In Tilly and Tarrow’s conceptualizations, *certification* mechanism has more positive outcomes for the contentious actors however; with different sequences and combinations of other mechanisms certification mechanism can well play an obstructor role. In another study, Tilly argues that outside certification becomes an effective incentive for further increase of violence in contentious episodes.

“Waves of collective violence depend, on fluctuations in the sources of material and organizational support for participants. Flows of arms, arrivals, or departures of militias, outside certification or decertification, injections of news funds, external provisions and movements of respected leaders commonly occur intermittently, thus introducing rapid increases or decreases in violent interactions.”⁷⁰

Syrian case is the recent instance of that process of deepening violent interactions which were employed mainly by the opposition groups that had clear ties with foreign patronage mechanism. Advancing the analysis of Tilly, outside certification mechanism has a potential to deflect local opposition groups’ sensitivity

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 75

⁷⁰ Charles Tilly, *The Politics of Collective Violence*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2003, p. 229

as regards to security and reproduction of constituent population. In the context of contentious politics, affinity of the broader set of actors vis-a-vis protest movement had a crucial impact on the success of contentious campaign. Therefore certification of the protest movement by the population which once chooses to be remaining outsider or bystander provides a strategic gain for the protest movement. In that sense certification mechanism enables to broaden support base of the movement and provides material gains which may impossible to obtain before. However, “outside certification” had more contradictory implications for the protest movement. While the support of the external but powerful patron entities gave leverage through which the oppositional structures may increase the volume of contention at the same time consent base of the movement shifts to external parties. As it will be introduced in the forthcoming chapters of this study, shifting of the source of the movement’ consent from internal to external actors contains the risk of alienating constituents of the movement. In that context, certification mechanism’s effectiveness can only realizable under the conditions of holistic preference coincidence between the ones which certificate and be certificated. Otherwise, if there are hegemonic relations, the certification of the protest movement by the external authority means subjugation of the native contentious actors to foreign patrons.

Concerning the fractured structure of the Syrian opposition groups during the Syrian uprising, coalition formation mechanism becomes significant in terms of forming broadest oppositional coalition against the Syrian regime. According to Tilly and Tarrow, coalition formation mechanism includes creation of new, visible and direct coordination of claims between two or more previously distinct actors.⁷¹ As a sub-mechanism of the articulation to foreign patronage mechanism, coalition formation implies external effort to constitute a unifying front against target government or regime. Drawing the unifying themes from the interactions of various opposition groups, coalition formation may provides a broader power base for the protest movement. In that sense different opposition structures can innovate more

⁷¹ Charles Tilly and Sidney G. Tarrow, *Contentious Politics*, Paradigm Publishers, Boulder, Colombia, 2007, p. 34

robust alliances and gain productive cooperation domains through the dialogue between them. However, external initiatives which aim to create new coalitions have significant flaws which deserve attention. As imposed upon by the external authorities, the rules and conditions of the compromises between various opposition groups cannot appear durable. In fact these sorts of compromises have the potential to estrange the opposition movement from its immediate needs as well as from political preferences which gives way to its struggle. In time factitious coalition initiatives become an end in itself regardless of their real likelihood. Differing ideological affiliations and actual grievance perceptions of the opposition structures sideway and in that sense the process of coalition formation becomes instrumentalised. In fact Syrian opposition groups had lived all these process during Friends of Syria meetings and in various meetings which aimed to settle down divergences between various opposition groups in Syria.

Co-optation, outside certification, and imposed coalition formation mechanisms consolidate into articulation to foreign patronage process in Syria. These three principal contentious politics mechanisms with specific sequences and combination, for the Syrian case, had a great significance in terms of understanding the effects of foreign patronage mechanisms on mobilization. However to determining the trend of that effect, whether positive or negative, require nuanced investigation.

At first glance the benefits and capabilities that foreign patronage brings together seem to be advantageous for the challenging groups. However the effects of the foreign patronage on mobilization processes deserve a more nuanced look. Foreign patronage has potential to transform and reshape all the determinants of the contentious episodes. Articulation to foreign patronage changes the network structures, intragroup relations, preference of contentious repertoires, and strategic decision making processes of the group.

Contentious actors mainly depend on local populations' grievances and demands to broaden sphere of influence. They get benefit from existing social ties such as family, clan, and sectarian bonds. Local allies and sympathizers become

crucial part of resource mobilization process. Therefore movement elites have to give priority to local constituents' concerns in order to gain their support to movement. However articulation to foreign patronage changes the balance among social movement constituents. The sensibilities of the local population become subordinated to the preference of foreign patronage. Movement elites apply more to foreign patron to acquire appropriate resources rather than referring to local social networks. They capitalize on more precipitous and secure capabilities of the foreign patronage as the local resources appear to be scarcer and hard to obtain. This process transforms the relations among existing social networks and results in the decomposition of power balance.

Articulation to foreign patronage networks also deviate the contentious movements' priorities. Existing social networks which give main character to the social conflict are begun to be ignored by the movement elites. A new type of network system which proves to be more advantage for clientelist relations is imposed by the foreign patrons. While some of the local grievances and demands are suppressed totally others are framed by the movement elites and foreign patrons according to their respective needs. First strategy mainly depends on violent means while latter involves a variety of media techniques and rhetorical hegemony.

Throughout contentious episode proximity to the foreign patronage becomes a major condition to take the lead in the movement. Therefore different actors begin to compete for more advantageous access to the foreign patronage instead of developing native opportunities. This has distorting effects on the duration of the contentious movement as the grievances and demands which once gave way to struggle are repressed consistently. In that way essential bearers of the contentious movement become alienated to the process.

The vertical and asymmetrical relationships that define clientelist arrangements have been conceptualized as the exact opposite of the horizontal ties

that are understood to be the necessary precondition of either episodic or more sustained forms of collective action.⁷²

⁷²Javier Auyero, Pablo Lapegna and Fernanda Page Poma, "Patronage Politics and Contentious Collective Action: A Recursive Relationship", *Latin American Politics and Society*, Vol. 51, No. 3, Fall 2009, p. 1

CHAPTER 3

DEFINING THE CONTEXT IN SYRIAN UPRISING

3.1 Pulse of Arab Spring to the Existing Opposition Structures in Syria

Throughout the first quarter of the 2011 Middle Eastern countries witnessed an unprecedented wave of social upheaval. Millions of people unexpectedly took the streets and began to vocalize their demands more vehemently. In a relatively short span of time these social uprisings changed the Middle Eastern politics radically and dramatically.

The first round of the uprisings erupted in Tunisia. Tunisian vendor Mohammed Bouazizi set himself on fire on 17 December 2010 due to his mistreatment by a policewoman.⁷³ Bouazizi's self-immolation sparked the resentment of the Tunisian people against the long-rule president Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. Sidi Bouzid, in which Bouazizi set himself on fire, became the first center of the protests.⁷⁴ Ever-increasing number of people began to take the street and directed their anger against government officials and buildings. After two weeks of Bouazizi's self-immolation Tunisian Federation of Labor Unions, Tunisian Bar Association and a variety of human rights associations decided to participate to the protest.⁷⁵

⁷³“Man at the Centre of Tunisia Unrest Recuperating, Doctors Say”,
<http://gulfnews.com/news/region/tunisia/man-at-the-centre-of-tunisia-unrest-recuperating-doctors-say-1.738967>, 31.12.2010, (accessed on 06.05.2011)

⁷⁴“Riots Reported in Tunisian City”,
<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2010/12/2010122063745828931.html>, 20.12.2010 , (accessed on 06.05.2011)

⁷⁵ “Thousands of Tunisia Lawyers Strike”,
<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2011/01/201116193136690227.html>, 06.01.2011, (accessed on 06.05.2011)

By the first days of 2011 the protest movement had been spread to the main centers of Tunisia as the police response became more violent. In the face of continuing protests Tunisian security officials responded with tear gas and water cannon initially but afterwards more violent means came to the fore. This caused to diffusion of protest movement to the other sections of the population and increased the tension of struggle.⁷⁶

Following five weeks of demonstrations and riots Tunisian ruler Zine El Abidine Ben Ali fled to Saudi Arabia with his family. Ben Ali's departure opened the way for constitutional transformation of the government. Tunisian Constitutional Court enabled the establishing of an interim government and monitored it. Previously ruling party, the Constitutional Democratic Rally, was dissolved.⁷⁷ However Tunisian protest movement has been continuing to retain its effect on Tunisian political life.⁷⁸

Ironically Tunisia had been presented as an economic model for emerging countries by the International Monetary Found not so long before the protest movement.⁷⁹ However main grievances of the protesters in Tunisia were the high rate of unemployment, inflation, corruption and poor living conditions. Tunisian people also demanded the freedom of speech and association.⁸⁰ All these grievances and

⁷⁶“Tunisia Unrest Spreads to Capital”,
<http://www.aljazeera.com/video/africa/2011/01/2011111214716877786.html>, 11.01.2011, (accessed on 06.05.2011)

⁷⁷“Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali Forced to Flee Tunisia as Protesters Claim Victory”,
<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/jan/14/tunisian-president-flees-country-protests>, 15.01.2011, (accessed on 06.05.2011)

⁷⁸“Tunisia Protesters Turn Government HQ into Campsite”,
<http://af.reuters.com/article/libyaNews/idAFLDE70R13720110128?sp=true>, 28.01.2011, (accessed on 06.05.2011)

⁷⁹ International Monetary Fund Pres Release, “IMF Managing Director Dominique Strauss-Kahn’s Statement at the Conclusion of his Visit to Tunisia”, 18 November 2008

⁸⁰Mehdi Mabrouk, “A Revolution for Dignity and Freedom: Preliminary Observations on the Social and Cultural Background to the Tunisian Revolution”, *The Journal of North African Studies*, Vol. 16, Issue 4

demands converged on the one denominator, the fall of the regime. Falling of the regime was rendered as a masterframe⁸¹ to garner broadest support. Different sections of the Tunisian society brought together under the banner of people that struggle to topple the regime. This position created various fault lines for the future of the protest movement.

Foreign countries and international institutions approached cautiously to the protest movement in Tunisia initially. However, with vested economic and geopolitical interests France reactivated its local political networks and tried to control the course of uprising. Tunisian Muslim Brotherhood "en-Nahda" also got benefit from international brotherhood networks. The leader of the en-Nahda movement Rashid al-Ghannushi returned from exile immediately after protests erupted.⁸² En-Nahda leaders strove to create alliance with other opposition movements and forge an image of Islamic movement with clear understanding of democratic principles. Throughout the nationwide protests en-Nahda movement gained the upper hand in terms of power relations in the post-revolution era.⁸³

The protest movement in Tunisia heralded a wave of popular uprising throughout the region. Egypt, Libya, Yemen, Bahrain, Syria, Algeria, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, Sudan and Saudi Arabia witnessed same sort of popular uprisings with varying degrees. In Egypt, Libya and Yemen protest movements seemed to be reaching their goals as the long-rule presidents of these countries were forced to leave their seat. In other countries such as Bahrain and Saudi Arabia protesters were crushed with harsh measures and a kind of stability has been ensuring. Despite different social settings and political structures all these countries' popular uprisings

⁸¹David A. Snow, "Framing Processes, Ideology, and Discursive Fields", in *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*, ed. David A. Snow, Sarah A. Soule, Hanspeter Kriesi, Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2004, p. 390-391

⁸² "Tunisian Islamist Leader Rachid Ghannouchi Returns Home", <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-12318824>, 30.01.2011, (accessed on 07.05.2011)

⁸³ Fawaz Gerges, "The Many Voices of Political Islam", *Majalla*, June 2012, Issue 1573, p. 16-18

have some common features as a masterframe for the protest movement which is commonly called as "Arab Spring".

The protest movements of the Arab Spring generally developed without well-defined ideological borders. Existing ideological divisions became blurred within the process as particular rhetorical positions took the scene. The slogan, "fall of the regime" appeared to be a common phrase that linked different sections of the political spectrum of a particular country.⁸⁴ Activists preferred to use more generic terms such as "Egyptians, Tunisians, Jordanians.." to define their protest movement. Despite that sort of efforts to generalize protests there is no wonder that some kind of ideological positions were embedded in these social movements. Nevertheless, all ideological positions struggled to articulate with popularly shared images and slogans.

It seems ironic that the protest movements throughout the Arab Spring era did not have any charismatic leaders or central organizing bodies despite autocratic legacy against which they fought. Existing opposition organizations generally lagged from the popular uprisings. By the means of new telecommunication techniques and organization capabilities newly emerging social actors took the leads in these protests. Social media played a crucial role to bring new actors to the scene. However that sort of explanation seemed to be valid for the initial phase of the uprisings. Afterwards the social movements in these countries passed through the shock of initial phases and more organized and prepared social entities came to fore.

Protest movements employed particular types of social movement repertoires at the initial phases of the Arab Spring. Most prominent types of these repertoires were demonstrations, vigils, marches, sit-ins, and collecting signatures. According to Tilly, that sort of repertoire belongs to modern times which can be defined as beginning in late eighteenth century.⁸⁵ Social actors in social movements

⁸⁴Nassima Neggaz, "Syria's Arab Spring: Language Enrichment in the Midst of Revolution", http://www.language-and-society.org/journal/2-2/1_neggaz_article.pdf, (accessed on 19.12.2013)

⁸⁵Charles Tilly and Sidney G. Tarrow, *Contentious Politics*, Paradigm Publishers, Boulder, Colombia, 2007, p. 119

mostly employ the similar forms of contention in different settings and targets such as demonstration, petition and street march. All these modular performances are directed to public, bystanders and common audiences. Therefore public self-representation of actors and aims through modular performances becomes a way of convincing broader set of population. However, as regards Arab Spring protests the target audiences were mostly the international community.⁸⁶ Arab Spring protesters engaged with such modular performances in order to change the political equations of the domestic power holders and persuade foreign patrons to support their cause. In that sense the question whether these performances were the signs of newly emerging democratization process remains to be debated. In all cases where the regime change ensured, in Tunisia, Libya, Yemen, and Egypt, foreign intervention played crucial role. In these countries opposition structures were widely articulated with foreign patronage networks with various degrees and means. Therefore their contentious repertoire choices aimed to maximize international support to their cause more than domestic audiences.

That sort of leaning brought about a sudden change in terms of repertoire preferences in some cases. In Libya and Yemen foreign patronage provided the opposition groups secure ground for shifting to violent forms of action. Instead of persuading large segments of population of the country contentious parties applied to more direct way of guaranteeing power holding. Opposition groups with intense links with foreign patronage considered more their resource stream and less local populations' grievances and priorities. In Egyptian and Tunisian case we saw more non-violent versions of that process. Foreign patronage networks operated more covertly in Egypt and Tunisia but made the effect as much as in Libya and Yemen. By means of modular performances such as demonstrations, vigils, signatures collecting opposition groups tried to obtain sympathetic attitude towards their cause

⁸⁶Brett Van Niekerk, Kiru Pillay, Manoj Maharaj, "Analyzing the Role of ICTs in the Tunisian and Egyptian Unrest from an Information Warfare Perspective", *International Journal of Communication*, 2011, Vol. 5, p 1406-1416; Sean Aday, Henry Farrel, Marc Lynch, John Sides, Deen Freelon, "New Media and Conflict After the Arab Spring", *United States Institute of Peace Blogs and Bullets II*, July 2012, No. 80

from international patrons or potential international patrons. In that context social media tools proved to be an efficient way to reach target audiences.

With all its ups and downs Arab Spring provided a masterframe⁸⁷ for all the other Middle Eastern peoples to struggle against corruption, unemployment, high inflation, suppression of freedoms and undemocratic rulers. Therefore the masterframe's rhetorical and practical features showed themselves in local experiences. Syrian case was not an exception.

3.2 Initial Phase of Syrian Uprising

In early 2011 popular protest movement swiftly spread from Tunisia to all regions. However at first sight Syria seemed to be an exception as there were not such demonstrations or actions as seen in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya. But coming to mid-March the course of events began to change.

On the 15 March 2011 some 40-50 people appeared in the capital city of Syria, Damascus. It was the first as people watched that demonstration on mainstream news channels via YouTube footage. A YouTube video showed protesters clapping and chanting "God, Syria, freedom -- that's enough", and "Peaceful, peaceful".⁸⁸ Syrian security officials then dispersed the small group quickly.

One day later relatives of the Syria's numerous political detainees gathered before the Ministry of Interior to demand greater respect for the right of detainees.⁸⁹

⁸⁷David A. Snow, "Framing Processes, Ideology, and Discursive Fields", in *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*, ed. David A. Snow, Sarah A. Soule, Hanspeter Kriesi, Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2004, p. 390-391

⁸⁸ "Protesters Stage Rare Demo in Syria", <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/03/20113151834383782.html>, 15.03.2011, (accessed on 17.03.2011)

⁸⁹ "In Syria, Demonstrations Are Few and Brief", http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/17/world/middleeast/17syria.html?_r=0, 16.03.2011, (accessed on 17.03.2011)

Four protesters were arrested after the demonstrators gathered in a public square near the ministry in central Damascus. Dozens of supporters of President Bashar al-Assad held a counter-demonstration in the same square also.

At the first quarter of the 2011 Syrian oppositions' call for action did not take response from Syrian people. On February 8 some civil society activists invited people via social media tools to participate "Day of Anger" demonstrations which were organized before in Egypt and Tunisia. However at that day no one took the streets.⁹⁰ Some activists who talked to media connect that failure to the rootless of that sort of calls. An activist's remarks deserve to be taken here as his statements presented the problematic of the opposition in Syria:

"This call for a day of anger came from outside of the country, from people with no track record and that no one had heard of," said Mazen Darwich, a leading civil liberties campaigner. "It was a disaster; the organizers were less democratic than the security services." He said those behind the Facebook campaign were overseas armchair revolutionaries, safely away from any repercussions of a failed revolt."⁹¹

The relative calm in Syria began to slip away towards mid-March with the eruption of Deraa events. Bordered by Israeli-occupied Golan plateau to the west and the Jordanian frontier to the south, Deraa was historically and geographically on a strategic location. As an administrative centre with one of the largest agricultural facility of the Syria, Deraa is located on the intersection point of smuggling, agriculture, and traditional tribe laws. Interestingly, Deraa was once considered as a pillar of the regime as some of the high ranking Baathists' birthplace was Deraa.⁹²

The detention of a group of children by the security service with the charge of drawing anti-regime slogans to the city walls brought Deraa to the international

⁹⁰ "Syria's Day of Anger Failed to Ignite as Protesters Stay Away", <http://www.thenational.ae/news/world/middle-east/syrias-day-of-anger-failed-to-ignite-as-protesters-stay-away>, 08.02.2011, (accessed on 16.03.2011)

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Nikolas Van Dam, *The Struggle for Power in Syria: Politics and Society under Asad and Ba'th Party*, I. B. Tauris, New York, 1996, p. 17

attention. As Syrian security authorities were accused of torturing the children the residents of Deraa poured into the streets. The relatives of the children showed their resentment by attacking government's and Baath party buildings. Police forces responded to boiling crowd with harsh measures. All these events resulted in fatality.⁹³

The Deraa events started a cycle of increasing violence. Every funeral ceremony turned to be a protest movement and responded by the security apparatus' excessive use of force. The violence cycle which began in Deraa spread to other cities within two weeks. In Idlib, Banias, Qamishli, Homs and Hama small groups of people took the chance of protest cycle. They took the streets in their neighborhoods with mostly their relatives. At first they did not prefer the slogans which clearly contained anti-regime tones. However once facing with regime's harsh measures and violence responses they began to volume up their resentment. In the suburbs of the capital city, Damascus, a group of protesters capture their video as they ripped the poster of Bashar al-Assad on 16 April 2011.⁹⁴

However, the protest calls on the main squares of the cities did not draw so much attention from the Syrian people. When people in suburban areas decided to march through their neighborhood most of the time they were allowed by the security forces.⁹⁵ But when they directed their march to main squares of the city center police forces responded with tear gas and physical violence. Most of the deaths occurred in such events which Tilly calls them as "broken negotiations".⁹⁶

⁹³ "A Timeline of Some Key Events in Syrian Uprising", <http://www.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/03/16/200987.html>, 16.03.2011, (accessed on 19.03.2011); "Timeline: Unrest in Syria", <http://apps.washingtonpost.com/g/page/world/timeline-unrest-in-syria/207/>, (accessed on 20.01.2014); "Syria Unrest: Tear Gas Fired at Deraa Funeral", <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-12796020>, 19.03.2011, (accessed on 21.03.2011)

⁹⁴ "Thousands Demonstrate in Syrian Cities", <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/04/201141511585431229.html>, 16.04.2011, (accessed on 25.04.2011)

⁹⁵ "Protests Spread to Southern Town Jassem", <http://yalibnan.com/2011/03/21/protests-spread-to-southern-syrian-town-jassem/>, 21.03.2011, (accessed on 25.03.2011)

⁹⁶ Charles Tilly, *The Politics of Collective Violence*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2003, p.

Broken negotiations brought about protester violence also. Towards end of March 2011 a dozen of protesters and security officials were killed amid heavy clashes. In Tafas, south of the capital Damascus, residents set ablaze a police station and the local headquarters of the Baath party in 27 March 2011. The cause of the anger of the residents was apparent. Three demonstrators had been killed by the security forces on the previous Friday and they gathered for them.⁹⁷

After the shock of the initial conflict with the security forces the protesters in Deraa started to implement more organized forms of social movement repertoires. One of the main mosques of the city, Omari Mosque, became a central point of protest. Firstly hundreds of people gathered around the Omari Mosque with chanting anti-regime slogans. Then they were dispersed by the security forces as the tension in the city was critically high. But the protesters did not surrender easily. They began to erect tents outside the mosque and pledged to remain there until their demands for greater political freedom and an end to corruption were met. According to media reports which most of them referred to witnesses' accounts police forces released tear gas and fired live ammunition at protesters around the mosque.⁹⁸

The mosque raid drew significant attention by the international community as well as domestic public. At the same time that experience created a contentious repertoire model which would be emulated many times in the future. Taking shelter in a mosque provided a legitimacy ground for the protesters in Syria where the protest movement could easily be dismissed by the charge of foreign conspiracy. But taking shelter in a mosque had a more salient meaning than legitimacy gaining. Mosque choice operated as an identity creating mechanism.⁹⁹ In Syria where various

⁹⁷Deaths as Syria Protests Spread", <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/03/201132616546326475.html>, 27.03.2011, (accessed on 25.04.2011)

⁹⁸"Syria Unrest: Protesters Killed at Omari Mosque", <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-12827542>, 23.03.2011, (accessed on 27.03.2011)

⁹⁹ Charles Tilly and Sidney G. Tarrow, *Contentious Politics*, Paradigm Publishers, Boulder, Colombia,

religions and sects has been living together in a relatively secular social life mosque had a different meaning for Syrian citizens. Therefore taking shelter in a mosque intentionally gave message to people who monitor protest movement and its future vision. Beginning with basic human rights and freedom demands, the protest movement in Deraa now transformed into a movement which characterized by a particular sectarian property.

Another aspect of the Omari Mosque protests was erecting tents outside the mosque. That sort of social movement repertoire had been seen in Egypt before. In the most central square of Cairo, Tahrir Square, Egyptian people had built huge tents around the square and began to wait there until the then-president Hosni Mubarak resign. They remained in the square as an appropriation of public space for a common cause. This strategy was tried to emulate by the Syrian protesters in Deraa. However, political setting of Syria was different from that of Egypt. Syria with more repressive regime type and nascent civil society did not tolerate any sit-in repertoire in a bordering area with Jordan.

Throughout the first months the Syrian uprisings were local in terms of their main constituents and conflict-subjects. As regards to their demands most of them mirrored from other Arab Spring countries' experience. For example in Duma, a district of Damascus at the north of the capital, protesters demands involved an investigation into the use of force against local rallies, the release of political prisoners, lifting the emergency law, allowing demonstrations, ending the Baath party's monopoly on official appointments, adopting a new election law, ensuring freedom of the press and judicial independence, fighting corruption, permitting independent trade unions and improving living conditions.¹⁰⁰ In most of the cities protesters did not directly demand for a regime change but their particular demands in fact meant it.

2007

¹⁰⁰International Crisis Group Middle East/North Africa Report, "Popular Protest in North Africa and the Middle East(VII): The Syrian Regime's Slow-Motion Suicide", No. 109, 13 July 2011, p. 6

Although the local demonstrations, sit-ins and marches spread to other areas of Syria there was not a strong coordination between protesters. People in Hama, Homs, Baniyas, and suburbs of Damascus interpreted the Deraa events as the starting point for voicing their grievances and took the streets to show their solidarity with the people in Deraa. But once they went into the streets new dynamics got involved into their conflict with public authorities. The attitude of the local governors and security officials played a crucial role in determining the result of the encounter. In the same vein positioning of the traditional opposition networks had significant impact on the course of events. As we will see in next chapter, the tone of previous relationships between the residents of the locality and state had also an effect on the direction of conflict.

At the initial phase of Syrian uprising the opposition depended almost only to local resources. This limited their room for maneuver but at the same time stick them to local constituents' grievances and demands. Local population's sensibilities were on fore to struggle against regime forces. In Deraa that was the release of the children and in Banyas the responsibilities of the state officials who killed the protesters. In Duma it was more than with a list of demands. However, the scope of the demands was very much related to locality of the protest. In that sense the residents of a city or a district considered the cost of defying a regime by taking account into a huge security apparatus. The retaliation of the regime forces was taken account in real terms.¹⁰¹

The protest groups' main source of recruitment was the local population. Traditional social networks were employed by the protesters regularly. Therefore their protest tools were intrinsic to local capabilities such as pamphlet, poster, graffiti, and canvas banner. Syrian protesters also got benefit from social media tools. However, the targets of this usage were not the local population but international media outlets. This difference was of crucial importance to understand the mechanism of social media sourcing. Without media cahnnels which provide an

¹⁰¹Meetings with local people in Damascus and its suburbs, June 2011

ensuring way of transmitting protest messages the Syrian people had to depend on more alternative media tools. But in the initial phase of protest use of those tools were limited to local potentialities. When the state cut the electricity or internet stream people were to be in a dire position to disseminate their conditions.¹⁰²

3.3 Response of the Syrian Regime

The Syrian state was not caught unprepared to the protest movement. When the Tunisian uprising was succeeded in changing the regime all the Middle Eastern regimes began to consider same type of uprisings in their countries. So the Syrian regime also tried to prepare their state capacity for possible contingencies.¹⁰³ However they did not expect a nationwide uprising with huge foreign support in such a scale.

Syrian regime's initial response in the face of Deraa events and the protests in other cities was surprisingly proactive. In nearly one month the Syrian state embarked on a set of reform packages which had considered as impossible before. Most striking part of these reforms was the lifting of the Syrian emergency law which had been in place for nearly 50 years.

For the events in Deraa Syrian regime took some immediate measures to appease the citizens of Deraa. An official delegation which was sent from Damascus tried to engage in dialogue with the notables of the city. The governor and head of security in the city were dismissed immediately.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰²“Syrian regime Cuts off Electricity, Phones, and Water to Dara”, Youtube footage, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iKuEloEOptk>, 25.04.2011, (accessed on 27.04.2011)

¹⁰³Meeting with senior state officials, June 2011

¹⁰⁴“President al-Assad Discusses with Delegation From Dara”, <http://www.sana.sy/eng/337/2011/05/17/pr-347150.htm>, 17.05.2011, (accessed on 24.05.2011); “Assad Appoints New Governor for Dara”, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/04/201144134848651549.html>, 04.04.2011, (accessed on 17.04.2011)

Syrian state also lifted the ban on two major social media sites, YouTube and Facebook.¹⁰⁵ At that time Syrians started to discover the usefulness of the social media in terms of disseminating opposition rhetoric. The situation of the opposition figures was under close scrutiny by the Syrian public. Therefore the regime issued a decree that foreseen a limited amnesty.¹⁰⁶ To alleviate the economic hardships of the low-income Syrians the Syrian authorities increased the state subsidies on heating fuel and established a social security fund designed to provide cash handouts to needy families.¹⁰⁷ Syrian state stepped up aid in areas hardest hit by several years of drought.¹⁰⁸

The repeal of the emergency law was a key demand of the protesters in Syria since the very beginning. Syria's emergency law had been in place since the Baath Party came to power in a military coup in 1963. Syrian regime bound the persistence of the emergency law to the war situation with Israel. It gave the prime minister and the interior minister as his deputy the ability to place restrictions on freedoms of individuals with respect to meetings, residence, travel and passage in specific places or at particular times; to preventatively arrest anyone suspected of endangering public security and order; to authorize investigation of persons and places; and to delegate any person to perform any of these tasks.¹⁰⁹ With the lifting

¹⁰⁵ "Syria to Set Facebook Status to Unbanned in Gesture to People", <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/feb/08/syria-facebook-unbanned-people>, 08.02.2011, (accessed on 11.02.2011)

¹⁰⁶ "To Much Skepticism, Syria Issues Amnesty", <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/01/world/middleeast/01syria.html>, 31.05.2011, (accessed on 03.06.2011)

¹⁰⁷ International Crisis Group Middle East/North Africa Report, "Popular Protest in North Africa and the Middle East(VII): The Syrian Regime's Slow-Motion Suicide", No. 109, 13 July 2011, p. 14

¹⁰⁸ "Syria's Poor Receive Cash Aid From Government", <http://www.thenational.ae/news/world/middle-east/syrias-poor-receive-cash-aid-from-government>, 20.02.2011, (accessed on 17.03.2011)

¹⁰⁹ "Syria Protests: Assad to Lift State of Emergency", <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-13134322>, 20.04.2011, (accessed on 25.04.2011)

of the emergency law the state security court which was dealt with the trials of political prisoners was abolished.

The Syrian Regime's another strategy to contain the protest movement was to organize counter rallies supporting the Bashar al-Assad. On 29 March 2011 tens of thousands of Syrians gathered for a pro-government rally at the Central Bank Square in Damascus. People who participated the rally with Syrian flag and Assad posters chanted pro-Assad slogans and carried national unity theme pamphlets.¹¹⁰ Pro-Assad rallies operated as a signal that the Syrian regime did not lose its legitimacy over the Syrian public. At the same Assad regime strove to show international community that it still got the control of majority of the Syrian population. Another way of claiming legitimacy was the public visit of Assad family. On February 15, after prayers at the Omayyad Mosque in central Damascus, Assad drove his own car through a crowd of citizens.¹¹¹

Repression of the protest was the most frequently used measure of the Syrian regime. Various security services were alarmed by the spreading protest movement. Security services quickly intervened at the first sight of possible dissent.¹¹² The plainclothes security officials took crucial part to suppress and prevent any sort of protest practices. Detaining and torturing prominent opposition figures or potential dissents were the ordinary practice of the security services. However when these security services became insufficient to terminate protest movements army units or more heavy armed police forces came into play. In Deraa these units had played crucial role to suppress protests. But at the same time their response created more resentment against the state as their degree of violence mostly resulted in deaths. This vicious circle had a crucial impact on the bystander public as

¹¹⁰ "Syria Mobilizes Thousands for Pro-Assad Marches", <http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/03/29/us-syria-idUSTRE72N2MC20110329>, 29.03.2011, (accessed on 04.04.2011)

¹¹¹ International Crisis Group Middle East/North Africa Report, "Popular Protest in North Africa and the Middle East(VII): The Syrian Regime's Slow-Motion Suicide", No. 109, 13 July 2011, p. 17

¹¹²Ibid. , 19

they were alarmed by the increasing volume of violence. While the Syrian president Bashar Al-Assad admitted that his rule counted on the implicit acceptance of the majority by saying “Not the majority of the people only in the middle always, the majority of the Syrian people are in the middle and then you have people who support you and you have people who are against you. So the majority always in the middle. Those majority are not against you. If they are against you you cannot stabilize most of the cities in Syria let's say, as you see, you've been here for two days now” the attitude of the so-called majority began to change towards the end of the 2011.¹¹³

3.4 Escalation of Conflict into Armed Struggle

The Deraa events started a cycle of increasing violence. Every funeral ceremony turned out to be a protest movement and responded by the security apparatus' excessive use of force. Violence cycle spread to other parts of the country with increasing volume.

The Syrian regime's main strategy to contain nationwide uprising was to lay siege on the cities with big army units. By the order of Syrian authorities soldiers rolled into flashpoint cities in tanks and set up sand barriers topped with machine guns.¹¹⁴ By this way authorities tried to control and monitor the wave of human and goods traffic across the cities. Isolation of the protest movements from each other enabled the security forces to begin a search and arrest campaign. Before coming of the tanks most of the time the electricity and internet were cut off. While the army units retaining their siege of the city security services conducted operations with

¹¹³“ABC’s Barbara Walters’ Interview With Syrian President Bashar al-Assad”, <http://abcnews.go.com/International/transcript-abcs-barbara-walters-interview-syrian-president-bashar/story?id=15099152&page=2>, 07.12.2011, (accessed on 08.12.2011)

¹¹⁴“Syrian Soldiers Take Up Positions Before Protests”, http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/world/2011-05-12-syria-protests_n.htm, 13.05.2011, (accessed on 14.05.2011)

detention lists of the activists.¹¹⁵ Towards the end of May 2011 Syrian army had laid siege to main centres of the protest movement such as Baniyas, Homs, Tafas, Deraa, Talkalakh, Rastan, Talbiseh and some suburbs of Damascus.

While the siege of the cities by the Syrian army continued initial reports of armed assaults against the army units began to reveal more consistently. On May 8, the official news agency of Syria announced the killing of 11 soldiers by the armed gangs in Homs. According to military sources who talked to agency, armed terrorist groups attacked a military checkpoint in the central province of Homs, killing five soldiers and policemen; army units had chased those groups after the attack as clashes with them led to the killing of another six soldiers and the wounding of many others. That sort of events became usual throughout the uprising in Syria.¹¹⁶

However in most cases the identities of these armed groups could not be confirmed properly as there was no one that took the responsibility of armed assaults. At the beginning of the armed conflicts the most told narrative was the appearance of a group of unidentified men carrying weapons and patrolling restive neighborhoods.¹¹⁷ According to eyewitnesses of the residents of Al-Qabun municipalities in Damascus, some armed men occasionally appeared around the district by small pickups. They carried light weapons such as Kalashnikovs and pistols. The residents pointed up that they came only nights and they did not remain in there long. In many cases the residents admitted that they had not known any of the armed men.

Other narrative as regards to armed assaults was pointing to the residents who took the arms against the regime's violent practices. According to media reports the residents who suffocated in the face of security service's brutal campaign decided

¹¹⁵“Syrian Army Tanks Moving Towards Hama”, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-13343540>, 10.05.2011, (accessed on 11.05.2011)

¹¹⁶ “11 More Killed in Terrorist Infighting as Syria Army Advances”, <http://en.alalam.ir/news/1597071>, 24.05.2011, (accessed on 05.05.2011)

¹¹⁷Visit of the Damascus suburbs in January 2012

to defy the regime's attack by the means of armed struggle.¹¹⁸ Mostly in central Syria residents used automatic rifles and rocket-propelled grenades to repel advancing government troops. However it was not a organized armed resistance with a common command center. An activist in Homs revealed the situation as follows:

"The protests began peacefully but the practices of security forces that humiliated the people eventually led to the use of arms," he said. He said it was common for Syrians to have light weapons such as rifles in their homes, adding that in recent years weapons have been smuggled in from neighboring countries such as Lebanon and Iraq."¹¹⁹

Despite different accounts as regards to arming of the opposition in Syria the result was clear. Almost all parts of the Syria which experienced a wave of protest movement began to witness more armed conflict between security forces and unidentified armed groups. As this situation increased the volume of reciprocal violence some opposition figures emphasized the necessity of peaceful opposition. In a statement released by the local committee in Deraa activists call for peaceful struggle against Syrian regime:

"We must continue our peaceful revolution throughout Syria until we achieve the freedom we demand. The crowds are only growing in size and momentum. The government's fierce campaign of arbitrary mass arrests will not succeed where their bullets have failed."¹²⁰

At the same time the negotiations between regime officials and prominent opposition figures were underway. After meeting with officials from the Presidential

¹¹⁸"Syria's Once-Peaceful Protesters Turn to Guns", <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/syrias-once-peaceful-protesters-turn-to-guns/>, 30.05.2011, (accessed on 07.06.2011)

¹¹⁹"Armed Residents Put up Resistance to Syrian Army", http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle09.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2011/May/middleeast_May870.xml§ion=middleeast, 31.05.2011, (accessed on 07.06.2011)

¹²⁰"Hundreds Held in Syria Protest Crackdown", <http://news.sky.com/story/853909/hundreds-held-in-syria-protest-crackdown>, 05.05.2011, (accessed on 08.05.2011)

office one of the prominent figures of the opposition in Syria, Luay Hussein, gave an account of the process as follows:

"I hope we will see [no firing at demonstrators] tomorrow. I still call for non-violent form of any protest regardless of the response of the security apparatus."¹²¹

Despite the efforts of keeping protest movement in a non-violent form, the tide of the events turned to escalation of violence. Jisr Al-Shughour event was the turning point for the Syrian uprising. In early June 2011, Syrian state television announced that 120 members of the security services were killed by the armed gangs in a bordering town with Turkey, Jisr al-Shughour.¹²² According to initial reports armed groups set government buildings ablaze and stole five tons of dynamite and were firing at security forces with machineguns and rocket-propelled grenades. When the world learned the armed attacks, Syrian army units had been already on the way to deal with armed groups. The Syrian state dispatched dozens of tanks and hundreds of soldiers equipped with heavy weapons to the restive town. At the same time thousands of people who lived in Jisr al-Shughour began to flee due to threat of reprisals by the regime.¹²³

Different narratives were claimed by the various parts of the event in Jisr Al-Shughour. Contradicting accounts of the event revealed the efforts of rhetorical competition between opposition and Syrian state. Each part in that struggle tried to present themselves as the victim of unchecked violence. At the same time the two parties made critical moves which changed the course of events dramatically. Those quotations from residents who participated in Jisr al-Shughour attack delineated the violence spiral which created by the Syrian state and opposition mutually:

¹²¹ "Syrian Troops Will Not Shoot Protesters", <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/05/201151362452271960.html>, 13.05.2011, (accessed on 17.05.2011)

¹²² "Syria to Send in Army after 120 Troops Killed", <http://ca.reuters.com/article/topNews/idCATRE7553AI20110606?sp=true>, 06.06.2011, (accessed on 07.06.2011)

¹²³ "Syria Ratchets up Military Operation on Jisr al-Shghour", <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/jun/10/syria-military-jisr-al-shughour>, 10.06.2011, (accessed on 08.07.2011)

“I’m going to tell you what happened, even at the cost of damaging the cause of the revolution,” says Uthman, a refugee from Atma, who had to flee to the Turkish refugee camp of Reyhanli after the battle in Jisr Al-Shughour. According to Uthman, in Jisr as-Shughour everything started around 20 May 2011, when 15 Syrian workers were killed by state security forces. People were already prepared to respond to the attacks with force. In Omar’s account, the armed protests started right after this massacre. “On the third of June, we took weapons with us and hid them, while marching in the demonstration,” he recalls, “when the snipers of the military security (al-mukhabarat al-askariyyah) opened fire on us from the post office, we hit back—killing some of them”. The protesters were then joined by the battalion led by Lieutenant Colonel Hussein Al-Harmoush, the first high-ranking officer to defect, and planned an offensive against military security forces, which were the only intelligence branch that refused to hand over its weapons. Omar explained that military security forces are mainly made up of Alawis and hardcore loyalists. “The siege of the post office lasted for 3 hours,” remembers Tareq Abdul-Haqq, a 26-year-old activist from Jisr As-Shughur, while showing me the videos he filmed during the clashes. “We tried everything: dynamite barrels used in construction, exploding a gas cylinder . . . in the end the last surviving officers came out because the noise of these explosions drove them crazy.” The wider confrontation with military security forces lasted for two days, causing the government in Damascus to deploy a reserve security contingent to the restive city on 5 June 2011. Unexpectedly, the insurgents succeeded in resisting the offensive with Kalashnikovs seized from the security headquarters, and the contingent had to retreat. “After having defeated military security, we set up checkpoints and planted landmines [in preparation] to face the arrival of the army,” says Omar.¹²⁴

Jisr Al-Shughour attack exposed the new phase of Syrian uprising as there were armed groups, military defections, border crossings, and refugees. As the explanations mentioned above that, the armed groups in Jisr al-Shughour moved in an organized manner. They obtained weapons via smuggling activities and created a cross border logistics network. The armed groups in Jisr Al-Shughour were different

¹²⁴Andrea Glioti, “Secrets From Jisr Al-Shughour”, The Majalla, <http://www.majalla.com/eng/2012/04/article55230561>, 05.04.2011, (accessed on 07.07.2011)

from the resistance groups of the residents in town. There were experienced army defectors who took the lead in armed attacks. Although some individual defection events had been reported before in other parts of Syria, Jisr al-Shughour attacks constituted a different case as the defectors cooperated with resident recruits in order to change the direction of conflict.

After Jish al-Shughour attacks the residents of the town fled to Turkey as they feared from regime reprisals, while the Syrian state television broadcasted the video of residents who seemed happy with the arrival of Syrian army.¹²⁵ Whatever the feelings of the residents as regards to the armed group attackers the reality was that the majority of the people were fleeing from their settlement. That was the recurrent problematic of the armed groups.

Jisr al-Shughour constituted the first example of ghost towns which became vacant after the attacks of armed groups. In due course most of the towns and cities which experienced the armed conflict such as Azez, Qusayr and Kfar lata witnessed the escaping of the residents from their residential area. The towns which were the homes for thousands of people before turned out to be an attack base for hundreds of armed men. The towns without residents created detrimental conditions for the durability of protest movement. As the main subject of the protest, local people disappeared from the scene the context of the conflict became a war between two armed parties. This changed the main determinants of the contentious episode such as network strategies, resource mobilizations, strategic choices and identity formations. Without recruitment capabilities from local people armed groups directed to foreign fighters or mercenaries. Therefore their resource deficiencies increased swiftly. To compensate the mounting necessities the armed groups began to loot and confiscate citizens' private properties or most of the time public properties.¹²⁶

¹²⁵ "Security, Tranquility Back to Jisr Al-Shughour", <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mFaDLMthPhU>, Youtube footage, 02.08.2011, (accessed on 04.08.2011)

¹²⁶ "Syrian Rebels Sidetracked by Scramble for Spoils of War",

As seen in the Jisr al-Shughour case the armed groups strategic preferences were also problematic for the residents of the town. As they attacked the security forces in the town there was no planning as regards to the day after. When the army units of the Syrian state came to Jisr al-Shughour almost all armed groups had already fled from the town as they crossed the border and escaped to Turkey. The example of Lieutenant Colonel Hussein al-Harmoush deserves some attention. Al-Harmoush, as the first high ranking officer to defect, had led the armed groups in Jisr al-Shughour attacks. However after attacks he fled to Turkey and took refuge in a military camp. He did not return to Jisr al-Shughour again. The residents of the Jisr al-Shughour were left with their fates by the armed groups which previously emerged as the guardians of the people. Throughout the uprising in Syria the residents of the towns and cities learned that sort of cases and tried to adjust themselves into new situation by fleeing from their residential area.

Another aspect which proved to be problematic for the armed opposition groups was the utilization of identity formation mechanisms. Armed groups conducted their assaults without depending on previous solidarity networks. They bypassed the priorities of local residents as the physical force monopoly was with them. In that sense armed groups did not consider the grievances and demands of the people who live in the towns intimately. This situation enlarged the margin between the local people's priorities and armed groups immediate necessities. The residents of the towns and cities hesitated to match their causes with the armed groups. The mechanisms of attribution of similarity¹²⁷ gave way to disillusionment of the local residents from armed groups. The position of the armed groups resulted in a decline in the commitment of peoples to cause of the armed groups.

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/dec/27/syrian-rebels-scramble-spoils-war>, 27.12.2012, (accessed on 28.12.2012); "Syria Rebels Accused of Looting Churches, Destroying Mosques", http://worldnews.nbcnews.com/_news/2013/01/23/16661634-rights-group-syria-rebels-accused-of-looting-churches-destroying-mosque?lite, 23.01.2013, (accessed on 24.01.2013)

¹²⁷Charles Tilly and Sidney G. Tarrow, *Contentious Politics*, Paradigm Publishers, Boulder, Colombia, 2007

CHAPTER 4

ARTICULATION TO FOREIGN PATRONAGE NETWORKS

4.1 Practices of the Foreign Patronage Networks

International actors were caught off unprepared to the Arab Spring as wide-reaching social uprisings shook the foundation of domestic and regional order of the Middle East.¹²⁸

While newly recognized opposition movements appeared on the scene and became the main source of political turmoil, the countries which have been retaining close surveillance on the Middle Eastern countries' domestic political landscape began to reassess their intelligence gathering methods. One of the leading countries that have indispensable interest in the Middle Eastern countries' internal developments exposed the lack of proper information flow as regards to opposition structures as follows:

"We were missing a side of reporting that would have provided a better picture of how strong that opposition really was, how capable that opposition was, to respond or react to the shifting of their capability to challenge the status quo"¹²⁹

The countries which vested interest in the Middle Eastern countries set in motion a variety of policy program in order to meet the deficit in reaching local

¹²⁸ "U.S. Intelligence Official Acknowledges Missed Arab Spring Signs", http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/world_now/2012/07/us-intelligence-official-acknowledges-missed-signs-ahead-of-arab-spring-.html, 19.07.2012, (accessed on 25.07.2012); "Arab Spring Took British Intelligence Surprise, Report Says", <http://www.theguardian.com/uk/2012/jul/12/arab-spring-british-intelligence-report>, 12.07.2012, (accessed on 15.07.2012)

¹²⁹ "U.S. Intelligence Official Acknowledges Missed Arab Spring Signs", http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/world_now/2012/07/us-intelligence-official-acknowledges-missed-signs-ahead-of-arab-spring-.html, 19.07.2012, (accessed on 25.07.2012)

opposition circles. Most of these countries have generally continued their contact with the more institutionalized political groups and long-ruled political figures of the Middle Eastern Countries.¹³⁰ However the uprisings spreading all over the Middle East presented a different account of the political change as the main agents of the contentious movements were seemed to be elusive to predict the pattern of their action and thinking.¹³¹ As mainly operating out of the monitoring activities of the foreign intelligence services grassroots organizations and suddenly gathering mass protests took the lead as regards to determine the course of events. What is more all these countries which experienced a wave of social uprisings has been traditionally labeled as 'strong states and weak societies' hence the countries which strove to control the course of events in the conflict-torn Middle Eastern countries has retained relatively weak connections with the non-elite driven protest movements.¹³²

Having curicial interest networks in the Middle Eastern Countries, the U.S. Government immediately started to implement specific program to create robust links with the contentious domestic actors of the particular countries. The Office of The Special Coordinator For Middle East Transitions which was established in September 2011 in U.S. constituted a model example in terms of reaching newly emerging contentious actors during the popular uprisings in the Middle Eastern countries.¹³³ The main task of the Office was designated as:

"Support free, fair and competitive elections; assist the Egyptian, Tunisian, and Libyan people's creation of enduring democratic institutions; enable the current transitional authorities and future elected governments to deliver services and sufficiently meet citizen expectations, including through support for civil society and

¹³⁰ Jeff Goodwin, "Why We Were Surprised (Again) by the Arab Spring", *Swiss Political Science Review*, Vol. 17, Issue 4, December 2011, p. 457

¹³¹ F. Gregory Gause III, "Why Middle East Studies Missed the Arab Spring", *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 2011

¹³² J. S. Migdal, *Strong Societies and Weak States: State-Society Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1988

¹³³ State.gov, "Office of The Special Coordinator For Middle East Transitions", <http://www.state.gov/s/d/met/index.htm>, (accessed on 05.06.2012)

the private sector; identify ways to support key sectors of the Tunisian, Egyptian, and Libyan economies; increase outreach to emergent political, economic and social forces in Egypt, Tunisia, and Libya."¹³⁴

As above mentioned The Office of The Special Coordinator For Middle East Transitions specifically focused on the social actors which operated mainly outside of the established political structure which had been characterized mainly by the long-ruled authoritarian regimes and lack of institutionalized political processes. The U.S. Department of State put the main tasks of this office as " Develop comprehensive assistance strategies and ensure that assistance tools (USAID, INL, MEPI, DRL, and others, as well as PM/DOD programs as appropriate) are aligned with U.S. policy goals; liaise closely with the interagency to insure that State and USAID assistance tools are reinforced with a whole-of-government package of technical, economic, and other support; work with international donors and institutions on a coordinated assistance strategies; evaluate the feasibility and facilitation of the recovery of any illegally acquired assets; keep Congressional members and staff advised and informed, seeking Hill input and support; develop and maintain links with Washington's think-tank community; mobilize resources from the U.S. business, foundation, university and other sectors to support Middle East transitions; ensure close assistance coordination between Washington and the U.S. embassies in Tunis, Cairo, and Tripoli; support the interagency processes, goals and tasks."¹³⁵

As the social uprisings swept the Middle Eastern countries such as Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Yemen, at first Syria seemed to be an exception to these upheavals. During the heyday of the social movements in Egypt, Libya and Tunisia;

¹³⁴ State.gov, "Office of The Special Coordinator For Middle East Transitions", <http://www.state.gov/s/d/met/index.htm>, (accessed on 05.06.2012)

¹³⁵It should not be misunderstood that the only U.S. Government programme to reach opposition circles has been the The Office of The Special Coordinator For Middle East Transitions. On the contrary, this Office was designated to coordinate other tools of penetration to the target countries and re-adjust their activities to newly emerging political environments which has been more diffused and elusive

Syrian cities witnessed very few demonstrations and protest forms.¹³⁶ Therefore the efforts of the foreign countries to reach Syrian opposition groups remained intact at the initial phase of Syrian uprising. However, towards the end of the 2011 new initiatives aimed at penetration to opposition structures inside Syria began implemented. Foreign governments tried to understand the motives, ideological commitments, network structures, recruit strategies, potential alliances, and the role of the secular and Islamist-radical tendencies and the mobilization potentials of the contentious actors in Syria. Foreign countries and individuals' main concern was more than strategic information gathering, namely they were in the pursuit of leverage over the opposition circles. In comparing with Foucaultian understanding, strategic knowledge as regards to newly emerging contentious political and social landscape provided a sort of control mechanism over the contentious episode of the Syrian uprising.¹³⁷ Foreign countries and individuals which tried to establish their hegemony over the opposition groups in Syria employed a variety of practices which can be combined into a set of particular patronage mechanisms.

The strategies of the foreign patrons, individuals as well as states, in Syrian case, depended on a three dimensional patronage mechanism; namely *co-optation* of the Syrian opposition by the means of resource provision and strategic information sharing; *certification* of the particular opposition groups in the face of international community through Friends of Syria meetings and opposition gatherings; *coalition formation* to provide a feasible ground for opposition groups to establish the widest front against Syrian regime. Co-optation, certification, and coalition formation mechanisms were mainly employed by the foreign patrons to mobilize Syrian opposition structures in line with their respective interest definitions. However, as it is argued more detailed in other sections of this thesis, these mechanisms generally caused disillusionment among the constituencies and bystanders of the Syrian

¹³⁶“In Syria, Demonstrations Are Few and Brief”, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/17/world/middleeast/17syria.html>, 16.03.2011, (accessed on 17.05.2011)

¹³⁷ Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977*/Michel Foucault, ed. Colin Gordon, Pantheon Books, New York, 1980

uprising and also created a fertile ground for the de-mobilization of the contentious actors in Syrian episode. Therefore the particular mechanisms of the patronage networks should be elaborated in detail.

After the Deraa events which resulted in the killing of five people and the arrest of school children a group of country made a series of denouncement against the acts of Syrian government. On 18 of March 2011, United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon described Syrian governments' response on protests and use of deadly force against demonstrators as "unacceptable" and reminded the responsibility of the government in Syria to listen to the legitimate aspirations of the people and address them through inclusive political dialogue and genuine reforms, not repression.¹³⁸ On 22 March 2011, Catherine Ashton, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, issued a statement saying that the European Union "strongly condemns the violent repression, including through the use of live ammunition, of peaceful protests in various locations across Syria"¹³⁹ The Government of the United States participated the condemnation campaign with the statement of "The United States stands for a set of universal rights, including the freedom of expression and assembly, and believes that governments, including the Syrian government, must address the legitimate aspirations of their people" on 19 March 2011.¹⁴⁰ On 24 March 2011, Foreign Secretary of the Britain, William Hague called the government of Syria to respect their people's right to peaceful protest, and to take action about their legitimate grievances.¹⁴¹ Similar statements came from a variety of countries such as France, Germany, Turkey, Qatar, Saudi Arabia.¹⁴²

¹³⁸“U.N. Chief Slams Syria’s Crackdown on Protests”, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/03/2011318231622114396.html>, 18.03.2011, (accessed on 25.03.2011)

¹³⁹ “EU Condemns Unacceptable Repression in Syria”, <http://www.middle-east-online.com/english/?id=45066>, 22.03.2011, (accessed on 25.03.2011)

¹⁴⁰ “Obama Administration Condemns Syrian Violence Against Protesters”, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-03-18/obama-administration-condemns-syrian-violence-against-protests.html>, 19.03.2011, (accessed on 21.03.2011)

¹⁴¹“More Than 100 Killed in Syrian Anti-government Rallies”, <http://www.jpost.com/Middle->

On the contrary, the countries which had positive attitude towards Syrian regime, especially Russia and China, made more balanced announcements which underscored the political dialogue between the Syrian government and protesters. As a clear example, in his statement the spokesperson of the Foreign Ministry of China, Jiang Yu, stated that

"China believes that when it comes to properly handling the current Syrian situation, it is the correct direction and major approach to resolve the internal differences through political dialogue and maintain its national stability as well as the overall stability and security of the Middle East. The future of Syria should be independently decided by the Syrian people themselves free from external interference. We hope the international community continues to play a constructive role in this regard."¹⁴³

The countries which tried to develop relationship with newly emerging opposition groups circumspectly calibrated their respective tones of announcement as regards to events in Syria in order to validate the actions of Syrian opposition. In fact these initial steps covering denouncements of the Syrian regime and promotion of the emergent opposition groups was the first move towards *outside certification* efforts by the foreign countries.¹⁴⁴ Most of the Western countries and mainly Gulf Countries, tired to set out *certification* mechanism which would enlarge their respective influence domain among opposition circles in Syria.

The patron states and individuals did not contend with only condemnations as they began to implement a series of sanctions against the Syrian regime. Without United Nations Security Council resolutions due to Russian and Chinese vetoes

East/More-than-100-killed-in-Syrian-anti-government-rallies, 24.03.2011, (accessed on 26.03.2011)

¹⁴² "Saudi Arabia Calls for Syrian Reforms", <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/08/201187213922184761.html>, 08.08.2011, (accessed on 09.10.2011); "Erdogan Says He Will Pres Syria's Assad to Reform", <http://www.jpost.com/Middle-East/Erdogan-says-he-will-pres-Syrias-Assad-to-reform>, 02.04.2011, (accessed on 03.04.2011)

¹⁴³ "Foreign Ministry Spokeperson Jiang Yu's Regular Press Conference on May 31, 2011, <http://www.china-botschaft.de/det/fyrth/t827089.htm>, 01.06.2011, (accessed on 04.06.2011)

¹⁴⁴ Charles Tilly and Sidney G. Tarrow, *Contentious Politics*, Paradigm Publishers, Boulder, Colombia, 2007, p. 35

particular countries such as U.S., France, Britain, Turkey, Saudi Arabia imposed sanctions on Syria.

The U.S. Treasury Department announced that "it freezes any assets of the Syrian officials that are in the United States or otherwise fall within U.S. jurisdiction and it generally bars U.S. individuals and companies from dealing with them" and stated that "the actions the administration has taken today send an unequivocal message to President Assad, the Syrian leadership, and regime insiders that they will be held accountable for the ongoing violence and repression in Syria."¹⁴⁵ The European Union also put 13 Syrian officials on its sanctions list in what it described as a move to gradually increase pressure.¹⁴⁶

The condemnation of the foreign countries and a series of sanctions were met with indifference by the Syrian authorities. High level officials who were known as close to Assad family draw attention to the ongoing negative attitude and practices of these countries towards Syrian regime. Therefore they underrated the actual effects of that sort of attempts.¹⁴⁷

Towards end of the 2011, the passive support of the foreign patron countries to the Syrian opposition groups turned into active assistance to establish a unified opposition structure which could gain legitimacy in the presence of the Syrian people and international community. In order to achieve that aim they employed *coalition formation* mechanism which enabled them to build broadest opposition front against Syrian regime.¹⁴⁸ Lacking a secure ground to gather and get in touch with other contentious actors, the Syrian opposition could not find a way to meet inside Syria.

¹⁴⁵"U.S. Slaps Sanctions on Syrian President, Top Aides", <http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/05/18/us-syria-usa-idUSTRE74H4XX20110518>, 18.05.2011, (accessed on 20.05.2011)

¹⁴⁶"Guidance: Embargoes and Sanctions on Syria", <https://www.gov.uk/sanctions-on-syria>, (accessed on 10.12.2012)

¹⁴⁷Meeting with senior Syrian Government officials, in June 2011 and January 2012

¹⁴⁸ Charles Tilly and Sidney G. Tarrow, *Contentious Politics*, Paradigm Publishers, Boulder, Colombia, 2007, p. 34

Therefore foreign countries especially neighbor countries such as Turkey, Jordan and Saudi Arabia became a convenient avenue to gather in order to build a consensus among opposition groups and establish a unified structure. Foreign patrons took this chance through providing reliable ground to opposition circles to round up their resources and get different actors into touch.

In this context Turkey played a special role in terms of proceeding *coalition formation* mechanism by hosting the first phase of opposition meeting in Turkish cities. On 23 August 2011, various opposition groups gathered in Istanbul, Turkey in order to announce the formation of the Syrian National Council, which would operate as a main organization of the Syrian opposition groups.¹⁴⁹ Substantially comprised of opposition figures in-exile Syrian National Council consisted of 115 to 120 members from Syrian opposition groups.¹⁵⁰ Turkey also provided the Syrian National Council to open offices in Turkey. The chief agenda for the Council stated as gaining legitimacy in the international community as the representative of the Syrian people and also the Council declared that foreign governments would act on such recognition through humanitarian aid and military intervention.¹⁵¹ Turkey was also one of the first countries that recognize the Syrian National Council as a legitimate representative of the Syrian people.¹⁵² The representatives of the Syrian National Council had been hosted by the Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu

¹⁴⁹ “Syrian Dissidents Form National Council”,
http://www.edmondsun.com/news_tab3/x2122765173/Syrian-dissidents-form-national-council,
24.08.2011, (accessed on 27.08.2011)

¹⁵⁰ “The Syrian Opposition: Who’s Doing the Talking?”,
<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2012/jul/12/syrian-opposition-doing-the-talking>,
12.07.2012, (accessed on 12.07.2012)

¹⁵¹ “Syrian National Council, Syria’s Rebel Government, Opens Offices in Turkey”
<http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/regions/middle-east/111214/syrian-national-council-syria-rebel-government-turkey>, 15.12.2011, (accessed on 17.05.2011)

¹⁵² “Turkish PM: Lost SOconfidence in Syrian Leadership”,
<http://www.voanews.com/content/diplomatic-tensions-escalate-as-turkey-meets-with-syrian-opposition-133921103/148222.html>, 14.10.2011, (accessed on 14.10.2011)

several times during the first quarter of the 2012.¹⁵³ In addition Turkey's special relationship with the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood, which was accepted as the most vigorous and organized opposition group at the initial stage of Syrian uprising, was accepted as a main leverage of Turkish Government in Syrian National Council.¹⁵⁴ According to Balci, some leading members of the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood who had already moved to Turkey, including its deputy general guide Mohammed Tayfour, were the members of the Syrian National Council's executive office. Since April 2011, the Turkish authorities have discreetly helped the Syrian National Council to organize, allowing it to convene its first congresses in Antalya in April and a second meeting in Istanbul in July 2011.¹⁵⁵

Throughout the end of 2011, Syrian National Council was recognized by variety of countries including, France, United Kingdom, the United States, Spain, Germany and Saudi Arabia. On December 2011 the US Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, deemed the Syrian National Council as a "leading and legitimate representative of Syrians seeking a peaceful democratic transition". Clinton also underscored that the United States was "committed to helping make this transition."¹⁵⁶ Similar statements came from the Foreign Secretary of United Kingdom William Hague who met with representatives of the Syrian National Council on 21 November 2011.

Speaking about the meeting, Hague remarked, "We will continue our contacts with the Syrian opposition. I have appointed a senior official to lead our

¹⁵³ "FM Davutoglu Meets With Syrian Opposition Representatives", <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-273049-fm-davutoglu-meets-with-syrian-opposition-representatives.html>, 02.03.2012, (accessed on 03.03.2012)

¹⁵⁴ Bayram Balci, "Turkey's Relation With Syrian Opposition", Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, <http://carnegieendowment.org/2012/04/13/turkey-s-relations-with-syrian-opposition/a88u>, 13.04.2012, (accessed on 17.04.2012)

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ "Clinton Meets With Syria Opposition", http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/clinton-meets-with-syria-opposition/2011/12/06/gIQApxQ9ZO_story.html, 06.12.2011, (accessed on 07.12.2011)

liaison and coordination with them. The message for the regime is that the rest of the world is talking to the Syrian opposition, that we are looking to a different future for Syria, for the Syrian people to decide for themselves what, what we want is what so many people in Syria want, a free and democratic future for the people of Syria. And I think the Assad regime will find that more and more Governments around the world are willing to work with the opposition to step up the level of their contacts as we have done today as part of the increasing pressure on this regime and its completely unacceptable behavior.”¹⁵⁷

As it can be inferred from the statements of the foreign countries above mentioned, the recognition of the Syrian National Council and hosting of their meetings meant more than "the support for the democratic transition in Syria" as these practices provided the foreign patrons to develop a contact point with the opposition groups and enabled them to reshape contentious actors' vision in the context of patron countries' strategic imperatives. In that context co-optation mechanism was evoked as a strategy which was characterized by signaling of readiness to recognize and support the existence and claims of newly emergent contentious actor.¹⁵⁸ In Syrian case, official recognition of the Syrian National Council in a respectively short time was the initial step of activating outside *certification* mechanism. In this manner stable maneuver sphere was created for the Syrian National Council in the international arena. That sort of external maneuver sphere relieved the internal pressure on the Syrian National Council. At the same time the message of the foreign patron countries to the Syrian regime that “the actions against the components of the Syrian National Council would be considered in terms of our vested interest”.

However integration mechanisms of the Syrian National Council to the foreign patronage confounded the organizational structure of the opposition. After

¹⁵⁷ “Foreign Secretary Meets Syrian Opposition”, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/foreign-secretary-meets-syrian-opposition>, (accessed on 22.11.2011)

¹⁵⁸ Charles Tilly and Sidney G. Tarrow, *Contentious Politics*, Paradigm Publishers, Boulder, Colombia, 2007, p. 35

establishing of the Council the charge of Muslim Brotherhood hegemony appeared among opposition circles. The Syrian branch of Muslim Brotherhood was criticized with taking the major seats in the Council; forming proponent armed groups inside Syria; using financial assets to seduce grassroots organizations in Syria; and finally served as a proxy inside the Council for the Turkish government.¹⁵⁹

A Syrian National Council member in Syria implied the patronage network of Turkey on the Council as “the SNC has paid too high of a price for international support”.¹⁶⁰ But at the same time the Council faced with the dilemma of alienating secularists and minorities as the Muslim Brotherhood became more dominant within the Council. As the Muslim Brotherhood was the best-funded and one of the most organized factions in Syrian opposition politics, making it difficult for the Syrian National Council to exclude the Muslim Brotherhood, because of its popularity with Turkey and the Gulf countries. Compromising on the extent of the role of the Muslim Brotherhood within the council members of the Syrian National Council faced with choosing between the benefits of receiving additional funds from Islamist countries and sacrificing popular support amongst the revolutionary youth groups inside Syria and the international community.¹⁶¹

On the other side, the rift between two leading regional players, Qatar and Saudi Arabia, in search for the gaining upper hand over the opposition segments in Syrian National Council rendered the role of these patron countries visible. On 22 January 2012, a Syrian National Council delegation met with Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al-Faisal, who pledged "Saudi Arabia's support and commitment to

¹⁵⁹ Hassan Hassan, “How the Muslim Brotherhood Hijacked Syria’s Revolution”, Foreign Policy, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2013/03/13/how_the_muslim_brotherhood_hijacked_syria_s_revolution, 13.03.2012, (accessed on 16.03.2012); “What is Turkey’s Role in Syria’s Islamic Opposition”, <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2013/09/turkey-syria-islamic-opposition-role.html>, 27.09.2013, (accessed on 02.10.2013)

¹⁶⁰ Jared Markland and Kritika Lalwaney, “Syrian National Council: A Victorious Opposition?”, The George Washington University IMES Capstone Paper Series, May 2012, p. 42, <https://www.gwu.edu/~imes/assets/docs/Capstone%20Papers%20-%202012/Lalwaney,%20Markland.pdf>

¹⁶¹ Ibid. 37-38

stand by the Syrian people and to help alleviate their suffering in this crisis."¹⁶² Qatar also declared the support for the Syrian National Council with the announcement of the Sheikh Hamad, Qatar's foreign minister, saying "We advise the opposition, across the spectrum, to rise above their differences and merge into one voice that expresses the aspirations of their people so that they can face the tyranny of the regime."¹⁶³

According to reports that refer to an insider source in Syrian National Council, Qatar, which had very close relationship with the Syrian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, backed particular groups within the Council while Saudi Arabia retained her support for non-Brotherhood members of the Council. In that context Syrian National Council passed through a series of organizational reforms in order to settle down the rivalry between Qatar and Saudi Arabia.¹⁶⁴ The different approaches as regards to the structure of the Syrian National Council shattered the certification efforts of the patron countries of the Syrian opposition. While one group under the influence of Saudi patronage leaned towards Saudi Arabia's political line, another one chose to defy these efforts. Therefore the legitimization efforts of the patron countries began to clash with one another as client groups in main opposition organization, Syrian National Council, critically wounded with alienation from contentious actors inside Syria.

One of the leading dissidents of the Syrian regime, Michel Kilo, described the foreign patronage network inside the Syrian National Council and the attitude of the ordinary Syrian citizen towards Syrian National Council properly as saying:

"The Syrian National Council has brought — with the help of the regime — all Arab, regional and international powers into Syria. Syria is now a battle field for all of the outside powers one can think of. Moreover, Syrians have been exposed to risks far

¹⁶² "SNC Delegation Meets With Saudi Foreign Minister", <http://syriancouncil.org/en/news/item/526-snc-delegation-meets-with-saudi-foreign-minister.html> , (accessed on 23.01.2012)

¹⁶³ "Qatar Calls for Recognising Syrian Opposition", <http://af.reuters.com/article/commoditiesNews/idAFL5E8EA08I20120310> ,10.03.2012, (accessed on 10.03.2012)

¹⁶⁴ "Saudi-Qatar Rivalry Divides Syrian Opposition", <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/01/15/us-syria-crisis-qatar-idUSBREA0E1G720140115> , 15.01.2014, (accessed on 15.01.2014)

beyond their control, including widespread foreign intervention and a lurking civil war. As a result, an enormous segment of Syrian society has started to feel confused, fearful and remorseful. According to this segment, the revolution's original direction — that which they had hoped would lead to freedom, justice and equality — has been forgotten."¹⁶⁵

In this context of confusion of the opposition groups and *coalition formation* between different factions of the contentious actors one of the most effective patronage mechanisms was the "Friends of Syria Meeting". Gathering representatives from nearly a hundred countries from all over world "Friends of Syria Meetings" operated as the main center to draw the opposition groups into patronage networks. While broadening the opportunity structures of the opposition groups, these meetings enabled the patron countries to consolidate contentious actors' strategic vision according to their priorities in Syrian uprising.

"The Friends of Syria" group was first initiated by the France and the first meeting was held in Tunis on 24 February 2012, with the participation of more than 60 countries and representatives from the United Nations, the League of Arab States, the European Union, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the Arab Maghreb Union and the Cooperation Council for the Arab Gulf States.¹⁶⁶ The members of the Syrian National Council were also the participants of the Meeting. However, the opposition groups such as National Coordination Committee which operated mainly inside Syria was not accepted to participate to the meeting due to the concern that the meeting would not rule out the idea of military intervention.¹⁶⁷ The need to build a united opposition was the focus of intense discussions at this inaugural meeting of

¹⁶⁵ "Syrian Opposition Hijacked by Islamists, Foreign Influence", <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/tr/politics/2012/12/islamist-alternative-will-not-save-syria.html#ixzz34QPcqeQM>, 13.12.2012, (accessed on 14.12.2012)

¹⁶⁶ "Chairman's Conclusions of Friends of Syria Meeting", <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/chairmans-conclusions-of-friends-of-syria-meeting>, 27.02.2012, (accessed on 27.02.2012)

¹⁶⁷ "Internal Syrian Opposition Group Rejects U.S. Strike", <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/security/2013/09/syrian-opposition-in-syria-rejects-us-strike.html#>, 06.09.2013, (accessed on 07.09.2013)

the Friends of Syria. Although the Meeting continued closed to the press, heated debates between participant countries and also with the Syrian National Council were reflected to reports. According to these reports, the Syrian National Council called on the international community to arm the rebels if the regime continues to ignore the need for political initiatives. "The Friends of Syria should not constrain individual countries from aiding the Syrian opposition by means of military advisers, training and provision of arms to defend themselves," the group said in a seven-point statement of demands.¹⁶⁸ In fact, the call of the Syrian National Council to arm the rebels inside Syria reflected the division between foreign countries which took part in the "Friends of Syria Group". During the Tunisia meeting, The Saudi Arabia's Foreign Minister Prince Saud al-Faisal walked out of the conference citing the Groups' inactivity to arming Assad's opponents and he suggested that even if others refuse to consider the military option, the kingdom may funnel funds and arms to Syrian rebels. At the same time the hosting country of the meeting, Tunisia's Foreign Minister Rafik Abdessalem declared that they rejected both of the notions of foreign military intervention and arming Assad's opponents while saying "We have had enough failed military excursions in the region and we do not want to use military force or weapons."¹⁶⁹ Chairman's Conclusions of the International Conference of the Group of Friends of the Syrian People on 24 February which was announced at the end of the Meeting, exposed the strain lines which were emanating from the penetration efforts of the patron countries to Syrian opposition groups. In these document, while "Friends of Syria Group" declared the recognition the Syrian National Council as a legitimate representative of Syrians, at the same time the Group excluded the armed solution to the crisis as an option by stating "The Friends' Group affirmed its goal of a political solution to this crisis that meets the aspirations of the Syrian people for dignity, freedom, peace, reform, democracy, prosperity and

¹⁶⁸ Rania Abouzeid, "The emergency Session on Syria: That's What Friends Are For?", Time, 24.02.2012, <http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2107636,00.html> , (accessed on 26.02.2012)

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

stability. The Friends' Group recognized that this solution should address the concern of all citizens of Syria, regardless of their religion or ethnicity."¹⁷⁰

"The Friends of Syria Group" also clarified the road map for the support of Syrian opposition with the statement, "the Group agreed to increase its engagement with and practical support for the Syrian opposition. (...) The Friends' Group called on the Arab League to convene a meeting around the Syrian National Council with a range of opposition groups and individuals, including those inside Syria, committed to a peaceful political transition, in order for them to agree on: seeking peaceful democratic change. The Group agreed to increase its engagement with and practical support for the Syrian opposition." However, despite these clear statements as regards to 'peaceful transition', the Syrian National Council and its armed wing Free Syrian Army traced different trajectory with the support of Gulf countries, namely Saudi Arabia and Qatar. Immediately after the "The Friends of Syria Group" meeting, the Qatari Prime Minister Hamad bin Jassim al-Thani said "We should do whatever necessary to help [the Syrian opposition], including giving them weapons to defend themselves."¹⁷¹ Simultaneously the armed attack reports from the Syrian cities began to flow in prominent news outlets.¹⁷²

Throughout the Friends of Syria Meetings, *coalition formation* and *certification* mechanisms combined into foreign patronage process as these meetings provided two pronged stage on which the actors external to the contentious episode of Syria precede articulation mechanisms with various Syrian opposition groups.

¹⁷⁰ "Chairman's Conclusions of Friends of Syria Meeting", <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/chairmans-conclusions-of-friends-of-syria-meeting> , 27.02.2012, (accessed on 27.02.2012)

¹⁷¹ Jonathan Schanzer, "Saudi Arabia is Arming the Syrian Opposition", Foreign Policy, 27 February 2012, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/02/27/saudi_arabia_is_arming_the_syrian_opposition, (accessed on 29.02.2012)

¹⁷² "Exclusive: Arab States Arm Rebels as UN Talks of Syrian Civil War", <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/exclusive-arab-states-arm-rebels-as-un-talks-of-syrian-civil-war-7845026.html>, 13.06.2012, (accessed on 15.06.2012); "Saudi, Qatari Plans to Arm Syrian Rebels Risk Overtaking Cautious Approach Favored by U.S.", http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/saudi-qatari-plans-to-arm-syrian-rebels-risk-overtaking-cautious-approach-favored-by-us/2012/03/01/gIQArWQfIR_story.html, 01.03.2012, (accessed on 04.03.2012)

While a broad part of the international community gathered with the relatively unified agenda on Syrian future at the same time fractured Syrian opposition groups were forced to revolve around that agenda. It is important to note that the relation between patron countries and the Syrian opposition were ineluctably dynamic. The parameters of the outside *certification* had to be constituted with concerning, reshaping, and in any way absorbing the political agenda of the opposition groups. The highly differing agenda and political preferences of the scattered Syrian opposition groups created significant constraints on these above mentioned mechanisms. One result of these constraints was the increasing violence spiral in Syrian uprising.

Towards the end of 2011, almost all parts of Syria which experienced a wave of protest movement began to witness increasing armed conflict between security forces and unidentified armed groups. As this situation escalated the volume of reciprocal violence some opposition figures emphasized the necessity of peaceful opposition. Statement released by the local committee in Deraa activists called for peaceful struggle against the Syrian regime saying "we must continue our peaceful revolution throughout Syria until we achieve the freedom we demand."¹⁷³

In spite of the verbal commitment to the 'peaceful transition' Syrian National Council increased the demands for support to armed groups inside Syria in subsequent meetings of the "Friends of Syria Group". On 1 April 2012, the leader of the Syrian National Council, Burhan Ghalioun, called for urgent relief aid, the setting up of humanitarian corridors in the country and tangible support for the opposition Free Syrian Army saying "Syrian National Council would take charge of payments of salaries to all members of the Free Syrian Army."¹⁷⁴

Beyond the ideological and practical patronage relations with the foreign countries subservience of the Syrian National Council to the foreign patronage

¹⁷³ "Hundreds Held in Syria Protest Crackdown", <http://news.sky.com/story/853909/hundreds-held-in-syria-protest-crackdown> [sky news](#), 05.05.2012, (accessed on 06.05.2012)

¹⁷⁴ "Syria Opposition Presses for Serious Action", <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia-pacific/2012/04/2012412022613580.html>, 01.04.2012, (accessed on 01.04.2012)

retained even on daily operation level of the Council. The president of the Syrian National Council, Burhan Ghalioun, let out this dependency in a report as follows:

"He (Burhan Ghalioun) said lack of money was the group's most acute problem. Although the Qatari government picked up the bill for the Doha meeting and for frequent travel, council members said that no significant financial support from Arab or Western governments had materialized despite repeated promises, so they must rely on rich Syrian exiles. They hope Friday's meeting in Tunis will begin to change that."¹⁷⁵

The inconsistent signals which came from the foreign countries concerning the configuration of the Syrian opposition structure draw reaction from even the subsequent president of the Syrian National Council, Abdelbaset Sieda. He reacted to foreign patron countries with the words of "I and others in the SNC no longer trust promises of international support that are linked to restructuring of the opposition. We faced this situation before, when we formed the Syrian National Council. There were promises like that, but the international community in fact did not give us the support needed for the Council to do its job."¹⁷⁶

On the other hand the fragmented and relatively weak position of the opposition groups caused debate in the patron countries as they consistently tried to render Syrian opposition a viable partner to shape the development inside Syria. While foreign countries organized a series of meetings with opposition groups and also with each other in order to bring different factions into a unified opposition structure, people who struggling against the Syrian regime on the ground remained aloof from these patronage networks. Considering the lack of ability to mobilize large numbers of supports on a national scale, and to sustain collective action at a meaningful level, the opposition circles which were keeping close relationship with

¹⁷⁵"After A Year, Deep Divisions Hobble Syria's Opposition", http://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/24/world/middleeast/syrian-opposition-is-hobbled-by-deep-divisions.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0 , 23.02.2012, (accessed on 25.02.2012)

¹⁷⁶"Divisions Emerge at Syria Opposition Conference", <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/infighting-plagues-syria-opposition-conference> , 04.11.2012, (accessed on 04.11.2012)

patron countries became a strategic tool, rather than being an equal party in terms of making a democratic transition inside Syria.¹⁷⁷ Therefore while patron countries strove to certificate particular opposition groups in the face of international community this created inverse effect inside Syria. In addition to certification mechanisms, coalition formation initiatives through 'Friends of Syria Groups' meetings and direct financial support to chosen opposition groups resulted in the alienation of broader contentious actors which were fighting on the ground.¹⁷⁸

The situation with the armed opposition appeared more contradictory in that context. Towards the end of 2011, Syrian uprising turned out to be a violent armed struggle between government forces and armed groups inside Syria. Non-violent street protests gradually replaced with the armed attacks against military targets of the Syrian state. While Syrian regime increased its grip on the ground by depending on military means such as intense bombardment of the restive neighborhoods and siege of the cities, strictly new armed groups began to emerge. One of the first examples of these armed groups was the Free Syrian Army. Composed of defected Syrian Armed Forces personnel and volunteers Free Syrian Army announced its formation on 29 July 2011 in a video released on the internet by a uniformed group of deserters from the Syrian military who called upon members of the Syrian army to defect and join them.¹⁷⁹ The name; Free Syrian Army, became a generic label for the various armed groups which established in all parts of the Syria swiftly. Although these fragmented armed groups had no direct connection with the central command of the Free Syrian Army, they still used the name to indicate their affiliation with the larger organization. Operating as franchising groups allowed that sort of local small

¹⁷⁷Steven Haydemann "Syria's Opposition Movement", United States Institute of Peace, 5 April 2012, <http://www.usip.org/publications/syrias-opposition-movement>, (accessed on 17.08.2012)

¹⁷⁸"Syria's Local Coordination Committees Threatens to Withdraw from Syrian National Council", http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/05/17/syria-local-coordination-committees_n_1523703.html , 17.05.2012, (accessed on 19.05.2012)

¹⁷⁹"Free Syrian Army Founded by Seven Officers to Fight the Syrian Army", <http://www.joshualandis.com/blog/free-syrian-army-established-to-fight-the-syrian-army/>, 29.07.2011, (accessed on 02.08.2011)

armed groups to coordinate the activities of a broad base without expending scarce resources on maintaining the formal connective structures of a large armed organization.¹⁸⁰

The narrative which was circulated by the Free Syrian Army members as they defected from the army with light weapons and also captured various weapons from the Syrian army depots began to shattered with the reports coming from Syria as more sophisticated weapons which were sent from a group of Gulf countries and individuals, namely Saudi Arabia and Qatar and some Kuwaiti people, were now on the hands of Syrian armed rebels.¹⁸¹ Although it was not possible to determine precisely when the foreign support to armed groups started to flow inside Syria; towards the beginning of 2012 gradually hoarding reports began to appear that Saudi Arabia and Qatar had decided to fund rebels to help them acquire weapons as in March the Kuwaiti's Parliament passed a nonbinding resolution urging the Kuwaiti Government to arm Syrian rebel groups.¹⁸²

Although initially U.S. and E.U. Governments hesitated to provide weapons to Syrian opposition groups, by the mid 2012, they altered their stance and began coordinating the flow of arms to Syrian rebel groups by Qatar and Saudi Arabia via Turkey and Jordan.¹⁸³ According to reports from Syria, Saudi Arabia and Qatar

¹⁸⁰ John D. McCarthy and Mark Wolfson, "Resource Mobilization By Local Social Movement Organizations: Agency, Strategy, and Organization in the Movement Against Drinking and Driving", *American Sociology Review*, December 1996, Vol. 61, No. 6, p. 1074-1076

¹⁸¹ Ghaith Abdul-Ahad, "How To Start a Battalion (in Five easy Lessons)" *London Review of Books*, 21 February 2013, Vol. 35, No. 4, p.13-14

¹⁸² "Exclusive: Arab States Arm Rebels as UN Talks of Syrian Civil War", <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/exclusive-arab-states-arm-rebels-as-un-talks-of-syrian-civil-war-7845026.html>, 13.06.2012, (accessed on 15.06.2012); "Saudi, Qatari Plans to Arm Syrian Rebels Risk Overtaking Cautious Approach Favored by U.S.", http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/saudi-qatari-plans-to-arm-syrian-rebels-risk-overtaking-cautious-approach-favored-by-us/2012/03/01/gIQAfWQfIR_story.html, 01.03.2012, (accessed on 04.03.2012)

¹⁸³ "Scales of Uprising Begin to Tip Against Assad", <http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/news/world/middleeast/article3456356.ece>, 26.06.2012, (accessed on 27.06.2012)

agreed to deliver weapons through Syrian National Council as the Council established a sort of bureau which would mainly deal with the flow of arms and funds to the armed groups operating inside Syria in March 2012.¹⁸⁴ In addition, the funds which reserved for the humanitarian aid in the second "Friends of Syria Group" meeting were likely to be used to purchase weapons on the black market for the rebel Free Syria Army according to the officials which attended to the meeting.

However, the Free Syrian Army was not the sole receiver of the foreign funds and weapons. At the end of 2011 new armed groups began to emerge in different parts of Syria. These were the local battalions that comprised from mainly local recruits and army defectors.¹⁸⁵ The initial type of armed groups was local organizations whose aim was to protect their respective residential area. These groups refrained from broadening their operational area apart from their own city or town as their logistic lines were not sufficient to take on offensive in vast areas. In that sense local armed groups had close ties to local residents in terms of recruitment and resource bases. As the command center of the Free Syrian Army could not supply basic needs of the local armed groups, the foreign patron countries and private donors became the main source of weapon and money for them. Without resources that could be obtained from the native funds the leaders of the Free Syrian Army did not have any leverage on the armed groups which fought on the ground. Therefore foreign patron countries and individuals set in motion independent armed groups according to their affiliations and geographic interest formation.¹⁸⁶ With the reach of the foreign support to these local rebel groups they delineated their operation scope

¹⁸⁴“Arab States Agree to Provide Millions to Pay Opposition Fighters in Syria”, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/syrian-opposition-leaders-plead-for-more-help-us-pledges-12-million-more-in-aid/2012/04/01/gIQA9MOvoS_story.html, 01.04.2012, (accessed on 02.07.2012)

¹⁸⁵ “Chaos in Syria: Are Army Deserters Helping to Arm the Opposition?”, <http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2076250,00.html> , 07.06.2011, (accessed on 09.06.2011)

¹⁸⁶ “Saudi Millions and Special Forces Expertise Turn Syria’s Rebels into a Fighting Force”, http://article.wn.com/view/2012/09/21/Saudi_millions_and_special_forces_expertise_turn_Syrias_reb_e/, 21.09.2012, (accessed on 24.09.2012)

under the terms of the foreign patrons' respective approaches to the Syrian conflict. Despite uniting under the term of "fall of the Syrian regime" these various rebel groups with the funding of the different foreign patrons incited the factionalism among armed opposition. As a sharp example, to balance the Syrian Branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, Saudi Arabia ensured the establishment of a new political branch inside the Syrian National Council, the Syrian Support Group. While Qatar and Turkey preferred to channel the funds through Syrian National Council Saudi Arabia became a primary partner of the Syrian Support Group.¹⁸⁷

Rania Abouzeid's investigative report on the patronage mechanisms of Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Turkey revealed the process strikingly. According to Abouzeid, Qatar and Saudi Arabia used a middlemen who operated out of Turkey and directed the distribution of vital military supplies to the Syrian border and then to the rebels. According to rebel sources, who talked to Abouzeid, the middlemen of the Qatar and Saudi Arabia was overseeing the distribution of batches of supplies, such as small consignments of 50,000 Kalashnikov bullets and several dozen rocket-propelled grenades, to at least four different FSA groups in Idlib province as well as larger consignments to other areas including Homs. However, that middlemen did not conducted these distributing tasks on his own, but rather he was mainly responsible for designating the representatives in Syria's 14 provinces to whom the real distributing center would funnel small batches of light weapons — Kalashnikov rifles, BKC machine guns, rocket-propelled grenade launchers and ammunition — to reach FSA groups operating in each area. However the middlemen indeed used these resources selectively according to the ratibility of the particular armed groups. The favoritism of Qatar and Saudi Arabia incited the discontent among some rebel groups which were allocated relatively lesser weapons and money than others. In the town of Bdeeta in Idlib province, one of the armed group's leaders Abu Mar'iye, who heads the Martyrs of Ibditha group in the tiny town, showed his reactions as saying

¹⁸⁷ "The West Searches in Vain for Conflict's Good Guys", <http://www.smh.com.au/world/the-west-searches-in-vain-for-conflicts-good-guys-20120831-255ho.html> , 01.09.2012, (accessed on 04.09.2012)

"It's not enough. Even the weapons that arrive, it's like a drop, just enough so the fighting continues, so we can kill each other but not win."¹⁸⁸

The material supplement process to the armed groups showed up the internal contradiction of the *co-optation* mechanism indeed. Looking from the example above mentioned, while Saudi Arabia was backing particular armed groups more favorably Qatar tried to balance Saudi effect with allocation material sources lending towards her political preferences. In that sense existence of the patron countries in the co-optation mechanism created uneasy atmosphere for the advance of opposition groups simultaneously. Outside co-optation mechanism incited the rivalries between various contentious groups and caused friction among otherwise could cooperate.

Another tool of the patronage mechanism was the supply of non-lethal supports largely provided by the United States. In March 2012, White House deputy national security adviser Benjamin J. Rhodes announced that the United States had planned to provide non-lethal assistance, like communications equipment and medical supplies, directly to opposition groups inside Syria.¹⁸⁹ After second "Friends of Syria Group" meeting in Istanbul on 1 April 2012, which constituted as an turning point in terms of providing material assistance to the Syrian opposition groups, U.S. set in motion an assistance program whose aim was stated as "to bolster their (Syrian opposition) institutional capacity and create linkages to local opposition groups"¹⁹⁰ U.S. non-lethal assistance included training and equipment to build the capacity of a network of nearly 1,500 grassroots activists, including women and youth, from over a hundred opposition councils and organizations from around the country to link Syrian citizens with the Syrian opposition and local councils. In addition, the U.S.

¹⁸⁸ Rania Abouzeid, "Syria's Secular and Islamist rebels: Who Are the Saudis and the Qataris Arming?", Time, 18 September 2012, <http://world.time.com/2012/09/18/syrias-secular-and-islamist-rebels-who-are-the-saudis-and-the-qataris-arming/>, (accessed on 20.09.2012)

¹⁸⁹ "U.S. and Turkey to Step Up Nonlethal Aid to Rebels in Syria", <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/26/world/middleeast/us-and-turkey-to-step-up-nonlethal-aid-to-syrian-rebels.html>, 25.03.2012, (accessed on 27.03.2012)

¹⁹⁰ U.S. Department of State, "U.S. Government Assistance to Syria", Fact Sheet, 19 June 2013, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2013/06/210899.htm>, (accessed on 24.06.2013)

Government also provided support to media outlets, including information for refugees about available services, training for networks of citizen journalists, bloggers, and cyber-activists to support their documentation and dissemination of information on developments in Syria; and technical assistance and equipment to enhance the information and communications security of Syrian activists within Syria. That sort of assistance provided the U.S. Government a unique leverage over the strategic information dissemination among opposition circles. In the context of the non-lethal assistance, the U.S. Government also supplied communication tools to the armed wings of the Syrian National Council, Free Syrian Army. In Istanbul Meeting of the "Friends of Syria Group", the U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton stated the aim of that sort of assistance saying: "The United States is going beyond humanitarian aid and providing additional assistance, including communications equipment that will help activists organize, evade attacks by the regime, and connect to the outside world."¹⁹¹ It was also reported that the U.S. Government agencies provided strategic intelligence including satellite imagery and other detailed intelligence on Syrian troop locations and movements to the vetted armed groups.¹⁹²

However the only source of the foreign support did not came from the states but from private donors as well. As the conflict in Syria continued into end of 2011, individual donors started to establish patronage networks inside Syria. Without the limitations of a state which operated in a relatively settled international sphere, private donors had the advantage of flexible and swift resource flows. Mostly comprised of the individuals from citizens in the Gulf Countries and Syrian ex-pats

¹⁹¹"U.S. Aid to Syria Opposition Includes Specialized Communications Equipment", <http://security.blogs.cnn.com/2012/04/02/u-s-aid-to-syrian-opposition-includes-specialized-communications-equipment/> , 02.04.2012, (accessed on 04.04.2012); "Syrian Forces Capture U.S. Satcom Gear", <http://dailycaller.com/2013/10/17/syrian-forces-capture-us-satcom-gear-video/> , 17.10.2013, (accessed on 20.10.2013)

¹⁹²"C.I.A. said to Aid in Steering Arms to Syrian Opposition", http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/21/world/middleeast/cia-said-to-aid-in-steering-arms-to-syrian-rebels.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0 , 21.06.2012, (accessed on 22.06.2012)

lived in the Western countries, these private donors selectively get in touch with various armed groups and created logistical links with their leaders.¹⁹³

One of the leading Gulf countries whose citizens established patronage linkages with the Syrian armed opposition was Kuwait. Having relatively weak financial rules to channel money and unique freedom of association which enabled the organization of various charity mechanisms Kuwaiti citizens could easily diverted their resources to the particular Syrian armed groups.¹⁹⁴ Private Kuwaiti involvement in Syria began in the summer of 2011, as some members of Kuwait's Syrian expatriate community began to organize personal donations for those in need. These private fund-raisers relied heavily on social media as some had hundreds of thousands of followers on Twitter, where they spread posts calling for donations, announcing drop-off points and listing phone numbers where operators are standing by.¹⁹⁵ However these private donations which initially gone humanitarian aid campaigns transformed into funding armed groups in Syria throughout the fall of 2011.¹⁹⁶ Even some armed groups which got the generous donations from Kuwaiti citizens began to give the donor's name to their rebel battalions.¹⁹⁷ In early 2012, as there appeared an explosion of videos, tweets, and photos on social media, announcing the creation of new rebel brigades, the Syrian armed groups began to

¹⁹³“Private Donors’ Funds Add Wild Card to War in Syria”,
<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/13/world/middleeast/private-donors-funds-add-wild-card-to-war-in-syria.html?pagewanted=all> , 12.11.2013, (accessed on 14.11.2013)

¹⁹⁴ Elizabeth Dickinson, “Playing With Fire: Why Private Gulf Financing Risks Igniting Sectarian Conflict at Home”, Brookings Paper, December 2013, p. 1-3

¹⁹⁵ “Private Donors’ Funds Add Wild Card to War in Syria”,
<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/13/world/middleeast/private-donors-funds-add-wild-card-to-war-in-syria.html?pagewanted=all> , 12.11.2013, (accessed on 14.11.2013)

¹⁹⁶ Elizabeth Dickinson, “Playing With Fire: Why Private Gulf Financing Risks Igniting Sectarian Conflict at Home”, Brookings Paper, December 2013, p. 6

¹⁹⁷“Private Money Pours into Syrian Conflict as Rich Donors Pick Sides”,
http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/private-money-pours-into-syrian-conflict-as-rich-donors-pick-sides/2013/06/15/67841656-cf8a-11e2-8845-d970ccb04497_story.html , 15.06.2013, (accessed on 25.07.2013)

attract a new cohort of donors including Kuwait's most prominent Sunni and tribal leaders, parliamentarians, and clerics.¹⁹⁸

Some armed groups in Syria promoted the advantages of private donors as they were not subject to government interference. A senior member of a Islamism leaning armed group, Ahrar al-Sham Brigade, manifested this by saying: "the difference is that the aid that comes to us reaches us directly. As for the other factions, the aid they receive stops in Istanbul and does not reach Syria."¹⁹⁹ While most of the private support came in cash which provided the armed groups buy weapons available on the region's black market free from limits or restrictions attached to government money in some cases private donors had been directly involved in arranging arms shipments especially from war-torn Libya.

Contrary to this, the Kuwaiti state and some Gulf countries, including Saudi Arabia, took measures in order to curb unlimited and unregulated fund flow to the Syrian armed groups. In the spring of 2013, the Kuwaiti government pushed through new anti-money-laundering legislation which foreseen the criminalization of terrorist financing and the establishment of a Financial Intelligence Unit to investigate illicit activity.²⁰⁰ In November 2012, the Saudi cabinet approved a measure that would grant a significant fiscal reward to anyone who reports money laundering or terrorist financing operations, provided he is not party to the crime itself.²⁰¹

¹⁹⁸ Elizabeth Dickinson, "Playing With Fire: Why Private Gulf Financing Risks Igniting Sectarian Conflict at Home", Brookings Paper, December 2013, p. 7

¹⁹⁹ "Private Money Pours into Syrian Conflict as Rich Donors Pick Sides", http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/private-money-pours-into-syrian-conflict-as-rich-donors-pick-sides/2013/06/15/67841656-cf8a-11e2-8845-d970ccb04497_story.html , 15.06.2013, (accessed on 25.07.2013)

²⁰⁰ Ibtissam Lassoued, "Kuwait, A New Stance on Financial Crime", Law Update, Al Tamimi And Co. , September 2013, <http://www.tamimi.com/en/magazine/law-update/section-5/september-3/kuwait-a-new-stance-on-financial-crime.html>, (accessed on 15.09.2013)

²⁰¹ Elizabeth Dickinson, "Playing With Fire: Why Private Gulf Financing Risks Igniting Sectarian Conflict at Home", Brookings Paper, December 2013, p. 21

4.2. Syrian Opposition Blocks vis-à-vis Co-optation, Outside Certification, and Coalition Formation Mechanisms

Without doubt, when the protests erupted in Syria in March 2011 there was already a variety of oppositional organizations in Syria. Inside Syria, political opposition mostly comprised of independent political figures and small groups of opposition associations which operated covertly. The Syrian branch of Muslim Brotherhood which has been the most well-known opposition to the Syrian regime was scattered to the world and they retained their opposition from abroad at large. The Syrian uprising which emerged surprisingly for them reshuffled all previous opposition structures dramatically. Throughout the uprising these opposition organizations tried to adjust themselves to the new conditions as they transformed their network structures. At the same these new actors appeared to lead the anti-regime struggle in a more dynamic way.

In this section I tried to present the position of three main currents of the Syrian opposition in connection with the question of articulation to foreign patronage. Namely, Local Coordination Committees, Syrian National Council, and the radical armed groups are the focus of this chapter. These opposition structures' founding phases are of crucial importance in terms of understanding their respective integration into the foreign patronage networks. Throughout this section, three dimensional foreign patronage process, including co-optation, certification, coalition formation mechanisms, will be tested by reflecting on the development of three particular opposition currents in Syria.

4.2.1. Non-violent Umbrella Organizations

4.2.1.1. Local Coordination Committees

With the beginning of the Syrian uprising local residents in various parts of the Syrian cities began to gather in local community based organizations. Although

they vary in size and structure and operate with different capacities and in different localities throughout Syria, some common features can be outlined.

Local coordination committees put a little information on their origin in their official web site:

"When the Syrian uprising began in March, local committees emerged in towns and cities across Syria. These committees took responsibility for meeting, planning and organizing events on the ground within their own communities. Over time, the committees have sought greater coordination between themselves, in order to synchronize their activities, movements on the ground and political positions. Together the committees formed the Local Coordinating Committees of Syria, an umbrella organization with members from most cities and many smaller towns across Syria."²⁰²

According to official web site of local coordination committee, there are 14 local branches of them, namely in Deraa, Homs, Baniyas, Saraqeb, Idleb, Hasaka, Qamishli, Der Ezzor, Syrian coast, Hama, Raqqa, Swayda, Damascus suburbs and Damascus. This list meant to be covered almost all cities of Syria.

Committee announced its first political text after three months of the beginning of the Syrian uprising. With the title, "Vision of the Local coordination Committees for a political solution in Syria" committees put forward its demands as follows:

"A dialog-based peaceful transition towards a pluralist democracy based on: Free and independent elections; A transition towards eliminating the rule of one party; Eliminating unlimited presidential terms and re-elections; Eliminating the current monarch-like republic system; Removing immunity for intelligence and security agents; Removing the official cover from those who stole public funds; And reforming public media that distorts facts and incites hatred."²⁰³

The Local Coordination Committees also delineated a roadmap for political solution. Committees firstly wanted the regime to stop murder, violence, and the

²⁰² "About LCCs", <http://www.lccsyria.org/about>, (accessed on 14.07.2011)

²⁰³ Ibid.

systematic targeting of protesters by security forces, militias and regime's armed thugs; releasing all political prisoners; halting all acts of tracking and detaining protesters; and allowing media access to the protests. Except from these immediate demands Local Coordination Committees also presented a plan for peaceful transition period:

"We support a call for a national conference aiming towards a transition into a pluralist democracy, based on freedom for the public as well as equal political and legal rights among Syrians. The conference should guarantee a safe and peaceful transition from the current governing system and provide unanimous foundations for a new system based on freedom, equality, and the rule of law. The new system should leave no space for chaos and acts of revenge."²⁰⁴

Local coordination committees envisaged Syria with secular and democratic principles. They demanded the renovation of political system according to civil values and with respect to the human rights. For the committees all the existing businesses and establishments should remain untouched while unfair and unjust economic and political practices were excepted.

As regards to origin of the local coordination committees there was not much information. But according to some media reports first branch of the committees was established in Daraya, a suburb of the capital city Damascus. The spokesman of the local coordination committee Omar Idlibi stated that the activists came together in committees in the uprising's second week with nearly 22 people who were helping to coordinate almost 100 people on the ground to document the demonstrations.²⁰⁵ In fact initially the members of the local coordination committees operated as a media hub which disseminated the ground footage of the protest and regime response. By means of social media platforms and telecommunication systems initial phase of the Syrian protests were broadcasted to international community by mostly young activists.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

²⁰⁵ "Coalition of Factions From the Streets Fuels a New Opposition in Syria", http://www.nytimes.com/2011/07/01/world/middleeast/01syria.html?_r=2&pagewanted=all&gwh=546B83259DA9A598F7ABA2FBAAE4611E&gwt=pay , 30.06.2011, (accessed on 04.07.2011)

The funding system of the local coordination committees was not clear. According to their official web sites they were financed by the donations. However The Office for Syrian Opposition Support which was established with funding from the Friends of the Syrian People in July 2012 as a support mechanism for the Syrian civilian opposition announced that they supported the local coordination committees materially.

The emergence of these committees and their structure cannot be understood in the context of the uprising alone. By the time mass protests erupted in Syria, Syrians had barely any independent organizations or political life due to strict state surveillance. Syrian political structure did not allow for the formation of independent youth organizations apart from Baathist associations. Local coordination committees became a way of surpassing that sort of obstacles. Therefore, the earliest manifestations of the local coordinating committees were neighborhood gatherings. Representatives of active anti-regime groups met in neighborhoods and residential areas to get to know each other better and build trust.²⁰⁶

In that sense local coordination committees were the closest opposition organizations to the protesters on the ground. Their recruitment circles mainly comprised of local residents, mostly young men. The intimate link between committee members and local residents provided more secure ground for protecting communities' existence and coherence.²⁰⁷ While the committees involved more in media coordination than the leadership of the protest movement.²⁰⁸ Therefore, they developed more or less equal relationships with the residents in terms of considering their priorities and immediate demands. As the members of the local coordination committees penetrated to the local community more properly they managed to use more local resources such as hiding capabilities and resident recruits.

²⁰⁶ "Syria's Coordination Committees: A Brief History", <http://english.al-akhbar.com/node/764> , 01.10.2011, (accessed on 04.10.2011)

²⁰⁷ Observations in Damascus, Lattakia and Aleppo, in June 2011 and January 2012

²⁰⁸ "Syria's Coordination Committees: A Brief History", <http://english.al-akhbar.com/node/764> , 01.10.2011, (accessed on 04.10.2011)

The embedded character of the local coordination committees to the local community resulted in the expression of objections against those who called for armed resistance. After five months from the beginning of the Syrian uprising some opposition circles called for taking arms against regime violence. The example of Mohammad Rahhal, the leader of the Revolutionary Council of the Syrian Coordination Committees, reflected the common position:

"We made our decision to arm the revolution which will turn violent very soon because what we are being subjected to today is a global conspiracy that can only be faced by an armed uprising. We will use whatever arms and rocks ... We will respond to the people's calls to arm the revolution."²⁰⁹

At the same time The Local Coordination Committees made counter statements through their official web site:

"While we understand the motivation to take up arms or call for military intervention, we specifically reject this position as we find it unacceptable politically, nationally, and ethically. Militarizing the revolution would minimize popular support and participation in the revolution. Moreover, militarization would undermine the gravity of the humanitarian catastrophe involved in a confrontation with the regime. Militarization would put the Revolution in an arena where the regime has a distinct advantage, and would erode the moral superiority that has characterized the Revolution since its beginning."²¹⁰

Committees also noticed the Palestinian experience and compared the first *Intifada* with second one:

"Our Palestinian brothers are experienced in leading by example. They gained the support of the entire Palestinian community, as well as world sympathy, during the first *Intifada* ("stones"). The second *Intifada*, which was militarized, lost public

²⁰⁹ "Syrian Opposition Decides to Take up Arms Against Assad Regime", <http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/syrian-opposition-decides-to-take-up-arms-against-assad-regime-1.381184>, 28.08.2011, (accessed on 05.09.2011)

²¹⁰ "Syrian Local Coordinating Committees on Taking Up Arms and Foreign Intervention", <http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/2539/syrian-local-coordinating-committees-on-taking-up->, 31.08.2011, (accessed on 07.09.2011)

sympathy and participation. It is important to note that the Syrian regime and Israeli enemy used identical measures in the face of the two uprisings."²¹¹

Comparing with the other opposition groups, Local Coordination Committees had a more national and local agenda for the political contention episode. While they tried to employ *coalition formation* mechanism with the aim of broadening the oppositional capacities of the Committees they categorically rejected the *co-optation* efforts of the foreign patronage mechanism. The Committees identified the demobilization effects of the foreign patronage mechanism as external hegemony over the Syrian uprising could risk the durability and diffusion of the Committees' over the large portion of Syrian population. That sense of concern over the independent path of the Syrian uprising expressed itself in their caution about "militarization of the protest movement". According to their statement militarization had the potential to erode popular support and participation in the "revolution". This notice was valid for the outside military intervention as well.

The statement of the Local Coordination Committees' main concern was the post-revolutionary Syria. They gave the answer very early to the question of Syria after protest movement would be able to reach its goals:

"We believe that the overthrow of the regime is the initial goal of the Revolution, but it is not an end in itself. The end goal is freedom for Syria and all Syrians. The method by which the regime is overthrown is an indication of what Syria will be like post-regime. If we maintain our peaceful demonstrations, which include our cities, towns, and villages; and our men, women, and children, the possibility of democracy in our country is much greater. If an armed confrontation or international military intervention becomes a reality, it will be virtually impossible to establish a legitimate foundation for a proud future Syria. We call on our people to remain patient as we continue our national Revolution. We will hold the regime fully responsible and accountable for the current situation in the country, the blood of all martyrs – civilian and military, and any risks that may threaten Syria in the future, including the possibility of internal violence or foreign military intervention."

²¹¹Ibid.

The arguments reflected in that statement was valid for the practices of Local Coordination Committees throughout the uprising. As the above mentioned elaborative statement put it the Committees had a clear vision for the future of the Syrian uprising. Their point concerning the way of struggling against the regime revealed their concern about armed groups. According to Committees, armed struggle had the potential to alienate activists from the mass of the population. The subtext of their statement implied the risk of foreign patronage under the conditions of armed struggle. Once the armed struggle began, they thought that the gravity of the uprising would shift to the groups other than the local population. This comprised an obstacle to build democratic structures in Syria.

The position of the Local Coordination Committees as regards to the opposition groups which operated mainly outside Syria reflected similar concerns. Committees warned the Syrian National Council against the abusiveness of the representative task of the Council and the militarization of the uprising:

"Finally, the Local Coordination Committees in Syria confirms that the continuity of the Revolution, the committees, and the peaceful demonstrations on the ground are important inside Syria and are held to the high ethical standards of the great Revolution. We emphasize the sacrifices of our heroes in the Free Syrian Army, who defected to defend the cities being bombarded by the regime's military and we admire their commitment to protect the peaceful demonstrators despite the difficulties they face. We emphasize that the Revolution will go on, despite the harsh difficulties experienced by our people and activists, and despite the international and global conspiracies against our people's aspirations, and despite the Syrian opposition's incompetency for the blood and sacrifices of our people, not only in the sense of political representation, but in also in the sense of providing much needed relief."²¹²

This statement expresses the Local Coordination Committees' concern over the foreign patronage networks which were at the time employed various strategies to *co-opt* Syrian opposition circles. With the remark of "... (w)e emphasize that the Revolution will go on, despite the harsh difficulties experienced by our people and

²¹²"Local Coordination Committees' Statement Regarding the Deteriorating Conditions of the Syrian National Council", <http://www.lccsyria.org/8477> , 17.05.2012, (accessed on 19.05.2012)

activists, and despite the international and global conspiracies against our people's aspirations(...)” the Committees implied the manipulative character of foreign patronage networks on the demands of opposition groups. In that sense throughout the first year of the Syrian uprising contact points between foreign patronage networks and the Committees were very limited as it appeared to be problematic to impose foreign patronage networks' agenda on the Committees. Locally determined necessities of the Committees hindered the strategic manipulations of the foreign patronage networks.

With the militarization of the Syrian conflict the Local Coordination Committees became sidelined by the armed groups. Although they retained their close ties with the protestors on the ground armed conflicts came to the fore. Peaceful protests gave way to armed attacks against security forces. Hence there remained no place to non-violent social movement repertoires. In fact that sort of development shifted the efforts of the foreign patronage networks towards armed groups or political structures which had close ties with armed groups. Although the Committees continued to be one of the principal actors of the Syrian uprising, foreign patronage networks opted to deal more with armed groups or opposition circles which had leverage on the various armed rebel groups as they provided them more secured ground to activate foreign patronage mechanisms.

4.2.1.2 Syrian National Council

Syrian National Council announced its establishment on 24 August 2011.²¹³ But before presenting the structure of the Council the initial steps which resulted in the founding of the Syrian National Council should be reviewed.

The first coordinated organization of the Syrian protest movement was the Antalya meeting. On 1-2 June 2011, newly 400 hundred delegations came together in

²¹³ “Syrian National Council: Dissidents Formally Establish Council to Overthrow Assad”, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/10/02/syria-national-council_n_991372.html, 10.02.2011, (accessed on 11.02.2011)

Turkey to discuss the situation of the opposition in Syria. With the title "The Conference of Change in Syria" conference delegations tried to form a sustainable organization which could operate as a connective hub for the scattered opposition. The participations of the conference mostly comprised of Syrian Kurd groups, Syrian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, tribal leaders from different locations of Syria and exiled opposition figures.²¹⁴

The participants of the conference focused on the representation problem in the face of growing international interest in the Syrian opposition. In that sense they reached an agreement in terms of establishing a coordination committee which would represent all strands of Syrian opposition. At the same time the hegemony of the Syrian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood in lists began to draw reaction from the other participants.²¹⁵ In the conference one of the main subjects which became focus of disputes was the problem of putting secularism to the final declaration. Despite liberal and independent opposition figures' insistence, secularism could not take part in the final declaration due to strong opposition by the Syrian branch of Muslim Brotherhood.²¹⁶

Various opposition groups participated to conference objected to foreign intervention and urged for peaceful protests. However they did not refrain from demonstrating their demands as regards to foreign assistance to the people on the ground. With broad business ties and social links to the Turkish government especially Muslim Brotherhood members showed their desire to cooperate with Turkey against Syrian regime.²¹⁷ One of the participants of the conference called Turkey to use trade links over Aleppo to include them in opposition movement.²¹⁸

²¹⁴“The Antalya Conference- A Brief Report”, <http://pomed.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/The-Antalya-Conference.pdf> , 23.06.2011, (accessed on 24.06.2011)

²¹⁵ Veyssel Ayhan and Oytun Orhan, “Suriye Muhalefeti’nin Antalya Toplantısı: Sonuçlar, Temel Sorunlara Bakış ve Türkiye’den Beklentiler”, Ortadoğu Analiz, Temmuz – Ağustos 2011, Cilt:3, Sayı: 31-32, p. 11-12

²¹⁶Ibid. , 34

²¹⁷“Syrian Opposition Meet in Turkey to Discuss Increasing Pressure on Assad”,

After the Antalya Conference, various Syrian opposition groups and figures continued the negotiations regularly. These negotiations resulted in the establishment of Syrian National Council in İstanbul.²¹⁹ The Council comprised of 115 to 120 members from different sections of the opposition groups. However the names of some members of the Council were not declared openly due to security reasons. Looking from the official declarations of the council, one can conclude that majority of the members were affiliated with the Syrian branch of Muslim Brotherhood.²²⁰ Burhan Ghalioun, a Syrian-French political scientist at the Sorbonne University in Paris, was appointed as the chairman of the Council.²²¹ The Council stated some of its principles in its official web site as follows:

"Working to overthrow the regime using all legal means; affirming national unity among all components of Syrian society and rejecting all calls for ethnic strife; safeguarding the non-violent character of the Syrian revolution; protecting national independence and sovereignty, and rejecting foreign military intervention."²²²

The Syrian National Council assumed the garnering of support to peaceful protests as a primary objective. In its political program the Council delineated the main objectives as follows:

"Garnering Arab and international support at the individual, public opinion, and official levels; mobilizing both the Arab and international societies to increase

<http://www.thenational.ae/news/world/middle-east/syrian-opposition-meet-in-turkey-to-discuss-increasing-pressure-on-assad> , 31.05.2011, (06.06.2011)

²¹⁸ Veysel Ayhan and Oytun Orhan, "Suriye Muhalefeti'nin Antalya Toplantısı: Sonuçlar, Temel Sorunlara Bakış ve Türkiye'den Beklentiler", Ortadoğu Analiz, Temmuz – Ağustos 2011, Cilt:3, Sayı: 31-32, p. 13

²¹⁹"Syrian Dissidents Form National Council", http://www.edmondsun.com/news_tab3/x2122765173/Syrian-dissidents-form-national-council , 24.08.2011, (accessed on 26.08.2011)

²²⁰ Meetings with Syrian opposition figures, August-October 2011

²²¹ "Sorbonne Professor Appointed Head of Syrian Opposition Council", <http://en.ria.ru/world/20110829/166274819.html> , 29.08.2011, (accessed on 04.09.2011)

²²² SNC web site, <http://syriancouncil.org/en/about.html>, (accessed on 28.09.2011)

pressure on the regime by all possible means; pursuing the official recognition of the SNC by Arab and foreign states."²²³

Syrian National Council conducted intense negotiations with the foreign states and international institutions in order to garner international support to the Council. After establishing, Syrian National Council was formally recognized by several states such as the United States, France, The United Kingdom, Spain, Tunisia, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt.²²⁴ On 6 December 2011 the United States Secretary of State Hillary Clinton held a meeting with the main actors of the Syrian National Council. Clinton acknowledged that the United States saw the Council as a leading and legitimate representative of Syrians seeking a peaceful transition.²²⁵ Ironically seven activists who met with Clinton were all exiles living in Europe.²²⁶ Although met with the members of the Syrian National Council Russia and the People's Republic of China did not recognize the Council officially.²²⁷

Beginning from its inception the Syrian National Council's main task was to create new links with the foreign patronage networks. The members of the executive committee traveled all around the world to get connection with the international power centers. Without strong links to the Syrian opposition inside the country foreign states found the Syrian National Council as a useful and easy tool to reach

²²³ SNC Statements, <http://ts.mygamersplatoon.com/en/mission-statement.html>, (accessed on 25.11.2011)

²²⁴ "France Recognises Syrian Council, Proposes Military Intervention", <http://euobserver.com/defence/114380>, 24.11.2011, (accessed on 25.11.2011); "UK Recognises Syrian Opposition Group", <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/68db745c-331f-11e2-aa83-00144feabdc0.html#axzz369Dq5FVJ>, 20.11.2011, (accessed on 21.11.2011)

²²⁵ "Remarks at Meeting With Syrian National Council", <http://www.state.gov/secretary/20092013clinton/rm/2011/12/178332.htm>, 06.12.2011, (accessed on 14.12.2011)

²²⁶ "Clinton to Syrian Opposition: Ousting al-Assad is Only First Step in Transition", <http://edition.cnn.com/2011/12/06/world/meast/clinton-syrian-opposition/>, 06.12.2011, (accessed on 08.04.2012)

²²⁷ "Syrian National Council in Moscow for First-ever Talks", <http://rt.com/politics/syria-russia-lavrov-moscow-talks-912/print/>, (accessed on 11.07.2012)

Syrian opposition. Articulation efforts to foreign patronage reflected to Syrian National Council's political vision arrangements. As the Council draws reaction from foreign countries the council embarked on reshaping its organizational structure constantly.

In that context *co-optation* mechanism was evoked as a strategy which was characterized by signaling of readiness to recognize and support the existence and claims of newly emergent contentious actor.²²⁸ Officially recognition of the Syrian National Council in a respectively short time was the initial step of activating outside *certification* mechanism. In this manner stable manoeuvre sphere was created for the Syrian National Council in the international arena. That sort of external manoeuvre sphere relieved the internal pressure on the Syrian National Council. At the same time the message of the foreign patron countries to the Syrian regime that “the actions against the components of the Syrian National Council would be considered in terms of our vested interest”.

Foreign patronage networks tried to desing the Syrian National Council by the means of *co-optation* and *coalition formation* mechanisms. While these various foreign actors accelatered their efforts for the unified opposition front against Syrian regime at the same time they faced with the task of deforming and reshaping different opposition groups' respective attitudes towards the way of political contention. Ironically this process increased the internal division of the Syrian National Council. Throughout the first half of 2012 foreign countries, particularly the United States increased the pressure on the Syrian National Council to transform its organizational structure in order to involve more opposition groups. The countries which supported the Council urged for internal reforms in the council.²²⁹ To unify the ranks of opposition in Syria the members of the Council brought together in

²²⁸ Charles Tilly and Sidney G. Tarrow, *Contentious Politics*, Paradigm Publishers, Boulder, Colombia, 2007, p. 35

²²⁹ “How the Muslim Brotherhood Hijacked Syria's Revolution”, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2013/03/13/how-the-muslim-brotherhood-hijacked-syrias-revolution/>, 13.03.2013, (accessed on 17.03.2013)

Cairo. However, these efforts could not manage to find a solution in terms of forming a united leadership and a political platform.²³⁰ In fact, foreign patrons of the Syrian National Council demanded a task that could not be accomplished. While they pressured the Council for incorporating the armed groups on the ground, at the same time they urged for clear political vision which would not exclude minority groups and secular sections of the Syrian society. In that sense foreign patrons tried to designate the course of Syrian uprising according to their respective strategic planning without considering the real needs of the protesters struggling on the ground. As the United States could not manage to achieve a unified opposition front out of the Syrian National Council they began to search for a new one. The Secretary of State of the United State, Hillary Clinton, acknowledged in the last quarter of 2012 that the Syrian National Council was no longer be considered the visible leader of the opposition.²³¹

Despite the clear statements of the Syrian National Council in its political program stating the need for "preserving, protecting, and enhancing the peaceful nature of the popular revolution" on 13 March 2012 the Council called for military intervention to Syria.²³² The Council members also demanded a no-fly zone across Syria and a speedy operation to arm the Free Syrian Army. Simultaneously a Military Bureau was established under the control of the Syrian National Council.²³³ The bureau designated as a liaison with the different armed opposition groups including the Free Syrian Army (FSA), and to plan an overall strategy for armed

²³⁰ "Rifts Split Syria's Opposition at Cairo Meeting", <http://news.yahoo.com/rifts-split-syrias-opposition-cairo-meeting-214457053.html>, 03.07.2012, (accessed on 08.09.2012)

²³¹ "U.S. Looks to Build Alternative Syrian Opposition Leadership", http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/us-looks-to-build-alternative-syrian-opposition-leadership/2012/10/31/ccfc7a40-2388-11e2-8448-81b1ce7d6978_story.html, 02.11.2012, (accessed on 22.12.2012)

²³² "Syrian Opposition Calls for International Military Intervention", <http://edition.cnn.com/2012/03/12/world/meast/syria-unrest/>, 13.03.2012, (accessed on 15.04.2012)

²³³ "SNC and Free Syrian Army Row Over Military Leadership", <http://english.al-akhbar.com/node/4718>, 01.03.2012, (accessed on 04.05.2012)

resistance. At the same time the Council stated its commitment to the foreign intervention:

"All forms of intervention are on the table, and the SNC is conducting continuous talks with several countries regarding the different intervention models; political, military, or humanitarian – to bring down the Assad regime and peacefully transition to a free and democratic rule."²³⁴

The integration of the Syrian National Council to the foreign patronage also confounded the organizational structure of the opposition. Immediately after the establishing of the Council the charge of Muslim Brotherhood hegemony appeared among opposition circles. Syrian branch of Muslim Brotherhood was criticized for taking the major seats in the Council; forming proponent armed groups inside Syria; using financial assets to seduce grassroots organizations in Syria; and finally serving as a proxy inside the Council for the Turkish government.²³⁵ Despite all these accuses Muslim Brotherhood did not refrain from controlling main organs of the Council. This created major splits from the council as 20 secular and Islamist members of the Council resigned and formed another group in the name of Syrian Patriotic Group.²³⁶

Critics in the Council stated that the Syrian National Council's top leaders should spend less time on far-flung diplomacy and more time channeling support to embattled communities back home. In that context the critics of the previous member of the Syrian National Council, Haitham al-Maleh, revealed the alienation of the Council members from the uprising:

²³⁴ SNC web site, <http://syriancouncil.org/en/about.html>, 03.03.2011, (accessed on 28.09.2011)

²³⁵ "How the Muslim Brotherhood Hijacked Syria's Revolution", <http://foreignpolicy.com/2013/03/13/how-the-muslim-brotherhood-hijacked-syrias-revolution/>, 13.03.2013, (accessed on 17.03.2013)

²³⁶ "Rift Develops in Opposition Groups", <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/02/27/us-syria-opposition-idUSTRE81Q02020120227>, 26.02.2012, (accessed on 05.06.2012)

"They have to be in one place, working 24 hours if they want to succeed. We are in a revolution. People are getting killed daily."²³⁷

In fact, the Syrian National Council was established on the traces of Libyan case. The forming of the Council coincided with the fall of Muammer al-Qaddafi's regime in Libya. The Transitional National Council which was established in Libya took a crucial role in prompting NATO's military intervention. The founding of the Syrian National Council created more hopes as regards to foreign military intervention to Syria. Some activists in Syria called for military intervention with organizing demonstrations under the banner of "Friday of International Protection".²³⁸

Confounded between the demands of the foreign patrons and grievances of the opposition on the ground, the Syrian National Council agreed to incorporate its organization into the newly established National Coalition of Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces.²³⁹ The formation of the new opposition structure was explained as a step towards a more inclusive umbrella organization for the Syrian opposition forces.

Syrian National Council reflected the contradictory character of the foreign patronage mechanisms as regards to develop unified and capable opposition structures against Syrian regime. Without taking concern of the priorities of internal opposition groups *coalition formation* process could not produce demanded solutions. Contrarily *coalition formation* mechanism created a symbiotic relation between various opposition groups and foreign networks as participating in a coalition became a way of gaining material support of the foreign patronage. Hence that sort of pragmatist approach of the opposition groups veiled the actual differences

²³⁷ "Turmoil within the Syrian National Council", <http://www.thenational.ae/news/world/middle-east/turmoil-within-the-syrian-national-council>, 14.05.2012, (accessed on 17.06.2012)

²³⁸ "Syrian Protesters Call for International Protection", http://www.nytimes.com/2011/09/10/world/middleeast/10syria.html?_r=0, 09.09.2011, (accessed on 13.11.2011)

²³⁹ "Syria's Opposition Chooses President, Formally Signs Coalition Deal", <http://english.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/11/12/249032.html>, 12.11.2012, (accessed on 14.12.2012)

of the opposition groups and their real ideological and strategic engagements inside Syria. They choose to sideline their actual affiliations in order to garner utmost sponsorship by the foreign patronage networks. However, covert schism among the opposition groups became apparent with the development of the contentious episode.

Syrian National Council was directly the product of the foreign patronage networks as it was established throughout the lengthy process of negotiations between various foreign and Syrian actors. While main aim of these negotiations was to create cohesion between various contentious actors these efforts ended up with the more split between these groups. It is ironic that once the Syrian National Council had been established a sole representative of the Syrian opposition but after a year the Council had to be replaced with another product of the foreign patronage networks, as mentioned above with the National Coalition of Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces.

4.2.2. Armed Opposition Groups

By the last quarter of 2011, the Syrian uprising turned out to be a violent armed struggle between government forces and armed groups inside Syria. Non-violent street protests and demonstrations gave way to armed attacks against military targets of the Syrian state. While Syrian regime increased its grip on the ground by depending on more military means such as intense bombardment of the restive neighborhoods, and siege of the cities strictly new armed groups began to emerge. Throughout the violent course of the conflict armed groups became more experienced. However this helped the cycle of violence at its peak.

To understand the articulation mechanisms of the armed groups into the foreign patronage networks, the origin and the structure of these groups are revised in detail.

By the beginning of the Syrian uprising, the Syrian army faced with growing numbers of defectors. The order of the Syrian regime's high level officials to the security forces as regards to implement harsh measures against the protesters

created disturbance among the military ranks. The field officers and the soldiers who denied participating to the crackdown campaigns had no choice but defect. As the military operations of the Syrian state intensified around the main cities of Syria such as Baniyas, Hama, Homs, Deraa the members of the Syrian army began to escape from the army more throughout the late 2011.

The army defectors did not only leave the army. They also broadcasted their defection via internet by announcing their readiness to armed struggle against Syrian regime.²⁴⁰ The defection of the Syrian Army Colonel Riad al-Asaad was the most prominent instance of this process.

Flanked by seven army officers Riad al-Asaad announced their defection from the army on a video footage which was broadcasted on an internet site. In the video al-Asaad claimed that the Syrian army had lost its legitimacy as the army represented only “the gangs of the regime”. In that sense al-Asaad called for the members of the army to realize what was happening in Syria:

“Proceeding from our nationalistic sense, our loyalty to this people, our sense of the current need for conclusive decisions to stop this regime’s massacres that cannot be tolerated any longer, and proceeding from the army’s responsibility to protect this unarmed free people, we announce the formation of the free Syrian army to work hand in hand with the people to achieve freedom and dignity to bring this regime down, protect the revolution and the country’s resources, and stand in the face of the irresponsible military machine that protects the regime.”²⁴¹

By announcing the forming of the new armed organization, namely Free Syrian Army, Riad al-Asaad put forward the immediate focus of the target as the Syrian army that took charge in suppressing of protest movement. He called for the members of the army to stop participating to the operations against protests and defect.

²⁴⁰ “Defected Syrian Security Agent Speaks Out”,
<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/06/201168175624573155.html>, 08.05.2011,
(accessed on 09.06.2011)

²⁴¹ “Syrian Army Colonel Defects Forms Free Syrian Army”,
<http://www.aawsat.net/2011/08/article55245595/syrian-army-colonel-defects-forms-free-syrian-army>,
01.08.2011, (accessed on 03.09.2011)

The announcement of the Riad al-Asaad constituted the new turn for the Syrian uprising as the army defectors were now on offensive. Yet, throughout the initial phase of the protest movement armed conflict between protesters and security officials appeared to be on the defensive. When the security forces increased the volume of violence sometimes the residents of the towns responded with light arms. However, the instances of the Free Syrian Army proved to be different from these spontaneous attacks. Rather, the members of the Free Syrian Army claimed to unify the ranks of the armed opposition against the operations of the Syrian regime. The legitimacy bases of the armed attacks were shifted radically as the militarization of the protest movement was no longer an end itself but an intendant move. Instead of depending on the discourse of safeguarding peaceful protest movement against brutal security services armed groups adopted a new rhetoric to bring the fall of regime directly by means of armed struggle.

Towards the end of the 2011 several attacks against the state buildings reported by the media. According to these reports a group of armed men attacked the military facilities on the outskirts of the capital, Damascus. Similar attacks were also seen in the northwestern province of Idlip, central province of Homs, and southern province of Deraa.²⁴² The responsibilities of these attacks were taken by the defectors who claimed to be members of Free Syrian Army. However these initial attacks remained to be local-initiatives and lack of coordination was clear. In order to deal with the problem of unified command of the armed operations Riad al-Asaad attempted to consolidate temporary military councils several times.

With the beginning 2012 the denotation, Free Syrian Army, became used widely in all parts of the Syria. Without great efforts of the Riad al-Asaad the brand of Free Syrian Army spread to other parts of Syria as it turned to be a common denominator for the armed struggle against the Syrian regime. However, it did not refer to a coordinated organization with a chain of command. The brand of Free

²⁴² “Syrian Army Defectors Go on Offense, Militarizing Syria’s Uprising”, <http://www.voanews.com/content/syrian-army-defectors-go-on-offense-militarizing-syrias-uprising-133963348/148279.html>, 15.11.2011, (accessed on 19.12.2011)

Syrian Army accepted as a cover term in order to frame fragmented armed opposition.

The Head of the Free Syrian Army Riad al-Asaad fled to Turkey with a group of officers after their defection. Turkish government provided shelter to the members of the Free Syrian Army. Riad al-Asaad took the advantage of the support of a bordering country with Syria which enabled him to orchestrate attacks across the border from inside a camp guarded by the Turkish military.²⁴³ In order to disseminate the brand of Free Syrian Army Riad al-Asaad appeared in variety of international media outlets. In his regular interviews he called the international community for more weapons which would change the equation on the ground.²⁴⁴ In that sense al-Asaad tried to urge international community that his organization had the power to defy the Syrian regime. He also sought to provide an umbrella organization for armed opposition by framing his organization as a unique attempt to struggle against the Syrian regime. By means of media campaign Riad al-Assad strove to gain more recognition from the foreign patronage networks. However, the effect of the commanders of the Free Syrian Army whom generally lived in a special camp inside the Turkey remained rhetorical. As they confined to a closely guarded camp in Turkey their penetration to the grassroots opposition groups was relatively low. The isolation of the commanders of the Free Syrian Army left no other alternative but to reach international community and local sympathizers via media channels. Despite the failure of the Free Syrian Army to create a joint command center on the ground as a brand name, Free Syrian Army gained great prominence among the armed groups inside Syria.²⁴⁵

²⁴³ "In Slap at Syria, Turkey Shelters Anti-Assad Fighters", <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/28/world/europe/turkey-is-sheltering-antigovernment-syrian-militia.html>, 27.10.2011, (accessed on 04.12.2011)

²⁴⁴ "Riad al-Asaad, Dissident Syrian Colonel, Fled to Turkey", http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/10/05/riad-al-asaad-syria_n_995651.html, 10.05.2011, (accessed on 14.07.2011)

²⁴⁵ "The Free Syrian Army Doesn't Exist", <http://www.joshualandis.com/blog/the-free-syrian-army-doesnt-exist/>, 16.03.2013, (accessed on 18.05.2013)

By the summer of the 2011 new armed groups began to emerge in different parts of Syria. These were the local battalions that comprised from mainly local recruits and army defectors. As the growing number of demonstrations were responded violently by the Syrian security forces local residents found the way of defying Syrian regime's violent operations by taking arms. At the beginning their arms were light weapons which could be found almost in all Syrian houses.²⁴⁶ The initial type of armed groups was local organizations whose aim was to protect their respective residential area. These groups refrained from broadening their operation area apart from their own city or town as their logistics lines were not sufficient to take on offensive in vast areas. In that sense local armed groups had close ties to local residents in terms of recruitment and resource bases. The notables and the unemployed youth of the cities and town participated in these groups. Intelligence and surveillance services which appeared to be crucial to avoid regime reprisals were also provided by the local residents. By the means of hand-held radios and mobile phones local activists supported the operations of the local armed groups.

Other sources of the arms were the depots of military and security services. While defecting from the army defectors took some weapons with them.²⁴⁷ Seizing large weapons caches provided the armed groups unparalleled opportunity to increase their struggle on the ground. As they gained the upper hand locally the leaders of the armed groups also consolidated their support base. In addition to it losing of the armed depots severely damaged the security services' warring capabilities as well as their morale.

²⁴⁶ "Chaos in Syria: Are Army Deserters Helping to Arm the Opposition", <http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2076250,00.html>, 07.06.2011, (accessed on 08.11.2011)

²⁴⁷ "In Syria, Seized Weapons Caches Boost Rebels' Hopes After Weeks of Setbacks", http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/seized-weapons-caches-boost-rebel-hopes-after-weeks-of-setbacks/2013/08/20/88ece6fc-09d1-11e3-8974-f97ab3b3c677_story.html, 20.08.2013, (accessed on 12.09.2013)

The smuggling activities were of crucial importance in terms of procurement capabilities of the local armed groups. Immediately after the beginning of the uprising in March 2011 smuggling lines around Syria reversed as automatic weapons, grenades and hunting rifles began to flow to Syria from Lebanon and Iraq.²⁴⁸ Contrary to ideological affiliations of the armed groups main suppliers of the arms were those individual smugglers in search of quick profits. The buyers of the smuggled weapons were mostly the local residents who faced with the threat of reprisals of the security forces. Increasing smuggling activities created a prevailing black market which in turn draws more people to smuggling.

Throughout the uprising local armed groups announced their affiliation with the Free Syrian Army. Although they did not have any strong link with the central command of the Free Syrian Army local battalions adopted the slogans and the brand of Free Syrian Army. The local leaders of the armed groups publicly pledge their allegiance to the defected Colonel Riad al-Asaad. However their allegiance did not mean unquestioned commitment to the order of the Free Syrian Army. On the contrary, the local groups' conflict strategy mostly depended on the needs of local constituencies perforce. As the local armed groups gained ground in Syria the leaders of the Free Syrian Army began to claim responsibility for the armed attacks.²⁴⁹ The relationship between the leaders of the Free Syrian Army and local armed groups resembled to a sort of symbiosis. As long as the command center of the Free Syrian Army did not breached the rhetorical frame of the struggle, on the ground the local armed groups continued their allegiance to the Free Syrian Army.

However, towards the end of 2012 the expectation of the local armed groups increased as their arm stock began to decrease. In the face of Syrian security forces'

²⁴⁸ "Arms Smuggling into Syria Flourishes: Experts", <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2011/Oct-16/151423-arms-smuggling-into-syria-flourishes-experts.ashx>, 16.10.2011, (accessed on 13.12.2011)

²⁴⁹ "Defectors Claim Attack That Killed Syria Soldiers", <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/27/world/middleeast/army-defectors-in-syria-take-credit-for-deadly-attack.html>, 26.10.2011, (accessed on 11.12.2011)

harsh response local battalions expressed their immediate needs in a greater degree.²⁵⁰ The command center of the Free Syrian Army could not supply basic needs of the local armed groups as their resource base totally depended on foreign patronage. Without resources that obtained from the native funds the leaders of the Free Syrian Army did not have any leverage on the armed groups which fought on the ground. Foreign patrons, unfulfillment of the promises of weapon supplies also contributed to the disillusionment of the local armed groups.²⁵¹ In addition to it the armed groups which fell short of the expectations began to have trouble with the local residents.²⁵²

Articulation to foreign patronage networks brought about a cycle of mutual dependency. Once this cycle interrupted whole chain of supply collapsed severely. While the umbrella organizations of the armed groups did not take any measure to compensate the lack of foreign patronage, especially local armed groups directed their attention to local residents immediately. However the armed groups' procurement means did not prove to be acceptable for the local residents. Looting and confiscation of the private property became a way of compensating interrupted foreign patronage. This created very serious problems between armed groups and the residents of the cities or towns. Misuse of the force undermined the legitimacy of the armed groups and the command center of the Free Syrian Army.

It was ironic that the leaders of the Free Syrian Army who faced with serious challenges arising from articulating to foreign patronage tried to solve the issue by searching for more foreign patronage networks and by transforming their command structure in order to render it more presentable to the foreign patrons. In

²⁵⁰ "Islamists, Rebels Cautious on FSA Command Move to Syria", <http://english.al-akhbar.com/node/12548>, 24.09.2012, (accessed on 12.10.2012)

²⁵¹ "David Cameron Accused of Betraying Syrian Rebels", <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/syria/10180820/David-Cameron-accused-of-betraying-Syrian-rebels.html>, 15.07.2013, (accessed on 19.09.2013)

²⁵² "Rebels Kidnap, Terrorize Syrian Public", <http://www.jpost.com/Middle-East/Rebels-kidnap-terrorize-Syrian-public-311619>, 30.04.2013, (accessed on 02.07.2013)

that context a new Supreme Military Council was formed in order to increase coordination between diverse fighting groups and streamline the pathway for arms.²⁵³ In early December 2012, over 260 rebel commanders from all over Syria gathered in Turkey to agree on a unified command structure, creating the Supreme military Command. A defector Brigadier General Salim Idris elected as the Chief of Staff on 8 December 2012. However the same complaints above mentioned continued to be voiced by the local armed groups and most seriously by the residents of the towns and cities.

One of the first instances of these radical armed groups was the Khalid bin Walid Brigade. Khalid bin Walid Brigade appeared between June and September 2011 with the defection of a group of Syrian army officers around Rastan. Under the leadership of Major Abdul Rahman Sheikh Ali, Khalid bin Walid Brigade broadened its ranks gradually and began to engage with Syrian army units increasingly. The forming of the brigade was announced in a video statement in June 2011.²⁵⁴

Khalid bin Walid Brigade operated around Homs and its restive rural parts. Indeed with the emerging of the Khalid bin Walid Brigade there were a number of armed clashes between the Syrian army units and armed groups throughout the July and August 2011.²⁵⁵ By the end of September, Khalid bin Walid Brigade intensified its operation in and around Rastan. They conducted a pair of lethal ambushes on the Rastan-Homs road and overran the home of Rastan's intelligence chief and captured a Syrian Army colonel from Qardahah.²⁵⁶

²⁵³ "Syria Rebels Create New Unified Military Command", http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/12/08/syria-rebels-military-council_n_2263256.html, 12.08.2012, (accessed on 15.09.2012)

²⁵⁴ Youtube Footage, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OBIZcqN0Kao&feature=>, (accessed on 16.06.2011)

²⁵⁵ "Khalid bin Al-Waleed Brigade", <https://syriarevolts.wordpress.com/tag/khalid-bin-al-waleed-brigade/>, 25.09.2011, (accessed on 04.11.2011)

²⁵⁶ "Syria: The Revolution Will Be Weaponised", <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2011/09/2011923115735281764.html>, 23.09.2011, (accessed on 27.11.2011)

The leader of the Khalid bin Walid Brigade in Homs, first lieutenant Muhammad Abdelaziz Tlass, introduced their aims to a reporter as to protect innocent people from the oppression of the Syrian regime. Tlass also revealed their motivations to participate in armed struggle as follows:

"Our people tried to defend the demonstration. We stopped the security forces from killing more and battled with them."²⁵⁷

The timing of the emergence of the Khalid bin Walid Brigade was critical as the Syrian opposition was debating the possible results of the armed rebellion at that time. The opposition actors who tried to sustain the vitality of the non-violent uprising hesitated to accommodate armed struggle in offensive terms. They put forth the possible regime reprisals against the civilian population. Besides that the incumbent opposition structures realised that once the armed struggle became dominant feature of the Syrian uprising their control over the opposition structures would shift to armed rebels. This attitude reflected in the initial statement of the Tlass, the leader of the Khalid bin Walid Brigade. Tlass explained why they had not yet broadcast videos of their operations as follows:

"They say they resigned from the military to defend the civilians but most of their operations involve attacking checkpoints. They say we attack the ones who attack us; this is our way of defending civilians."²⁵⁸

As the debate over whether to take arms against the Syrian regime in offensive terms continued by the end 2011, newly emerging armed groups began to conduct more sophisticated armed attacks against the Syrian army and intelligence units. Various armed groups attacked government forces in Jisr al-Shughour-Idlip, Rastan-Homs, Jebel al-Zawiya-Idlip, Zabadani, Damascus Countryside.²⁵⁹ In these

²⁵⁷ Ibid.

²⁵⁸ Ibid.

²⁵⁹ "Syria Unrest: Jabal al-Zawiya Massacres", <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-16287450>, 19.01.2012, (accessed on 18.03.2012); "Syrian Troops Fight Rebels Near Damascus", <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2012/01/26/uk-syria-idUKL6E8C52E220120126>, 26.01.2012, (accessed on 14.03.2012)

attacks armed groups traced the same line of engagement as they conducted a series of ambushes and raids against the army units along the main ways. The army reinforcements which consisted of armoured vehicles and tanks were the primary target of the armed groups as these army reinforcements were on their way to support local security forces which were dealing with uprising. However in some cases the armed groups proved to be very successful to defy security forces as they gained the control of some pockets of terrain. For example, in Zabadani, thirty kilometers northwest of the capital city Damascus, the armed opposition groups stopped the armored offensive of the government forces and seized the some parts of the town. The same has taken place in Bab al-Amr in Homs. Some battalions which fought under the flag of the Khalid bin Walid Brigade shifted their attention to Homs after fleeing from Rastan due to security forces operations. They took the control of the Bab al-Amr, Homs' southwest Sunni-majority neighbourhood, and began to skirmishing with securit forces from fighting positions fortified by sandbags.²⁶⁰

The takeover of the towns and part of the cities by the armed groups forced the Syrian regime to increase its grip on the insurgents. Security forces added artillery fire to the ground operations. They besieged the main roads leading into neighbourhoods and used artillery fire to force armed groups to leave their defence positions.²⁶¹ The armed groups retreated from the Bab al-Amr neighborhood after heavy clashes with the security forces. However the humanitarian cost of the Bab al-Amr conflict so heavy that hundreds of people wounded and thousands of people left their home.²⁶² One of the witnesses who talked to a television put the situation as follows:

²⁶⁰ "Syrian Rebels Leave Ambattled Homs Stronghold", <http://www.jpost.com/Middle-East/Syrian-rebels-leave-embattled-Homs-stronghold>, 03.01.2012, (accessed on 07.05.2012)

²⁶¹ "Syrian Rebels Retreat From Baba Amr District of Homs", <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/mar/01/syrian-rebels-retreat-baba-amr-homs>, 02.03.2012, (accessed on 04.05.2012)

²⁶² International Committe of the Red Cross - Resource Center, <https://www.icrc.org/eng/resources/documents/overview/syria-update-25-02-2012.htm>, 23.03.2012, (accessed on 14.07.2012)

"Water has been cut off from Bab Amr for 18 days. There's no electricity, cooking oil or even bread. Many people are literally on the brink of starvation. People have fled their homes in fear of being bombed. They took refuge in a mosque, and there they were bombed too."²⁶³

Before the arrival of armed groups, namely the Khalid bin Walid Brigade, the opposition actors in Homs continued their protest in street demonstrations and marches at night. Mostly some hundreds of people, which also include women, gathered in a street surrounded by apartments and chanted anti-Assad slogans.²⁶⁴ Their main slogans were "down with the regime" and "God, Syria, freedom, that's all". Nevertheless in its initial phase there were no reports as regards to armed engagement of the opposition groups with security forces. However the security forces' response to demonstrations was violent as there were civil casualties due to security forces' indiscriminate fire. The funeral ceremony of the civilians who were shot during the demonstrations turned to be more severe protest against Syrian government. People who carried the coffin of deceased began to chant anti-regime/Assad slogans more eagerly. But in the same vein the security forces' response became more violent. As the funeral ceremony drawn more and more people due to sensibility of the occasion the threat perception of the regime officials increased to the degree of crackdown. Interestingly but not unexpectedly, in the funeral ceremony the slogans shifted to more religious ones such as "Allah is the greatest" and "to heaven we are heading, martyrs by the millions".²⁶⁵

In that context the emergence of the armed groups with islamist tendencies applauded by the opposition consituences initially. The expectations of the people

²⁶³ "Fears Grown of Humanitarian Crisis in Homs", <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2012/02/2012222480571964.html>, 22.02.2012, (accessed on 14.05.2012)

²⁶⁴ "Syria Homs Protest", Youtube Footage, <https://www.youtube.com/user/freeSyrianTranslator>, (accessed on 14.05.2012)

²⁶⁵ Ibid.

were to be protected against security services' harassment and to alleviate the civilian cost of protesting. However the real result was totally different.

When the armed groups engaged with security forces they gained an apparent success at first. They prevented the security forces to intervene non-violent protest movement and restricted the regime's room for manoeuvre. As the regime shifted its measures to more violent armed campaigns the main issue for the opposition constituencies became surviving amid an armed conflict let alone stage demonstrations. Appearance of the armed groups totally changed the dynamics of protesting. The local residents of the towns and neighborhoods were not seen as a main core of the protest which had to be protected strictly anymore; on the contrary they became a resource base which could be sacrificed for the tactic gains of the armed group. This paradox manifested itself more overtly in the ongoing process.

Armed groups in Syria were more inclined to articulate with the foreign patronage networks as they were more source-dependent than the political opposition groups. However, as it can be seen in the narrative delineated above, dependence on external funds and materials constituted internal tension for the armed opposition groups. *Co-opted* by the foreign patronage networks, Syrian armed groups run into the influence sphere of the externally determined strategic decisions pattern. That process limited the action sphere of the armed groups according to their vested interest in contention. While foreign patron actors tried to employ *coalition formation* strategies to unify armed opposition groups externally imposed agenda ended up with more schism among these groups. Competition for scarce sources between armed groups prevented them from developing strong ties with the local population. These armed groups directed their attention more on external actors and their respective demands inside Syria. In that sense external support for the armed groups led up to alienation of the local population and created a demobilization process. In most cases, the residents of the towns which had captured by the armed

groups opted to flee to more secure areas or neighbouring countries instead of participating armed groups or even constituting support base for them.²⁶⁶

²⁶⁶ This situation reflected in the high numbers of the Syrian refugees which is labeled as one of the most painful refugee cases of the world history. The United Nations Refugee Agency, “Syria Regional Refugee Response”, <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php> , 12.06.2015, (accessed on 12.06.2015)

CHAPTER 5

Conclusion

The main concern of this thesis is to analyze the effects of the articulation to foreign patronage networks on particular Syrian opposition groups, non-violent umbrella organizations or armed rebels, during the formative years of the Syrian uprising, exactly beginning from March 2011 to the end of the 2012. While examining Syrian case as regards to popular uprising through which various opposition groups with close ties to foreign patronage networks operated Tilly's contentious politics approach employed as a theoretical framework in order to understand broader scope of the political collective action against particular regime practices.

Contentious politics positions itself on the convergence of three area, contention, collective action and politics. Contention contains making claims which has an effect on someone else's interest. Claims involve at least one subject's reaching visibly toward at least one object. Contention always brings together subjects, objects, and claims²⁶⁷ In this context, contentious politics approach tries to understand different forms of contentious collective actions through identifying recurrent mechanisms and processes with varying sequences and conditions. To understand how similar mechanisms and processes produce distinctive political trajectories and outcomes contentious performances and repertoires are of crucial importance. These performances and repertoires link at least two actors, namely the

²⁶⁷ Charles Tilly and Sidney G. Tarrow, *Contentious Politics*, Paradigm Publishers, Boulder, Colombia, 2007, p.5

claimant and an object of claims.²⁶⁸ While social movement repertoires mostly consist of non-violent performances such as demonstrations and marches²⁶⁹ as a result of the dynamic nature of social processes social movements bring about occasional and responsive violent acts. A government may intervene violently against demonstrators due to threat perception of the government officials or some part of the demonstrators may dare to attack some government buildings. In all instances violence does not appear as a systematic and sustained campaign. But in lethal conflicts violence occupies the central position. Large-scale lethal conflicts in which the violence does not occur chiefly as a by-product of nonviolent claim making but forms part of claim making's central rationale.²⁷⁰ Lethal conflicts have some implications that separate them from other forms of contentious politics. First of all, large scale lethal conflicts involve a high degree of violence that raises the cost of sustaining of the claim making. Secondly, unlike recruiting people for more peaceful social movement repertoires such as demonstrations and petitioning sustaining an armed asset requires extensive resources.²⁷¹ That sort of extensive resource requirement leads to search for external support mechanisms, for the concern of this thesis it appears as the foreign patronage networks. The notion of patronage is generally understood by political sociologist as the distribution of resources by political officeholders or political candidates in exchange for political support.²⁷² In this study the term "foreign patronage" is used to point out hegemonic relations between challengers in a contentious episode and the external stakeholders

²⁶⁸ Ibid. p. 12

²⁶⁹ Karl-Dieter Opp, *Theories of Political Protest and Social Movements: A Multidisciplinary Introduction, Critique, and Synthesis*, Routledge, New York, 2009, p. 40

²⁷⁰ Tilly and Tarrow, op. cit., p. 132

²⁷¹ Ibid., p. 137

²⁷² Herbert Kitschelt and Steven I. Wilkinson, "Patrons, Clients and Policies: Patterns of Democratic Accountability and Political Competition", Cambridge University Press, New York, p. 2; Javier Auyero, Pablo Lapegna and Fernanda Page Poma, "Patronage Politics and Contentious Collective Action: A Recursive Relationship", Vol. 51, No. 3, Fall 2009, p. 2-7

of this contention as foreign patronage involves an unequal interrelation among parties which try to increase their respective resource and control over contentious situation. As being external to severity and hardship of the conflict foreign supporters provide more consistent and sustained resources to the challenging groups hence domestic contentious actors strive to get benefit from that sort of support through manipulating and overplaying of various foreign actors. This process generates clientelist relations which are highly selective and diffuse that characterized by the simultaneous exchange of various resources and services.²⁷³ However articulation to foreign patronage changes the balance among social movement constituents as the sensibilities of the local population become subordinated to the preference of foreign patronage. Movement elites apply more to foreign patron to acquire appropriate resources rather than referring to local social networks. This process transforms the relations among existing social networks and results in the deviation of the contentious movements' priorities. With the subordination of the main constituents of the contentious episode to the external support networks disillusionment and alienation mechanisms come into play. The alienation of the potential constituencies of the opposition structures resulted in demobilization of the contentious movement.

The course of events in Syrian uprising at its formative period constitutes a proper example in terms of revealing the negative effects of the foreign patronage networks in Syrian opposition groups. Although at first the call for Arab Spring type protest had draw little attention inside the country²⁷⁴ the effect of the popular uprisings in Middle Eastern countries which appeared first in Tunisia reached to Syria towards March 2011. The detention of a group of children by the security services with the charge of drawing anti-regime slogans to the city walls brought Deraa to the international attention. As Syrian security authorities were accused by

²⁷³ Javier Auyero, Pablo Lapegna and Fernanda Page Poma, "Patronage Politics and Contentious Collective Action: A Recursive Relationship", Vol. 51, No. 3, Fall 2009, p. 2-7

²⁷⁴ "Syria's 'Day of Anger' Failed to Ignite as Protesters Stay Away", <http://www.thenational.ae/news/world/middle-east/syrias-day-of-anger-failed-to-ignite-as-protesters-stay-away>, 08.03.2011, (accessed on 09.07.2011)

torturing the children the residents of Deraa poured into the streets and the relatives of the children showed their resentment with attacking government and Baath party buildings.²⁷⁵ The Deraa events started a cycle of increasing violence as every funeral ceremony turned to be a protest movement and responded by the security apparatus' excessive use of force. The violence cycle which began in Deraa spread to other cities within two weeks. In Idlip, Baniyas, Qamishli, Homs and Hama small groups of people took the chance of protest cycle. They took the streets in their neighborhoods with mostly their relatives. However this initial break-up violence mostly occurred in a unorganized way which can be characterized under the term "broken negotiations".²⁷⁶

Syrian regime's initial response in the face of Deraa events and the protests in other cities was proactive.²⁷⁷ In nearly one month Syrian state embarked on a set of reform packages which had been seen impossible before. Most striking part of these reforms was the lifting of the Syrian emergency law which had been in place nearly 50 years. While Syrian government tried to contain opposition movement through limited reform packages at the same set in motion a series of pro-regime rallies in order to consolidate bystander public's attitude towards Syrian regime as well as its main constituents.²⁷⁸

On the other hand these efforts of the Syrian regime did not accomplish to prevent the escalation of the conflict into a armed struggle on the contrary Syrian uprising became more integrated to foreign patronage mechanisms in due course. Jisr Al-Shughour attack constituted a turning point for Syrian uprising in terms of gaining upper hand of the armed elements in Syrian uprising. In early June 2011, 120

²⁷⁵ "A Timeline of Some Key Events In Syrian Uprising", <http://www.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/03/16/200987.html>, 16.03.2012, (accessed on 18.05.2012)

²⁷⁶ Charles Tilly, *The Politics of Collective Violence*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2003, p. 226

²⁷⁷ Meeting with Syrian officials, Damascus, June 2011

²⁷⁸ "Syria Mobilizes Thousands for Pro-Assad Marches", <http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/03/29/us-syria-idUSTRE72N2MC20110329>, 29.03.2011, (accessed on 06.07.2011)

members of the security services were killed by the armed gangs in a bordering town with Turkey, Jisr al-Shughour.²⁷⁹ Syrian state dispatched dozens of tanks and hundreds of soldiers equipped with heavy weapons to the restive town while thousands of people who lived in Jisr al-Shughour began to flee due to threat of reprisals by the regime.²⁸⁰ Jisr Al-Shughour attack exposed the new phase of Syrian uprising as there were armed groups, military defections, border crossings, and refugees. Armed groups in Jisr al-Shughour moved in an organized manner as they obtained weapons via smuggling activities and created a cross border logistics network. Jisr al-Shughour also constituted the first example of ghost towns which became vacant after the attacks of armed groups. In due course most of the towns and cities which experienced the armed conflict such as Azez, Qusayr and Kfar lata witnessed the escaping of the residents from their residential area. The towns which were the homes for thousands of people before turned out to be an attack base for hundreds of armed men. As the main subject of the protest, local people disappeared from the scene the context of the conflict became a war between two armed parties and this changed the main determinants of the contentious episode such as network strategies, resource mobilizations, strategic choices and identity formations. Without recruitment capabilities form local people armed groups directed to foreign fighters or mercenaries. Therefore their resource deficiencies increased swiftly. To compensate the mounting necessities the armed groups began to loot and confiscate citizens' private properties or most of the time public properties.²⁸¹

Throughout the 2012 the articulation of the foreign patronage mechanisms to the particular Syrian opposition groups became more organized and apparent. The

²⁷⁹ "Syria to Send in Army After 120 Troops Killed", <http://ca.reuters.com/article/topNews/idCATRE7553AI20110606?sp=true>, 06.06.2011, (accessed on 16.12.2011)

²⁸⁰ "Syria Rachets up Military Operation on Jisr al-Shughour", <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/jun/10/syria-military-jisr-al-shughour>, 10.06.2011, (accessed on 15.08.2011)

²⁸¹ "Syrian Rebels Sidetracked by Scramble for Spoils of War", <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/dec/27/syrian-rebels-scramble-spoils-war>, 27.12.2011, (accessed on 03.02.2012)

strategies of the foreign patrons, individuals as well as states, depended on three dimensional patronage mechanism; namely *co-optation* of the Syrian opposition by the means of resource provision and strategic information sharing; *certification* of the particular opposition groups in the face of international community through Friends of Syria meetings and opposition gatherings; *coalition formation* to provide a feasible ground for opposition groups to establish the widest front against Syrian regime. Co-optation, certification, and coalition formation mechanisms were mainly employed by the foreign patrons to mobilize Syrian opposition structures in line with their respective interest definitions.

The non-violent umbrella organizations, namely the Syrian National Council and the Local Coordination Committees, and armed groups such as the Free Syrian Army and local battalions comprised the main opposition actors in Syrian uprising during the formative period of the contentious episode. However the articulation mechanisms to foreign patronage operated bidirectionally. While the opposition groups, non-violent or armed, tried to ensure more resources through reaching strategies to foreign patrons at the same time external actors which had vested interest in terms of shaping the development in Syrian conflict launched out various initiatives in order to create patronage networks with opposition groups in Syria. In Tilly's terminology, *co-optation* and *coalition formation* mechanisms became activated between foreign patronage networks and some part of Syrian opposition groups.²⁸² New initiatives aimed at penetration to opposition structures inside Syria began to implement. Foreign governments tried to understand the motives, ideological commitments, network structures, recruit strategies, potential alliances, the role of the secular and islamist-radical tendencies and the mobilizational potentials of the contentious actors in Syria. The countries which tried to develop relationship with newly emerging opposition groups circumspectly calibrated their respective tones of announcement as regards to events in Syria in

²⁸² Charles Tilly and Sidney G. Tarrow, *Contentious Politics*, Paradigm Publishers, Boulder, Colombia, 2007.

order to validate the actions of Syrian opposition. On the one hand condemning the Syrian government's acts regularly foreign patron countries started to begin sanctions against particular Syrian government officials simultaneously.²⁸³ Towards end of the 2011, passive support of the foreign patron countries to the Syrian opposition groups turned into active assistance to establish a unified opposition structures which could gain a legitimization in the presence of Syrian people and international community. Foreign countries, especially neighbor countries such as Turkey, Jordan and Saudi Arabia, became a convenient avenue to gather in order to build a consensus among opposition groups and establish a unified structure. The Syrian National Council became a central actor for the foreign patron countries in order to constitute a unified front against Syrian regime. Throughout the end of 2011, Syrian National Council was recognized by variety of countries including, France, United Kingdom, United State, Spain, Germany and Saudi Arabia. Recognition of the Syrian National Council and hosting of their meetings had more meaning than "the support for the democratic transition in Syria" as these practices provided the foreign patrons to develop a contact point with the opposition groups and enabled them to reshape contentious actors' vision in the context of patron countries' strategic imperatives. However contradictory approaches as regards to the structure of the Syrian National Council shattered the certification efforts of the patron countries of the Syrian opposition. While one group under the influence of Saudi patronage leaned towards Saudi Arabia's political line other one chosed to defy these efforts. Therefore the legitimization efforts of the patron countries began to clash with one another as client groups in main opposition organization, Syrian National Council, critically wounded with alienation from contentious actors inside Syria. On the other hand foreign patron countries congregated broader meetings, namely "Friends of Syria Group Meetinnngs" in terms of diffusion to the opposition groups and coalition formation between different factions of the contentious actors. While broadening the

²⁸³ "Obama Administration Condemns Syrian Violence Against Protests", <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2011-03-18/obama-administration-condemns-syrian-violence-against-protests>, 19.03.2011, (accessed on 04.06.2011)

opportunity structures of the opposition groups, these meetings enabled the patron countries to consolidate contentious actors' strategic vision according to their priorities in Syrian uprising.

As the tone of the contention in Syria turned to be more violent throughout the end of the 2011, foreign patronage mechanisms were directed to newly emerging armed groups. Although initially U.S. and E.U. Governments hesitated to provide weapons to Syrian opposition groups, by the mid of 2012, they altered their stance and began coordinating the flow of arms to Syrian rebel groups by Qatar and Saudi Arabia via Turkey and Jordan.²⁸⁴ With the reach of the foreign support to these local rebel groups they delineated their operation scope under the terms of the foreign patrons' respective approach to the Syrian conflict. Despite operating under the term of "fall of the Syrian regime" these various rebel groups with the funding of the different foreign patrons incited the factionalism among armed opposition. As the militarization of the Syrian conflict deepened, the Local Coordination Committees, which operated as grassroots opposition movement favoured non-violent form of protest repertoires, became sidelined by the armed groups. Although they retained close ties with the protestors on the ground armed conflicts came to the fore.

Articulation to the foreign patronage mechanisms brought the opposition structures to the conclusion that who guaranteed constant support of the foreign patrons so it could continue to exist throughout its respective conflict-ridden area. In that calculation, principal containers of the protest movement, local population or residents of the area, were gradually subdued to the immediate demands of the foreign patrons and their proxies on the ground in Syria. Local population was instrumentalized to the end of armed groups as they could gain/keep/secure the area which they deemed as crucial. Local populations' grievances and vulnerabilities could not find a way in the armed groups' conflict strategies. In that sense local population went into an alienation process from the call of the armed opposition groups.

²⁸⁴ "Arab States Arm Rebels", <http://www.dailyalert.org/rss/Mainissues.php?id=35336>, 23.06.2012, (accessed on 14.07.2012)

In that context Syrian case constituted a contradictory example in terms of broadening opposition capabilities with activating foreign patronage mechanisms. In Tilly and Tarrow's characterization, *coalition formation*, *co-optation* and, *certification* mechanisms were generally defined as opportunities which upgrading the sphere of the influence of the contentious actors.²⁸⁵ Although Tilly and Tarrow defined all mechanisms in their specific conjunctures *coalition formation* mechanism, portraying as creating new and direct coordination of claims between previously distinct actors; and *certification* mechanism, terming as external authority's signal of its readiness to recognize and support the existence and claims of contentious political actor, were considered in positive terms for the opposition groups. However, in Syrian case, opposition groups and armed rebels who were analysed detailly in this study reflected adverse effects of these mechanisms. As these three mechanisms combined into foreign patronage process, disillusionment of the local population increased gradually during the Syrian contentious episode.

Imposed coalition formation mechanism onto the Syrian opposition groups ignited the schism between these groups and caused to the emergence of various fraction among already divided opposition structures. It is valid for the outside *certification* mechanism also. Instead of extracting more sources from the local population with considering their concerns opposition groups more depended on foreign patronage networks for their contention survival. In Syrian case, ironically, most of the pre-conditions of the *outside certification* paved the way to internal legitimization crisis among local population. The devastating effect of the instrumentalization of the local population by the armed groups in Syria was delineated detailly in previous chapters.

In Syrian case, while there were other factors, such as repressive methods of the Syrian regime, scarcity of the material resources, location of the Syria as an epicentre of the regional power contention, ready-made opposition structures in-exile due to previous failed rebellions, authoritarian nature of the Syrian political order

²⁸⁵ Charles Tilly and Sidney G. Tarrow, *Contentious Politics*, Paradigm Publishers, Boulder, Colombia, 2007.

which obstructing any kind of opposition movement, which led to the disillusionment of the local population who were seen as potential recruiters for the uprising; articulation to foreign patronage mechanism is a constituent relation between organized opposition structures, namely umbrella opposition council/committees and armed groups and local populations who live in conflict-ridden areas. At the end of 2012, foreign patronage network of the opposition structures in Syria became more explicit as the main opposition groups were being called with their respective foreign patron.²⁸⁶ In the report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry of the Syrian Arab Republic, the failed attempt of the ceasefire in Syria during 2012 was delineated as follow:

“In the last six months of the period under review, the conflict became increasingly violent and complex, and efforts to achieve a political settlement stalled. In supporting various parties in the Syrian Arab Republic, regional and international actors hampered the prospects of a negotiated settlement owing to their divergent interests. The position of key international actors remains unchanged.”²⁸⁷

As indicated in the report above quoted, definitive feature of the conflict in Syria became foreign patronage on the armed groups. Without the consent of the foreign patrons, armed groups which were operated on the ground did not have any independent capability to decide whether to fight. Even the immediate need of the local population to the humanitarian assistance could be hampered by the armed groups without considering the grievances of the residents in respective conflict-ridden area. Looking into the report again:

“Despite multiple endeavours to unify and structure its ranks, the armed opposition remained fragmented and unable to designate a reliable leadership. This fragmentation was aggravated by — if not the result of —

²⁸⁶ “Exclusive: Arab States Arm Rebels as UN Talks of Syrian Civil War”, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/exclusive-arab-states-arm-rebels-as-un-talks-of-syrian-civil-war-7845026.html>, 13.06.2012, (accessed on 21.08.2012)

²⁸⁷ “Report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic”, http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/CoISyria/A.HRC.22.59_en.pdf, 05.02.2013, (accessed on 06.04.2013)

the fact that the financial and material external support delivered by different sponsors, instead of promoting integration, has generated divisions and exacerbated competition among different groups.(...) The intervention of external sponsors has contributed to the radicalization of the insurgency as it has favoured Salafi armed groups such as the al-Nusra Front, and even encouraged mainstream insurgents to join them owing to their superior logistical and operational capabilities. The support provided by external sources usually depends on the operational effectiveness of the groups and their willingness to embrace the language and symbols of their sponsors.”²⁸⁸

In that sense articulation to foreign patronage mechanism reconfigured the opposition movement in Syria on the preference of the foreign patrons’ respective interest in the conflict. While it is fair to say that there were numerous other factors which led to the disillusionment of the local population from the armed rebellion, which are deserved to be researched profoundly; as this thesis tries to reveal, in Syrian case foreign patronage mechanism appeared as a main constituent character.

5.1. Scope for Further Research

Large part of this thesis were written before end of the 2013, it is meant that militarization of the Syrian conflict with the external intervention had not reach today’s level. At the initial phases of the Syrian conflict, as this thesis mainly deals with that period of time, articulation of the Syrian opposition to the foreign patronage networks reflected a tendency to the increasing militarization of the Syrian contentious episode. Gradually depending more on the external sources armed groups created more powerful links with the foreign patronage networks while consolidated their preference structure in terms of foreign patrons’ strategic decision patterns. Coming to the end of 2015, this process evolved into its more developed form. Initial efforts to introduce foreign patronage networks to the Syrian armed opposition groups, now, operate in a more institutionalized way. Drawing syrian

²⁸⁸ Ibid.

individuals into Train and Equip program of the U.S. army constitutes a significant example of this process.²⁸⁹ Train and Equip program envisages the provision of U.S. assistance to the selected individuals of the Syrian opposition by providing basic combat skills and weapons. The aim of the program is claimed as follows:

“Defending the Syrian people from attacks by the Syrian regime, facilitating the provision of essential services, and stabilizing territory controlled by the opposition; defending the United States, its friends and allies, and the Syrian people from the threats posed by terrorists in Syria; and, promoting the conditions for a negotiating settlement to end the conflict in Syria.”

The first batch of the militants under the Train and Equip program, were sent into the Syria throughout July 2015.²⁹⁰ U.S. sponsored Train and Equip program was appeared as a rupture into the upper level of foreign patronage mechanism as it was continued explicitly and directed to armed elements of the opposition. Although the task of the Train and Equip program was introduced as an action only against terror groups in Syria, such as ISIL²⁹¹, training an armed group and injecting them to a country has noticeable contradictory implications in terms of international law and the practices of the existing state system. This also reveals the inherent tension of the foreign patronage networks as regards to control client contentious actors in current political landscape of the international order. What is remained incomplete

²⁸⁹ Blanchard, M. Christopher and Belasco, Amy, “Train and Equip Program for Syria: Authorities, Funding and Issues for Congress”, Congressional Research Service, <https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/R43727.pdf>, , 09.06. 2015, (accessed on 04.08.2015)

²⁹⁰ “U.S. to Send First Train and Equip Program Militants to Syria”, <http://www.albawaba.com/news/us-send-first-train-and-equip-program-militants-syria-715186>, 03.07.2015, (accessed on 05.07.2015)

²⁹¹ The group known variously as ISIL (Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant), ISIS (Islamic State in Iraq and Syria) or simply Islamic State is, originally, an offshoot of Al-Qaeda in Iraq. But while it shares a similar ideological outlook, ISIL has adopted a different strategy from its predecessor. What distinguishes the new armed group is its capture and occupation of swaths of territory, stretching from the outskirts of Aleppo, Syria’s largest city, eastward beyond Tikrit, Saddam Hussein’s war-torn hometown in Iraq. ISIL has established what it calls a caliphate, with the northeastern Syrian city of Raqqa as its capital, and has imposed its harsh interpretation of Islamic law on areas under its control. More information in: Al Jazeera America, Who, what and where ISIL? Explaining the Islamic State, <http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2014/9/18/isil-threat-explained.html>, 18.09.2014, (accessed on 09.08.2015)

throughout this thesis is that fragile border of contention and problematic implications trending toward more institutionalized form of articulation to foreign patronage networks. Hence it is the subject of further research.

REFERENCES

I-BOOKS AND ARTICLES

Abdul-Ahad, Ghaith. (2013) “How To Start a Battalion (in Five easy Lessons)”, *London Review of Books*, 35 (4), pp. 12-14.

Aday, Sean and Farrel, Henry and Lynch, March and Sides, John and Freelon, Deen. (2012), “New Media and Conflict After the Arab Spring”, *United States Institute of Peace Blogs and Bullets II*, 80.

Auyero, Javier and Lapegna, Pablo and Poma, Page Fernanda. (2009), “Patronage Politics and Contentious Collective Action: A Recursive Relationship”, 51 (3), pp. 1-31

Ayhan, Veysel and Orhan, Oytun. (2011), “Suriye Muhalefeti’nin Antalya Toplantısı: Sonuçlar, Temel Sorunlara Bakış ve Türkiye’den Beklentiler”, *Ortadoğu Analiz*, 3 (31-32), pp. 11-15.

Diani, Mario and McAdam Doug. (2003), *Social Movements and Networks: Relational Approaches to Collective Action*, New York, Oxford University Press.

Earl, J. (2003), “Tanks, Tear Gas, and Taxes: Toward a Theory of Movement Repression”, *Sociological Theory*, 21 (1), pp. 44-68.

Emirbayer, Mustafa. (1997), "Manifesto for a Relational Sociology", *The American Journal of Sociology*, 103 (2), pp. 281-317.

Foucault, Michel. (1980), *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977*/Michel Foucault, ed. Colin Gordon, New York, Pantheon Books.

Gause, Gregory F. (2011), "Why Middle East Studies Missed the Arab Spring", *Foreign Affairs*, 90 (4).

Gerges, Fawaz. (2012), "The Many Voices of Political Islam", *Majalla*, 1573, pp. 16-18

Goffman, Erving. (1974), *An Essay on the Organization of Experience*, New York, Harper and Row.

Goodwin, Jeff. (2011), "Why We Were Surprised (Again) by the Arab Spring", *Swiss Political Science Review*, 17 (4), pp. 452-461.

Hinnebusch, Raymond A. (2001), *Syria: Revolution from Above*, New York, Routledge.

Hinnebusch, Raymond A. (2008), *The State and the Political Economy of Reform in Syria*, Scotland, Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Jenkins, Craig J. (1983), "Resource Mobilization Theory and the Study of Social Movements", *Annual Review of Sociology*, 9, pp. 527-553.

Kitschelt, Herbert and Wilkinson, Steven I. (2007), *Patrons, Clients and Policies: Patterns of Democratic Accountability and Political Competition*, New York, Cambridge University Press.

Bert, Klandermans. (1997), *The Social Psychology of Protest*, Cambridge, Blackwell Publishers.

Klandermans, Bert and Staggenborg, Suzanne. (2002), *Methods of Social Movement Research*, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press.

Mabrouk, Mehdi. (2011), "A Revolution for Dignity and Freedom: Preliminary Observations on the Social and Cultural Background to the Tunisian Revolution", *The Journal of North African Studies*, 16 (4), pp. 625-635.

McAdam, Doug and McCarthy, John D. And Zald, Mayer N. (1996), *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Cultural Framings*, New York, Cambridge University Press.

McAdam, Doug and Tarrow, G. Sidney and Tilly, Charles. (2001), *Dynamics of Contention*, New York, Cambridge University Press.

McAdam, Doug and Snow, A. David. (2010), *Readings on Social Movements: Origins, Dynamics and Outcomes*, New York, Oxford University Press.

McCarthy, John D. and Wolfson, Mark. (1996), "Resource Mobilization By Local Social Movement Organizations: Agency, Strategy, and Organization in the Movement Against Drinking and Driving", *American Sociology Review*, 61 (6), pp. 1070-1088.

Melucci, Alberto. (1996), *Challenging Codes: Collective Action in the Information Age*, New York, Cambridge University Press.

Meyer, D.S. (2004). Protest and political opportunities. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 30, 125-145.

Migdal, J. S. (1988), *Strong Societies and Weak States: State-Society Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World*, Princeton, Princeton University Press.

Niekerk, Bret Van and Pillay, Kiru and Maharaj Manoj. (2011), "Analyzing the Role of ICTs in the Tunisian and Egyptian Unrest from an Information Warfare Perspective", *International Journal of Communication*, 5, pp. 1406-1416.

Olson, Mancur. (1965), *The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press.

Opp, Karl-Dieter. (2009), *Theories of Political Protest and Social Movements: A Multidisciplinary Introduction, Critique, and Synthesis*, New York, Routledge.

Snow, A. David and Rochford, E. Burke and Worden, Steven K. and Benford, Robert. (1986), "Frame Alignment Processes, Micromobilization, and Movement Participation", *American Sociological Review*, 51 (4), pp. 464-481.

Snow, David A. (2004), "Framing Processes, Ideology, and Discursive Fields", in *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*, David A. Snow, Sarah A. Soule, Hanspeter Kriesi (eds.) *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*, London, Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

Tarrow, Sidney G. (1998), *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*, New York, Cambridge University Press.

Tarrow, Sidney G. (2012), *Strangers at the Gates: Movements and States in Contentious Politics*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Tilly, Charles and Tarrow, G. Sidney. (2007), *Contentious Politics*, Colombia, Paradigm Publishers.

Tilly, Charles. (2004), *Social Movements: 1768-2004*, Boulder, Paradigm Publishers.

----- (2003), *The Politics of Collective Violence*, , Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

----- (2007), *Democracy*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

----- (1995), "To Explain Political Processes", *The American Journal of Sociology*, 100 (6), pp. 1594-1610.

Tilly, Charles and Wood, Lesley J. (2013), *Social Movements, 1768-2012*, Paradigm Publishers.

Van Dam, Nikolas. (1996), *The Struggle for Power in Syria: Politics and Society under Asad and Ba'th Party*, New York, I. B. Tauris.

Zald, N. Mayer and McAdam, Doug and McCarthy, John D. (1996), *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Cultural Framings*, New York, Cambridge University Press.

II- CITED ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, “4th Report of Commission of Inquiry on Syria –A/HFC/22/59”, http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/HRCouncil/CoISyria/A.HRC.22.59_en.pdf, (accessed on 12.05.2013)

Internal Displacement Monitoring Center, “Global Overview 2014: People Internally Displaced by Conflict and Violence”, Inter-agency Information Sharing Portal, <http://www.internal-displacement.org/assets/publications/2014/201405-global-overview-2014-en.pdf>, (accessed on 06.06.2014)

International Monetary Fund Press Release, “IMF Managing Director Dominique Strauss-Kahn’s Statement at the Conclusion of his Visit to Tunisia”, 18 November 2008, <https://www.imf.org/external/country/tun/index.htm?type=9998>, (accessed on 11.03.2012)

International Crisis Group Middle East/North Africa Report, “Popular Protest in North Africa and the Middle East(VII): The Syrian Regime’s Slow-Motion Suicide”, No. 109, 13 July 2011, [http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/Middle%20East%20North%20Africa/Iraq%20Syria%20Lebanon/Syria/109%20Popular%20Protest%20in%20North%20Africa%20and%20the%20Middle%20East%20VII%20--%20The%20Syrian%20Regimes%20Slow-motion%20Suicide.pdf](http://www.crisisgroup.org/~/media/Files/Middle%20East%20North%20Africa/Iraq%20Syria%20Lebanon/Syria/109%20Popular%20Protest%20in%20North%20Africa%20and%20the%20Middle%20East%20VII%20--%20The%20Syrian%20Regimes%20Slow-motion%20Suicide.pdf), (accessed on 15.09.2012)

State.gov, “Office of The Special Coordinator For Middle East Transitions”, <http://www.state.gov/s/d/met/index.htm>, (accessed on 05.06.2012)

Bayram Balci, “Turkey’s Relation with Syrian Opposition”, *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, 13.04.2012,

<http://carnegieendowment.org/2012/04/13/turkey-s-relations-with-syrian-opposition/a88u>, (accessed on 17.04.2012)

“Clinton Meets With Syria Opposition” ,
http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/clinton-meets-with-syria-opposition/2011/12/06/gIQApzQ9ZO_story.html , (accessed on 07.12.2011)

Hassan Hassan, “How the Muslim Brotherhood Hijacked Syria’s Revolution”, Foreign Policy, 13.03.2012,
http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2013/03/13/how_the_muslim_brotherhood_hijacked_syria_s_revolution , (accessed on 16.03.2012)

Jared Markland and Krittika Lalwaney, “Syrian National Council: A Victorious Opposition?”, The George Washington University IMES Capstone Paper Series, May 2012, p. 42, <https://www.gwu.edu/~imes/assets/docs/Capstone%20Papers%20-%202012/Lalwaney,%20Markland.pdf> , (accessed on 08.09.2012)

Rania Abouzeid, “The emergency Session on Syria: That’s What Friends Are For?”, Time, 24.02.2012,
<http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2107636,00.html> , (accessed on 26.02.2012)

Jonathan Schanzer, “Saudi Arabia is Arming the Syrian Opposition”, Foreign Policy, 27 February 2012,
http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/02/27/saudi_arabia_is_arming_the_syrian_opposition, (accessed on 29.02.2012)

Steven Haydemann “Syria’s Opposition Movement”, United States Institute of Peace, 5 April 2012, <http://www.usip.org/publications/syrias-opposition-movement>, (accessed on 17.08.2012)

Rania Abouzeid, “Syria’s Secular and Islamist rebels: Who Are the Saudis and the Qataris Arming?”, Time, 18 September 2012, <http://world.time.com/2012/09/18/syrias-secular-and-islamist-rebels-who-are-the-saudis-and-the-qataris-arming/> , (accessed on 20.09.2012)

U.S. Department of State, “U.S. Government Assistance to Syria”, Fact Sheet, 19 June 2013, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2013/06/210899.htm> , (accessed on 24.06.2013)

Elizabeth Dickinson, “Playing With Fire: Why Private Gulf Financing Risks Igniting Sectarian Conflict at Home”, Brookings Paper, December 2013, <http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/papers/2013/12/06%20private%20gulf%20financing%20syria%20extremist%20rebels%20sectarian%20conflict%20dickinson/private%20gulf%20financing%20syria%20extremist%20rebels%20sectarian%20conflict%20dickinson.pdf> , (accessed on 04.02.2014)

Ibtissam Lassoued, “Kuwait, A New Stance on Financial Crime”, Law Update, Al Tamimi And Co. , September 2013, <http://www.tamimi.com/en/magazine/law-update/section-5/september-3/kuwait-a-new-stance-on-financial-crime.html>, (accessed on 15.09.2013)

“About LCCs”, <http://www.lccsyria.org/about>, (accessed on 14.07.2011)

“Local Coordination Committees’ Statement Regarding the Deteriorating Conditions of the Syrian National Council”, <http://www.lccsyria.org/8477> , (accessed on 19.05.2012)

International Committee of the Red Cross - Resource Center, <https://www.icrc.org/eng/resources/documents/overview/syria-update-25-02-2012.htm>, 23.03.2012, (accessed on 14.07.2012)

“SNC Delegation Meets With Saudi Foreign Minister”, <http://syriancouncil.org/en/news/item/526-snc-delegation-meets-with-saudi-foreign-minister.html> , (accessed on 23.01.2012)

“What is Turkey’s Role in Syria’s Islamic Opposition”, <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2013/09/turkey-syria-islamic-opposition-role.html> , (accessed on 02.10.2013)

“Foreign Secretary Meets Syrian Opposition”, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/foreign-secretary-meets-syrian-opposition>, (accessed on 22.11.2011)

“City of Homs Becomes Focus of Syria’s Uprising”, <http://news.yahoo.com/city-homs-becomes-focus-syrias-uprising-203508408.html>, (accessed on 10.02.2012)

“Syrian Troops Bombard Sealed-off Suburb of Homs”, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/feb/09/syrian-troops-suburb-homs>, (accessed on 10.02.2012)

“Syrian Rebels Quit Besieged Homs Stronghold”, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/03/01/syria-idUSL5E8DTB7I20120301>, (accessed on 04.03.2012)

“Local Coordination Committees” , <http://www.lccsyria.org/6032>, (accessed on 6.02.2012)

“Syrian Interior Ministry: Terrorist Groups in Homs Escalated Aggressions Against Citizens”, <http://www.champress.net/index.php?q=en/Article/view/112549>, 02.03.2012, (accessed on 04.03.2012)

“Syria Clashes: Homs Death Toll Soars to 350”,
<http://news.sky.com/story/924312/syria-clashes-homs-death-toll-soars-to-350>,
04.02.2012, (accessed on 06.02.2012)

“Press Release Regarding the Latest Attacks Perpetrated by the Syrian Administration Against the People of Homs”, Turkish Foreign Ministry, No:37,
http://www.mfa.gov.tr/no_37_-4-february-2012_-press-release-regarding-the-latest-attacks-perpetrated-by-the-syrian-administration-against-the-people-of-homs.en.mfa,
04.03.2012, (accessed on 06.03.2012)

“Russia and China Block U.N. Action on Crisis in Syria”,
<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/05/world/middleeast/syria-homs-death-toll-said-to-rise.html>, 04.02.2012, (accessed on 06.02.2012)

“U.N. Chief Criticises Atrocious Homs Assault”,
<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2012/03/2012334752803236.html>,
03.03.2012, (accessed on 06.03.2012)

“Syria Crisis: Gulf Arab States Expel Syrian Ambassadors”,
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-16932556>, 07.02.2012, (accessed on 08.02.2012)

“Syrian Flee to Turkey, Telling of Gunmen Attacking Protesters”,
http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/09/world/middleeast/09syria.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0 08.06.2011, (accessed on 12.06.2011)

“In Aleppo Christians Fleeing Rebel-held Areas”,
<http://www.news.va/en/news/asiasyria-in-aleppo-christians-fleeing-rebel-held->,
(accessed on 12.06.2011)

“Man at the Centre of Tunisia Unrest Recuperating, Doctors Say”,
<http://gulfnews.com/news/region/tunisia/man-at-the-centre-of-tunisia-unrest-recuperating-doctors-say-1.738967>, 31.12.2010, (accessed on 06.05.2011)

“Riots Reported in Tunisian City”,
<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2010/12/2010122063745828931.html>,
20.12.2010 , (accessed on 06.05.2011)

“Thousands of Tunisia Lawyers Strike”,
<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2011/01/201116193136690227.html>,
(accessed on 06.05.2011)

“Tunisia Unrest Spreads to Capital”,
<http://www.aljazeera.com/video/africa/2011/01/2011111214716877786.html>,
(accessed on 06.05.2011)

“Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali Forced to Flee Tunisia as Protesters Claim Victory”,
<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/jan/14/tunisian-president-flees-country-protests>, (accessed on 06.05.2011)

“Tunisia Protesters Turn Government HQ into Campsite” ,
<http://af.reuters.com/article/libyaNews/idAFLDE70R13720110128?sp=true>,
(accessed on 06.05.2011)

“Tunisian Islamist Leader Rachid Ghannouchi Returns Home”,
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-12318824>, (accessed on 07.05.2011)

Nassima Neggaz, “Syria’s Arab Spring: Language Enrichment in the Midst of Revolution”, http://www.language-and-society.org/journal/2-2/1_neggaz_article.pdf,
(accessed on 19.12.2013)

“Protesters Stage Rare Demo in Syria”,
<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/03/20113151834383782.html>,
(accessed on 17.03.2011)

“In Syria, Demonstrations Are Few and Brief”,
http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/17/world/middleeast/17syria.html?_r=0, (accessed
on 17.03.2011)

“Syria’s Day of Anger Failed to Ignite as Protesters Stay Away”,
<http://www.thenational.ae/news/world/middle-east/syrias-day-of-anger-failed-to-ignite-as-protesters-stay-away>, (accessed on 16.03.2011)

“A Timeline of Some Key Events in Syrian Uprising”,
<http://www.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/03/16/200987.html>, (accessed on 19.03.2011)

“Timeline: Unrest in Syria”, <http://apps.washingtonpost.com/g/page/world/timeline-unrest-in-syria/207/>, (accessed on 20.01.2014)

“Syria Unrest: Tear Gas Fired at Deraa Funeral”, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-12796020>, (accessed on 21.03.2011)

“Thousands Demonstrate in Syrian Cities”,
<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/04/201141511585431229.html>,
(accessed on 25.04.2011)

“Protests Spread to Southern Town Jassem”,
<http://yalibnan.com/2011/03/21/protests-spread-to-southern-syrian-town-jassem/>,
(accessed on 25.03.2011)

“Deaths as Syria Protests Spread”,
<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/03/201132616546326475.html>,
(accessed on 25.04.2011)

“Syria Unrest: Protesters Killed at Omari Mosque”,
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-12827542>, (accessed on 27.03.2011)

“Syrian regime Cuts off Electricity, Phones, and Water to Dara”, Youtube footage,
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iKuEloEOptk>, (accessed on 27.04.2011)

“President al-Assad Discusses with Delegation From Dara”,
<http://www.sana.sy/eng/337/2011/05/17/pr-347150.htm>, (accessed on 24.05.2011)

“Assad Appoints New Governor for Dara”,
<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/04/201144134848651549.html>,
(accessed on 17.04.2011)

“Syria to Set Facebook Status to Unbanned in Gesture to People”,
<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/feb/08/syria-facebook-unbanned-people>,
(accessed on 11.02.2011)

“To Much Skepticism, Syria Issues Amnesty”,
<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/01/world/middleeast/01syria.html>, (accessed on 03.06.2011)

“Syria’a Poor Receive Cash Aid From Government”,
<http://www.thenational.ae/news/world/middle-east/syrias-poor-receive-cash-aid-from-government>, (accessed on 17.03.2011)

“Syria Protests: Assad to Lift State of Emergency”,
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-13134322>, (accessed on 25.04.2011)

“Syria Mobilizes Thousands for Pro-Assad Marches”,
<http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/03/29/us-syria-idUSTRE72N2MC20110329>,
(accessed on 04.04.2011)

“ABC’s Barbara Walters’ Interview With Syrian President Bashar al-Assad”,
<http://abcnews.go.com/International/transcript-abcs-barbara-walters-interview-syrian-president-bashar/story?id=15099152&page=2>, (accessed on 08.12.2011)

“Syrian Soldiers Take Up Positions Before Protests”,
http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/world/2011-05-12-syria-protests_n.htm,
(accessed on 14.05.2011)

“Syrian Army Tanks Moving Towards Hama”, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-13343540>, (accessed on 11.05.2011)

“11 More Killed in Terrorist Infighting as Syria Army Advances”,
<http://en.alalam.ir/news/1597071>, (accessed on 05.05.2011)

“Syria’s Once-Peaceful Protesters Turn to Guns”,
<http://www.cbsnews.com/news/syrias-once-peaceful-protesters-turn-to-guns/>,
(accessed on 07.06.2011)

“Armed Residents Put up Resistance to Syrian Army”,
http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle09.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2011/May/middleeast_May870.xml§ion=middleeast, (accessed on 07.06.2011)

“Hundreds Held in Syria Protest Crackdown”,
<http://news.sky.com/story/853909/hundreds-held-in-syria-protest-crackdown>, (accessed on 08.05.2011)

“Syrian Troops Will Not Shoot Protesters”,
<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/05/201151362452271960.html>,
(accessed on 17.05.2011)

“Syria to Send in Army after 120 Troops Killed”,
<http://ca.reuters.com/article/topNews/idCATRE7553AI20110606?sp=true>, (accessed on 07.06.2011)

“Syria Ratchets up Military Operation on Jisr al-Shghour”,
<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/jun/10/syria-military-jisr-al-shughour>,
(accessed on 08.07.2011)

Andrea Glioti, “Secrets From Jisr Al-Shughour”, The Majalla,
<http://www.majalla.com/eng/2012/04/article55230561>, (accessed on 07.07.2011)

“Security, Tranquility Back to Jisr Al-Shughour”,
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mFaDLMthPhU>, Youtube footage, (accessed on 04.08.2011)

“Syrian Rebels Sidetracked by Scramble for Spoils of War”,
<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/dec/27/syrian-rebels-scramble-spoils-war>,
(accessed on 28.12.2012)

“Syria Rebels Accused of Looting Churches, Destroying Mosques” ,
http://worldnews.nbcnews.com/_news/2013/01/23/16661634-rights-group-syria-rebels-accused-of-looting-churches-destroying-mosque?lite, (accessed on 24.01.2013)

“U.S. Intelligence Official Acknowledges Missed Arab Spring Signs”,
http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/world_now/2012/07/us-intelligence-official-acknowledges-missed-signs-ahead-of-arab-spring-.html, (accessed on 25.07.2012)

“Arab Spring Took British Intelligence Surprise, Report Says”,
<http://www.theguardian.com/uk/2012/jul/12/arab-spring-british-intelligence-report>,
(accessed on 15.07.2012)

“U.S. Intelligence Official Acknowledges Missed Arab Spring Signs”,
http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/world_now/2012/07/us-intelligence-official-acknowledges-missed-signs-ahead-of-arab-spring-.html, (accessed on 25.07.2012)

“In Syria, Demonstrations Are Few and Brief”,
<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/17/world/middleeast/17syria.html>, (accessed on 17.05.2011)

“U.N. Chief Slams Syria’s Crackdown on Protests”,
<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/03/2011318231622114396.html>,
(accessed on 25.03.2011)

“EU Condemns Unacceptable Repression in Syria”, <http://www.middle-east-online.com/english/?id=45066>, (accessed on 25.03.2011)

“Obama Administration Condemns Syrian Violence Against Protesters”,
<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-03-18/obama-administration-condemns-syrian-violence-against-protests.html>, (accessed on 21.03.2011)

“More Than 100 Killed in Syrian Anti-government Rallies”,
<http://www.jpost.com/Middle-East/More-than-100-killed-in-Syrian-anti-government-rallies>, (accessed on 26.03.2011)

“Saudi Arabia Calls for Syrian Reforms”,
<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/08/201187213922184761.html>,
(accessed on 09.10.2011)

“Erdogan Says He Will Pres Syria’s Assad to Reform”,
<http://www.jpost.com/Middle-East/Erdogan-says-he-will-press-Syrias-Assad-to-reform>, (accessed on 03.04.2011)

“Foreign Ministry Spokeperson Jiang Yu’s Regular Press Conference on May 31, 2011, <http://www.china-botschaft.de/det/fyrth/t827089.htm>, (accessed on 04.06.2011)

“U.S. Slaps Sanctions on Syrian President, Top Aides”,
<http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/05/18/us-syria-usa-idUSTRE74H4XX20110518>, (accessed on 20.05.2011)

“Guidance: Embargoes and Sanctions on Syria”, <https://www.gov.uk/sanctions-on-syria>, (accessed on 10.12.2012)

“Syrian Dissidents Form National Council”,
http://www.edmondsun.com/news_tab3/x2122765173/Syrian-dissidents-form-national-council, (accessed on 27.08.2011)

“The Syrian Opposition: Who’s Doing the Talking?”,
<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2012/jul/12/syrian-opposition-doing-the-talking>, (accessed on 12.07.2012)

“Syrian National Council, Syria’s Rebel Government, Opens Offices in Turkey”,
<http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/regions/middle-east/111214/syrian-national-council-syria-rebel-government-turkey>, (accessed on 17.05.2011)

“Turkish PM: Lost Confidence in Syrian Leadership”, <http://www.voanews.com/content/diplomatic-tensions-escalate-as-turkey-meets-with-syrian-opposition-133921103/148222.html>, (accessed on 14.10.2011)

“FM Davutoglu Meets With Syrian Opposition Representatives”, <http://www.todayszaman.com/news-273049-fm-davutoglu-meets-with-syrian-opposition-representatives.html>, (accessed on 03.03.2012)

“Qatar Calls for Recognising Syrian Opposition”, <http://af.reuters.com/article/commoditiesNews/idAFL5E8EA08I20120310>, (accessed on 10.03.2012)

“Saudi-Qatar Rivalry Divides Syrian Opposition”, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/01/15/us-syria-crisis-qatar-idUSBREA0E1G720140115>, (accessed on 15.01.2014)

“Syrian Opposition Hijacked by Islamists, Foreign Influence”, <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/tr/politics/2012/12/islamist-alternative-will-not-save-syria.html##ixzz34QPcqeQM>, (accessed on 14.12.2012)

“Chairman’s Conclusions of Friends of Syria Meeting”, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/chairmans-conclusions-of-friends-of-syria-meeting>, (accessed on 27.02.2012)

“Internal Syrian Opposition Group Rejects U.S. Strike”, <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/security/2013/09/syrian-opposition-in-syria-rejects-us-strike.html#>, (accessed on 07.09.2013)

“Chairman’s Conclusions of Friends of Syria Meeting”, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/chairmans-conclusions-of-friends-of-syria-meeting> , (accessed on 27.02.2012)

“Exclusive: Arab States Arm Rebels as UN Talks of Syrian Civil War”, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/exclusive-arab-states-arm-rebels-as-un-talks-of-syrian-civil-war-7845026.html>, (accessed on 15.06.2012)

“Saudi, Qatari Plans to Arm Syrian Rebels Risk Overtaking Cautious Approach Favored by U.S.”, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/saudi-qatari-plans-to-arm-syrian-rebels-risk-overtaking-cautious-approach-favored-by-us/2012/03/01/gIQArWQfIR_story.html, (accessed on 04.03.2012)

“Hundreds Held in Syria Protest Crackdown”, http://news.sky.com/story/853909/hundreds-held-in-syria-protest-crackdown____sky_news, 05.05.2012 , (accessed on 06.05.2012)

“Syria Opposition Presses for Serious Action”, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia-pacific/2012/04/2012412022613580.html>, (accessed on 01.04.2012)

“After A Year, Deep Divisions Hobble Syria’s Opposition”, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/24/world/middleeast/syrian-opposition-is-hobbled-by-deep-divisions.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0 ,(accessed on 25.02.2012)

“Divisions Emerge at Syria Opposition Conference”, <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/infighting-plagues-syria-opposition-conference> , (accessed on 04.11.2012)

“Syria’s Local Coordination Committees Threatens to Withdraw from Syrian National Council”, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/05/17/syria-local-coordination-committees_n_1523703.html , (accessed on 19.05.2012)

“Free Syrian Army Founded by Seven Officers to Fight the Syrian Army”, <http://www.joshualandis.com/blog/free-syrian-army-established-to-fight-the-syrian-army/>, (accessed on 02.08.2011)

“Exclusive: Arab States Arm Rebels as UN Talks of Syrian Civil War”, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/exclusive-arab-states-arm-rebels-as-un-talks-of-syrian-civil-war-7845026.html>, (accessed on 15.06.2012)

“Saudi, Qatari Plans to Arm Syrian Rebels Risk Overtaking Cautious Approach Favored by U.S.”, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/saudi-qatari-plans-to-arm-syrian-rebels-risk-overtaking-cautious-approach-favored-by-us/2012/03/01/gIQArWQfIR_story.html, (accessed on 04.03.2012)

“Scales of Uprising Begin to Tip Against Assad”, <http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/news/world/middleeast/article3456356.ece>, (accessed on 27.06.2012)

“Arab States Agree to Provide Millions to Pay Opposition Fighters in Syria”, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/syrian-opposition-leaders-plead-for-more-help-us-pledges-12-million-more-in-aid/2012/04/01/gIQA9MOvoS_story.html, (accessed on 02.07.2012)

“Chaos in Syria: Are Army Deserters Helping to Arm the Opposition?”, <http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2076250,00.html>, (accessed on 09.06.2011)

“Saudi Millions and Special Forces Expertise Turn Syria’s Rebels into a Fighting Force”, http://article.wn.com/view/2012/09/21/Saudi_millions_and_special_forces_expertise_turn_Syrias_rebe/, (accessed on 24.09.2012)

“The West Searches in Vain for Conflict’s Good Guys”,
<http://www.smh.com.au/world/the-west-searches-in-vain-for-conflicts-good-guys-20120831-255ho.html> , (accessed on 04.09.2012)

“U.S. and Turkey to Step Up Nonlethal Aid to Rebels in Syria”,
<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/26/world/middleeast/us-and-turkey-to-step-up-nonlethal-aid-to-syrian-rebels.html>, (accessed on 27.03.2012)

“U.S. Aid to Syria Opposition Includes Specialized Communications Equipment”,
<http://security.blogs.cnn.com/2012/04/02/u-s-aid-to-syrian-opposition-includes-specialized-communications-equipment/> , (accessed on 04.04.2012)

“Syrian Forces Capture U.S. Satcom Gear”,
<http://dailycaller.com/2013/10/17/syrian-forces-capture-us-satcom-gear-video/> , (accessed on 20.10.2013)

“C.I.A. said to Aid in Steering Arms to Syrian Opposition”,
http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/21/world/middleeast/cia-said-to-aid-in-steering-arms-to-syrian-rebels.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0 , (accessed on 22.06.2012)

“Private Donors’ Funds Add Wild Card to War in Syria”,
<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/13/world/middleeast/private-donors-funds-add-wild-card-to-war-in-syria.html?pagewanted=all>, (accessed on 14.11.2013)

“Private Donors’ Funds Add Wild Card to War in Syria”,
<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/13/world/middleeast/private-donors-funds-add-wild-card-to-war-in-syria.html?pagewanted=all> , (accessed on 14.11.2013)

“Private Money Pours into Syrian Conflict as Rich Donors Pick Sides”,
http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/private-money-pours-into-syrian-conflict-as-rich-donors-pick-sides/2013/06/15/67841656-cf8a-11e2-8845-d970ccb04497_story.html , (accessed on 25.07.2013)

“Coalition of Factions From the Streets Fuels a New Opposition in Syria”, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/07/01/world/middleeast/01syria.html?_r=2&pagewanted=all&gwh=546B83259DA9A598F7ABA2FBAAE4611E&gwt=pay , (accessed on 04.07.2011)

“Syria’s Coordination Committees: A Brief History”, <http://english.alkhbar.com/node/764> , 01.10.2011, (accessed on 04.10.2011)

“Syrian Opposition Decides to Take up Arms Against Assad Regime”, <http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/syrian-opposition-decides-to-take-up-arms-against-assad-regime-1.381184>, (accessed on 05.09.2011)

“Syrian Local Coordinating Committees on Taking Up Arms and Foreign Intervention”, <http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/2539/syrian-local-coordinating-committees-on-taking-up->, (accessed on 07.09.2011)

“Local Coordination Committees’ Statement Regarding the Deteriorating Conditions of the Syrian National Council”, <http://www.lccsyria.org/8477> , (accessed on 19.05.2012)

“Syrian National Council: Dissidents Formally Establish Council to Overthrow Assad”, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/10/02/syria-national-council_n_991372.html, (accessed on 11.02.2011)

“The Antalya Conference- A Brief Report”, <http://pomed.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/The-Antalya-Conference.pdf> , (accessed on 24.06.2011)

“Syrian Opposition Meet in Turkey to Discuss Increasing Pressure on Assad”, <http://www.thenational.ae/news/world/middle-east/syrian-opposition-meet-in-turkey-to-discuss-increasing-pressure-on-assad> , (06.06.2011)

“Syrian Dissidents Form National Council”,
http://www.edmondsun.com/news_tab3/x2122765173/Syrian-dissidents-form-national-council , (accessed on 26.08.2011)

“Sorbonne Professor Appointed Head of Syrian Opposition Council”,
<http://en.ria.ru/world/20110829/166274819.html> , (accessed on 04.09.2011)

SNC web site, <http://syriancouncil.org/en/about.html>, (accessed on 28.09.2011)

SNC Statements, <http://ts.mygamersplatoon.com/en/mission-statement.html>,
(accessed on 25.11.2011)

“France Recognises Syrian Council, Proposes Military Intervention”,
<http://euobserver.com/defence/114380> , (accessed on 25.11.2011)

“UK Recognises Syrian Opposition Group”, <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/68db745c-331f-11e2-aa83-00144feabdc0.html#axzz369Dq5FVJ> , 20.11.2011, (accessed on 21.11.2011)

“Remarks at Meeting With Syrian National Council”,
<http://www.state.gov/secretary/20092013clinton/rm/2011/12/178332.htm> , (accessed on 14.12.2011)

“How the Muslim Brotherhood Hijacked Syria's Revolution”,
<http://foreignpolicy.com/2013/03/13/how-the-muslim-brotherhood-hijacked-syrias-revolution/>, (accessed on 17.03.2013)

“Rifts Split Syria's Opposition at Cairo Meeting”, <http://news.yahoo.com/rifts-split-syrias-opposition-cairo-meeting-214457053.html>, (accessed on 08.09.2012)

“U.S. Looks to Build Alternative Syrian Opposition Leadership”, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/us-looks-to-build-alternative-syrian-opposition-leadership/2012/10/31/ccfc7a40-2388-11e2-8448-81b1ce7d6978_story.html, (accessed on 22.12.2012)

“Syrian Opposition Calls for International Military Intervention”, <http://edition.cnn.com/2012/03/12/world/meast/syria-unrest/>, 13.03.2012, (accessed on 15.04.2012)

“SNC and Free Syrian Army Row Over Military Leadership”, <http://english.al-akhbar.com/node/4718>, (accessed on 04.05.2012)

“Rift Develops in Opposition Groups”, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/02/27/us-syria-opposition-idUSTRE81Q02020120227>, (accessed on 05.06.2012)

“Turmoil within the Syrian National Council”, <http://www.thenational.ae/news/world/middle-east/turmoil-within-the-syrian-national-council>, (accessed on 17.06.2012)

“Syrian Protesters Call for International Protection”, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/09/10/world/middleeast/10syria.html?_r=0, (accessed on 13.11.2011)

“Syria's Opposition Chooses President, Formally Signs Coalition Deal”, <http://english.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/11/12/249032.html>, (accessed on 14.12.2012)

“Defected Syrian Security Agent Speaks Out”, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/06/201168175624573155.html>, (accessed on 09.06.2011)

“Syrian Army Colonel Defects Forms Free Syrian Army”, <http://www.aawsat.net/2011/08/article55245595/syrian-army-colonel-defects-forms-free-syrian-army>, (accessed on 03.09.2011)

“Syrian Army Defectors Go on Offense, Militarizing Syria’s Uprising”, <http://www.voanews.com/content/syrian-army-defectors-go-on-offense-militarizing-syrias-uprising-133963348/148279.html>, (accessed on 19.12.2011)

“In Slap at Syria, Turkey Shelters Anti-Assad Fighters”, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/28/world/europe/turkey-is-sheltering-antigovernment-syrian-militia.html>, (accessed on 04.12.2011)

“Riad al-Asaad, Dissident Syrian Colonel, Fled to Turkey”, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/10/05/riad-al-asaad-syria_n_995651.html, (accessed on 14.07.2011)

“The Free Syrian Army Doesn't Exist”, <http://www.joshualandis.com/blog/the-free-syrian-army-doesnt-exist/>, (accessed on 18.05.2013)

“Chaos in Syria: Are Army Deserters Helping to Arm the Opposition”, <http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2076250,00.html>, (accessed on 08.11.2011)

“In Syria, Seized Weapons Caches Boost Rebels' Hopes After Weeks of Setbacks”, http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/seized-weapons-caches-boost-rebel-hopes-after-weeks-of-setbacks/2013/08/20/88ece6fc-09d1-11e3-8974-f97ab3b3c677_story.html, (accessed on 12.09.2013)

“Arms Smuggling into Syria Flourishes: Experts”,
<http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2011/Oct-16/151423-arms-smuggling-into-syria-flourishes-experts.ashx>, (accessed on 13.12.2011)

“Defectors Claim Attack That Killed Syria Soldiers”,
<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/27/world/middleeast/army-defectors-in-syria-take-credit-for-deadly-attack.html>, (accessed on 11.12.2011)

“Islamists, Rebels Cautious on FSA Command Move to Syria”, <http://english.al-akhbar.com/node/12548>, (accessed on 12.10.2012)

“David Cameron Accused of Betraying Syrian Rebels”,
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/syria/10180820/David-Cameron-accused-of-betraying-Syrian-rebels.html>, (accessed on 19.09.2013)

“Rebels Kidnap, Terrorize Syrian Public”, <http://www.jpost.com/Middle-East/Rebels-kidnap-terrorize-Syrian-public-311619>, (accessed on 02.07.2013)

“Syria Rebels Create New Unified Military Command”,
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/12/08/syria-rebels-military-council_n_2263256.html, (accessed on 15.09.2012)

Youtube Footage, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OBIZcqN0Kao&feature=>, (accessed on 16.06.2011)

“Khalid bin Al-Waleed Brigade”, <https://syriarevolts.wordpress.com/tag/khalid-bin-al-waleed-brigade/>, (accessed on 04.11.2011)

“Syria: The Revolution Will Be Weaponised”, <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2011/09/2011923115735281764.html>, (accessed on 27.11.2011)

“Syria Unrest: Jabal al-Zawiya Massacres”, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-16287450>, 19.01.2012, (accessed on 18.03.2012)

“Syrian Troops Fight Rebels Near Damascus”, <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2012/01/26/uk-syria-idUKL6E8C52E220120126>, (accessed on 14.03.2012)

“Syrian Rebels Leave Ambattled Homs Stronghold”, <http://www.jpost.com/Middle-East/Syrian-rebels-leave-embattled-Homs-stronghold>, (accessed on 07.05.2012)

“Syrian Rebels Retreat From Baba Amr District of Homs”, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/mar/01/syrian-rebels-retreat-baba-amr-homs>, (accessed on 04.05.2012)

“Fears Grown of Humanitarian Crisis in Homs”, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2012/02/2012222480571964.html>, (accessed on 14.05.2012)

“Clinton to Syrian Opposition: Ousting al-Assad is Only First Step in Transition”, <http://edition.cnn.com/2011/12/06/world/meast/clinton-syrian-opposition/>, (accessed on 08.04.2012)

“Syrian National Council in Moscow for First-ever Talks”, <http://rt.com/politics/syria-russia-lavrov-moscow-talks-912/print/>, (accessed on 11.07.2012)

“Exclusive: Arab States Arm Rebels as UN Talks of Syrian Civil War”,
<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/exclusive-arab-states-arm-rebels-as-un-talks-of-syrian-civil-war-7845026.html>, (accessed on 21.08.2012)

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

CHRONOLOGY OF THE SYRIAN UPRISING, 2011-2012

2011 March - Syrian security forces detained a group of children in southern city of Deraa and residents of the town began to protest demanding release of the children and also political prisoners.

2011 April - President Assad announced conciliatory measures, releasing dozens of political prisoners, dismissing government, lifting 48-year-old state of emergency.

2011 May - As the protest movement spreaded to other cities army tanks enter Deraa, Banyas, Homs and suburbs of Damascus in an effort to crush anti-regime protests. US and European Union tighten sanctions. President Assad announces amnesty for political prisoners.

2011 June - 120 members of the security forces have been killed by armed groups in the northwestern town of Jisr al-Shughour. Troops besiege the town and more than 10,000 people flee to Turkey. President Assad pledges to start a "national dialogue" on reform.

2011 July - President Assad replaced the governor of the northern province of Hama after mass demonstration there, eventually sending in troops to restore order.

2011 August - The Syrian National Council is formed, the first opposition coalition of diverse groups challenging Syrian regime.

2011 November - The Arab League overwhelmingly approves sanctions against Syria to pressure Damascus to end the crackdown, an unprecedented move against an Arab state.

2011 December - Twin suicide bombs outside security buildings in Damascus kill 44, the first in a series of large blasts in the capital that continue into the following summer.

2012 February – Syrian government increased its operations on nationwide. Russia and China veto a resolution in the UN Security Council that backs an Arab League plan calling for Assad to step down.

2012 March - UN Security Council endorses non-binding peace plan drafted by UN envoy Kofi Annan. China and Russia agree to support the plan after an earlier, tougher draft is modified.

2012 May - France, UK, Germany, Italy, Spain, Canada and Australia expel senior Syrian diplomats.

2012 June - Turkey changes rules of engagement after Syria shoots down a Turkish plane, declaring that if Syrian troops approach Turkey's borders they will be seen as a military threat.

2012 August - First case of senior government official defection. Syrian Prime Minister Riad Hijab defects, US President Obama warns that use of chemical weapons would tilt the US towards intervention.

2012 October - Syria-Turkish tension rises when Syrian mortar fire on a Turkish border town kills five civilians. Turkey returns fire and intercepts a Syrian plane allegedly carrying arms from Russia.

2012 November - National Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces formed in Qatar, excludes Islamist militias. Arab League stops short of full recognition.

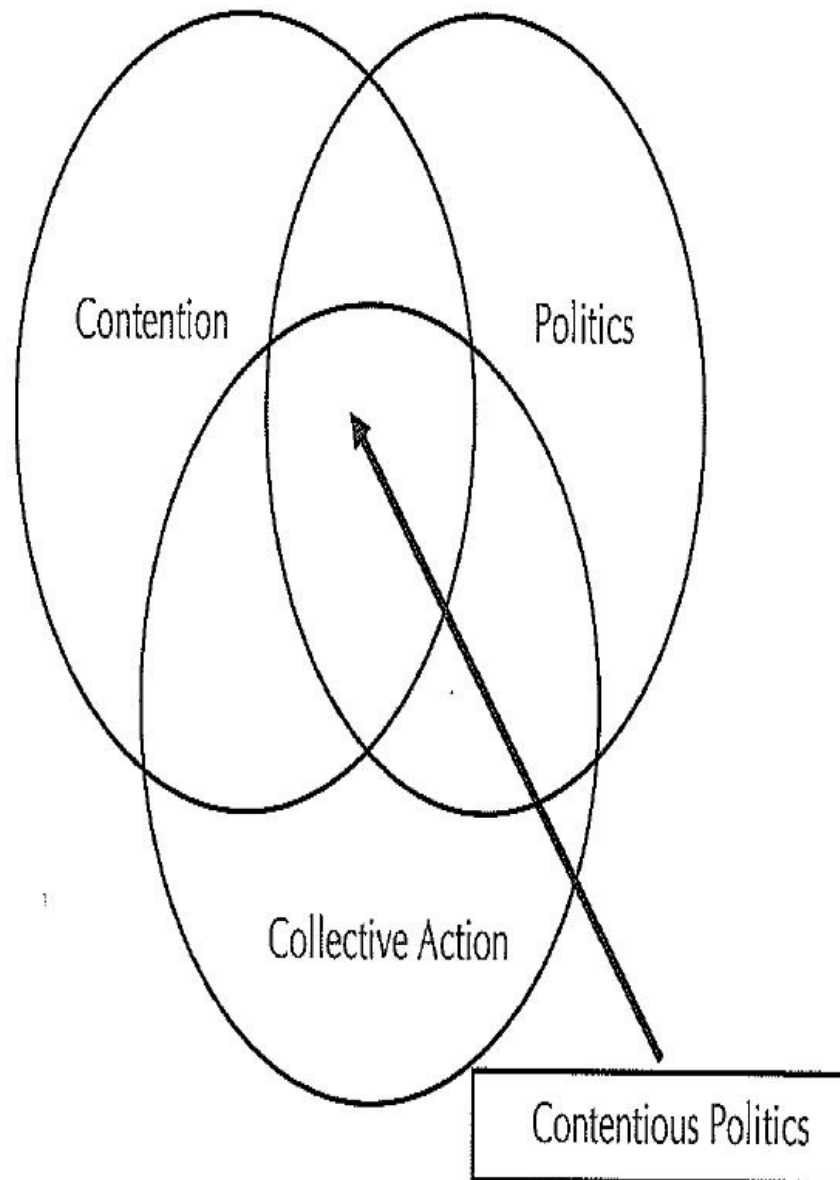
2012 December - US, Britain, France, Turkey and Gulf states formally recognise opposition National Coalition as "legitimate representative" of Syrian people

MAP OF THE SYRIA



APPENDIX C

CONTENTIOUS POLITICS DIAGRAM



APPENDIX D

TURKISH SUMMARY

Ortadoğu’da ‘Arap Baharı’ tanımlamasıyla ifade edilen toplumsal hareketler 2011 yılının ilk aylarıyla birlikte Suriye’de de etkisini göstermeye başlamıştır. Başlarda yürüyüş, gösteri ve sosyal medya kampanyaları gibi şiddet içermeyen toplumsal hareket repertuarlarını kullanan Suriye’deki rejim karşıtı gruplar süreç içerisinde aşamalı olarak organize şiddet içeren eylem biçimlerine yönelmiştir. Suriye’nin birçok kentine yayılan silahlı gruplar Suriye’deki rejim karşıtı muhalefet dinamiğini de dönüşüme uğratmıştır. Tez kapsamında incelenen 2011-2012 döneminde Suriye dışı yabancı patronaj ağlarıyla ilişki dozunu arttıran rejim karşıtı gruplar şiddet içeren eylemlerini büyük oranda yabancı patronaj kaynaklarından sağlamaya başlamış ve bu şekilde Suriye içerisinde faaliyet gösterdikleri yerel popülasyonda yabancılaşmaya yol açmışlardır. Bu tezde Suriye muhalefetinin yabancı patronaj kanallarıyla eklemlenmesi sonrası Suriye içerisindeki mücadele yöntemlerinin nasıl dönüştüğü ve bu dönüşümün yerel halk-rejim karşıtı odaklar ekseninde ne türde bir kırılmaya yol açtığı Charles Tilly’nin “çekişmeci siyaset” (contentious politics) kavramsallaştırması çerçevesinde incelenmeye çalışılmaktadır.

Çekişmeci siyaset literatürünün özgün kaynakları Tilly’nin tek başına ve ortak yazarlarla ele aldığı çalışmalar üzerinden izlenmektedir. Tilly’nin çekişmeci siyaset yaklaşımı her ne kadar toplumsal hareketler kuramları çerçevesinde dikkate alınsa da Tilly, çekişmeci siyaset yaklaşımıyla daha geniş bir eylem alanını çalışmalarının odağına yerleştirmek istemektedir. Tilly’e göre toplumsal hareketler modern dönemin ürünü olan daha dar bir toplumsal eylem alanını işaretler. Toplumsal hareketler, belirli bir iddia ortaya koyma iradesinin kamusal performanslar yoluyla tekrarlanan kamusal gösterilerle dışa vurulmadır. Toplumsal hareketler örgütlere, şebekelere, geleneklere ve dayanışma ağlarına yaslanır. Tüm bu

süreçler de özgün bir dönemsel gelişmenin ürünüdür. Oysa belirli bir iddia ortaya koyma işleminin daha geniş bir kavranışı bu noktada devreye sokulmalıdır. Tilly, bu kavrayış biçimini “çekişmeci siyaset” kavramıyla kodlar.

Çekişmeci siyaset; çekişme, kolektif hareket ve siyasetin kesiştiği noktada etkinleşir. Çekişme başkasının çıkarları üzerinde etkide bulunabilecek iddialarda bulunma sürecidir. İddiada bulunma ise belirli bir öznenin diğer özneye görünür bir şekilde ilişkiye geçme biçimidir. Çekişme, özel olarak çekişme sürecinde girdikleri özgün ilişkiler bakımından özne, nesne ve üzerinde çekişilen iddiayı bir araya getirir. Modern politik sisteminin başat aktörlerinden biri olan devletler çekişme sürecinin öznesi olabildiği gibi nesnesi durumuna da gelebilirler. Ayrıca bu süreç içerisinde devlet dışı aktörler de çeşitli biçimler altında karşı karşıya gelirler. Tilly’nin Tarrow ve McAdam ile birlikte vardığı en kapsamlı çekişmeci siyaset tanımı “çekişmeci siyaset; tarafların birinin mevcut hükümet olduğu anda iddia sahipleri ve onların nesneleri arasında düzensiz, kamusal ve kolektif etkileşimi içerir” şeklinde ortaya çıkmaktadır.

Tilly’nin kavram seti içerisinde süreçler ve mekanizmalar kilit önemdedir. Çekişmeci kolektif aksiyonun benzer bir hat izleyerek birbirini tekrar eden olaylar halinde bir araya getirilmesiyle çekişmeci siyaset tanımına ulaşılır. Mekanizmaların özel bir biçim altında dizilişi ve kombinasyonu süreçler oluşur. Mekanizma ve süreçlerin süregelen etkileşimiyle çekişmeci episotların meydana gelmesini sağlar. Mekanizma ve süreçler arasındaki farklılık özsel biçimde değil; gözlem seviyesinde tanımlanır. Tilly ve Tarrow kendi çalışmalarında bir dizi mekanizma ve süreç tarifi yapmaktadır. Bunlar arasında benzerlik atfı, kimlik etkinleştirme, kimlik değişimi, arabuluculuk, yayılım, koalisyon oluşumu, ticarileşme, uluslararasılaşma, tırmanma, kolektif aksiyon sayılabilir. Mekanizma ve süreçlerin anlaşılmasında çekişmeci performanslar ve eylem repertuarları kritik önemdedir. Bütün çekişmeci siyaset süreçleri belirli biçimler ve özgünlükler taşıyan eylem repertuarları ve kamusal performanslar üzerinden işlemektedir. Bu performans ve eylem repertuarları tarihsel deneyimler içerisinde kurulduğu gibi eylem anında kolektif kimlik yaratma dönemecinde yaratıcı biçimde ortaya atılabilmektedirler. Çekişen aktörlerin eylem

repertuarlarında hedef kitlesi kamudur. Bu anlamda dikkatler kamusal çıkar alanına çekilir. Çekişen aktörler özgün çıkar kategorilerini toplumsal bir şekle büründürerek söz konusu performansları görünür kılmaktadırlar. Çekişmeci performans ve eylem repertuarları iddiada bulunan, iddianın nesnesi ve üçüncü taraflar arasındaki aktif bir ilişkinin ürünüdürler.

Çekişmeci eylem repertuarları, asıl olarak şiddet dışı yöntemlerle örülse de toplumsal hareketin içine sızan şiddet oranıyla doğrudan bağlantılı olarak dönüşüme uğrarlar. Toplumsal süreçlerin dinamik doğası süreksiz biçimde olduğu kadar organize bir şekilde de şiddet unsurunu beraberinde getirmektedir. Tilly'nin "Kolektif Şiddetin Politikası" çalışmasında ortaya koyduğu biçimde şiddetin toplumsal eylem alanlarına sızması çeşitli biçimler alabilmektedir. Anlık anlaşmazlıklara bağlı şiddet içeren çatışmalar dışında doğrudan toplumsal eylemin rasyonelitesini oluşturan amaçlı şiddet eylemleri de çekişmeci politika akışına hakim duruma gelebilmektedir. Tilly'nin kategori seti içinde geniş kapsamlı ölümlü çatışmalar içerisinde şiddet unsuru iddia üretme sürecinin maliyetini ciddi biçimde tırmandırmaktadır. Ayrıca çekişmeci grup oluşumu bakımından ciddi eleman kazanma zorluklarını beraberinde getirmektedir. Suriye örneğinde anlık karşılıklı çatışmalardan geniş boyutlu ölümlü çatışmalara geçiş kritik bir nitelik kazanacaktır. Bu süreçte şiddet uzmanları, silahlı çatışmalara giden yolda önemli bir hızlandırıcı ve kurucu rol oynamaktadır. Organize şiddete uzanan çatışma spirali toplumsal hareket bağlamında mobilizasyon/demobilizasyon süreçlerini de tetiklemektedir.

Gerek toplumsal hareketler gerekse çekişmeci siyaset yaklaşımlarında bireylerin ortak bir davranış içinde harekete geçme motivasyonları yoğun bir tartışma konusudur. Bu çerçevede Mancur Olson'un yaklaşımı tartışmaların temel zeminini oluşturur. Olson bireylerin toplumsal aksiyonun zorluklarını en önde ilk harekete geçenlere yükleme eğiliminde olduğunu, bu takdirde amacın gerçekleştirilmesi halinde harekete katılmayan bireylerin de bu süreçten kazançlı çıkacaklarını belirterek savunur. Bu durum toplumsal hareket bakımından giderek problematik bir hal alır. Zira toplumsal hareketin iddiasının gerçekleşmesi bakımından kritik önemde olan bireylerin toplumsal hareketin içine katılımı en baştan sekteye uğramış olur.

Olson'un sorunsalına literatür içinde seçmece teşvikler, fırsat yapısı, çerçeveleme, kolektif kimlik gibi çeşitli yanıtlar verilmiştir. Ancak Olson'un yaklaşımındaki asıl sorun toplumsal harekete katılan bireylerin bu hareket sonucunda mutlaka pozitif bir kazanım elde edemeyecekleri gerçeğidir. Suriye örneğinde olduğu gibi, varlıklarını korumak söz konusu olduğunda toplumsal harekete katılmak/katılmamak kararı bireyler açısından bir zorunluluk çerçevesi içinde kendini ortaya koyar. Melucci'nin kolektif kimlik yaklaşımı da Suriye örneğinde toplumsal harekete katılım anlamında önemli ipuçları sağlamaktadır.

Elinizdeki tez ise tüm bu yaklaşımlar içerisinde yabancı patronajına bağlanma bakımından Tilly'nin mekanizma temeli anlayışı bağlamında üç çekişmeci siyaset mekanizmasını odağına almaktadır. Ancak bu mekanizmalardan önce “yabancı patronajı” tezin kapsamı çerçevesinde yeniden tanımlanmaya ihtiyaç duymaktadır. Patronaj mekanizması genel olarak, kaynakların politik mevkii sahipleri tarafından politik destek ölçüsünde dağıtılmasını ifade etmektedir. Hegemonik bir etkileşim biçiminde ortaya çıkan patronaj ilişkileri içerisinde işlediği politik süreçlerin tanımlayıcı özelliği haline gelir. Ancak bu çalışmada patronaj ilişkileri dışsallaştırılmaktadır. Yabancı patronajı şeklinde ifade edilen bu durum çekişmeci siyaset süreçlerinde iddia öne süren tarafında veri ülke dışı aktörlerle ilişkiye geçmesini içerir. Yabancı patronajı, ilişkiye geçen taraflar açısından eşitsiz bir temas biçimini öngörür. “Patron” olarak tanımlanan taraf büyük oranda çekişmeci sürecin girdilerini sağlar. Diğer yandan patronaj altına giren taraf da ilişki bakımından dönüştürücü etkilere sahiptir. Yabancı patronajının Tilly'nin çalışmalarında “uluslararasılaşma” olarak tarif edilen mekanizma ile karıştırılmaması gerekir. Tek başına “uluslararasılaşma”, mevcut çekişmeci siyaset sahnesi içerisinde yatay bağlantı yoğunluğunun ülkeler ve ulusötesi yapılar ekseninde akıcılık kazanmasıdır. “Uluslararasılaşma” doğrudan çekişmeci aktörler arasında hegemonik ilişki varlığını varsaymaz.

Suriye örneğinde, bu tez çerçevesinde tespit edilen yabancı patronajına eklenme mekanizmaları üç ana eksen üzerinden yürür. Bunlardan biri işbirliği tayini olarak Türkçe'ye çevrilebilecek “co-optation” mekanizmasıdır. Tilly

öncesinde dışlanmış olan politik aktörlerin güç merkezine içerilmesi olarak tanımladığı bu mekanizmada, yabancı patronajına eklemelenme süreci bir işbirliği görüntüsü altında yürür. İlişkinin baskın tarafı olan patron maddi ve sembolik kaynak dağıtımı üzerinden çekişmecî aktör üzerindeki etkisini sürdürür. Tilly'nin kullanımında doğrudan demobilizasyon sürecine yol açmayan işbirliği tayini mekanizması hegemonik ilişkilerin devreye girmesiyle Suriye örneğinde çekişme aktörlerin seslendiği toplumsal kesimlerin yabancılaşmasını beraberinde getirebilmektedir.

Yabancı patronaj şebekelerine dahil olma bakımından işleyen diğer bir mekanizma yabancı onay mekanizmasıdır. Tilly ve Tarrow yabancı onay mekanizmasını, “bir dış otoritenin politik aktörün varlığı ve iddialarını tanıma ve desteklemeye hazır olduğunun işareti” olarak tanımlar. Yabancı patronaj şebekeleri onay mekanizması üzerinden çekişmecî aktörleri patronaj sürecine dahil eder. Süreç çekişmecî aktörleri kendi yerel nüfuz alanlarından giderek dış onay ağlarına çeker. Bu durumda eylem repertuarlarının meşruiyet kaynağı dış onay mekanizmaları olarak belirir.

Suriye örneğinde tespit edilen bir diğer mekanizma ise koalisyon oluşturma mekanizmasıdır. Koalisyon oluşturma mekanizması çekişmecî aktörler tarafından dile getirilen iddiaların yeni, görülür ve doğrudan koordinasyon içine sokulması süreci olarak tanımlanmaktadır. Koalisyon oluşturma süreci yabancı patronaj şebekeleri çerçevesinde değerlendirildiğinde aktörler arasındaki eşgüdümün hegemonik biçimde dışsal bir aktörler dizisi tarafından dayatıldığı sonucu çıkmaktadır. Böyle olduğunda koalisyon oluşturma mekanizmasının toplumsal aksiyonun önünü açmak yerine daha kapsamlı bölünmeleri hazırladığı görülmektedir. Suriye’de rejim karşıtı grupların yabancı patronajına bağlanma süreci işbirliği tayini, dış onay ve koalisyon oluşturma mekanizmaları ekseninde anlaşılabilir. İlerleyen bölümde bu üç mekanizmanın Suriye’de 2011-2012 yılları içerisinde etkinlik gösteren rejim karşıtı gruplar tarafından nasıl harekete geçirildiği ve bu mekanizmaların belirli bir dizilim içerisinde rejim karşıtı bu unsurlarla yerel halk arasında ne tür bir etkileşim sürecini başlattığı çözümlenmeye çalışılacaktır. Bu

kapsamda ilk olarak Suriye’de başlayan toplumsal hareket dalgasının Ortadoğu’da “Arap Baharı” olarak kodlanan hareketler içerisinde bir bağlama oturtulması önemli açılımlar sağlayacaktır.

2010 yılının son çeyreği içinde başlayan toplumsal hareketler dalgası 2011 yılı içerisinde tüm Ortadoğu’ya yayıldı. Ortadoğu ülkelerinde siyasi yapıları altüst eden toplumsal hareketlerin ilk dalgası Tunuslu bir sokak satıcısının 17 Aralık 2010 tarihinde kendisini ateşe vermesiyle tetiklendi. Bu olayın ardından Tunus’ta geniş bir kesim toplumsal eylem sürecine katılırken diğer Arap ülkelerinde de Tunus’ta ayağa kalkan halk kitlelerine destek eylemleri yapılmaya başlandı. Tunus’taki eylem dalgası ilk beş hafta içinde görünürdeki amacına ulaştı. Tunus’u on yıllardır yöneten ve tepkilerin odağına yerleşen Zeynel Abidin bin Ali Suudi Arabistan’a kaçarak siyaset sahnesini yeni ortaya çıkan toplumsal güçlere açmış oldu. Tunus’taki bu görece erken zafer Ortadoğu’daki diğer ülkelerde de özellikle genç nüfusu hareketlendirdi. “Arap baharı” ve “Eş-şaab yurid ıskat'en-nizam” biçiminde ifade edilen “rejimin devrilmesi” talepleri Arapçanın geniş kapsamda konuşulan bir dil olması dolayısıyla ortak bir slogan ağı yaratarak Tunus’tan esen rüzgarın Ortadoğu’nun iliklerine kadar ulaşmasını sağladı. Arka arkaya Mısır, Libya, Yemen, Cezayir, Ürdün, Fas, Sudan, Suudi Arabistan ve Bahreyn büyük çaplı gösterilere sahne oldu. Ancak süreç içerisinde bütün bu ülkelerde toplumsal hareketlerin gelişim süreci farklı örüntüler izledi. Libya ve Yemen örneğinde doğrudan dış müdahaleyle artan bir şiddet sarmalı içine giren toplumsal eylem çizgisi Mısır ve Cezayir’de yaşanan vahşi şiddet eylemlerine karşın organize bir şiddet hareketinin çekim alanına girmedi. Öte yandan bu ülkelerin birçoğunda belirli modüler eylem repertuarları hakim konumdaydı. Yürüyüşler, gösteriler, oturma eylemleri ve sosyal medya kampanyaları farklı tonlar ve vurgularla çekişmeci aktörler tarafından kullanıldı. Tilly’nin kavramsallaştırmasını izlersek bu modüler eylem repertuarları iç politik kamuoyunu etkileyerek ülkenin politik denklemini değiştirmek bakımından kritik bir rol oynadılar.

2011’in ilk çeyreğinde Tunus’tan başlayan toplumsal hareket dalgasının Suriye’de diğer ülkeler kadar yoğun bir yankı oluşturmayacağı yönünde Suriyeli

yetkililerin açıklamalarına da yansıyan özgüven sözkonuydu. Gerçekten de 2011 yılı Mart ayında sosyal medya üzerinden yapılan yürüyüş ve gösterilere katılma biçimindeki çağrılara Suriye halkından yaygın bir yanıt alamadığı görülmektedir. Sözgelimi 15 Mart 2011’de Suriye’nin başkenti Şam’da gerçekleşen gösteriye sadece 40-50 kişinin katılması Suriyelilerin ilk elde beklenildiği kadar kolay bir şekilde toplumsal eylemlere katılmayacağını gösterdi. Devam eden süreçte yapılan çağrılarda ciddi bir etki yaratmadı. Buna karşın Suriye güvenlik yetkililerinin bu kısa süreli ve az katılımlı eylemlere yanıtları sert oldu. Sivil giyinimli polislerin görev aldığı operasyonlarda sokağa çıkan eylemcilere karşı gözaltına alma, şiddet uygulama gibi önlemler alındı. Bu durum Suriye halkının sokağa çıkma motivasyonunu düşüren kritik bir eşik yarattı.

Suriye’de toplumsal hareketlerin hızlandığı ve giderek çekişmeci siyaset kategorilerinin şiddete bezeli formlarının öne çıkmasını sağlayan ilk olay Suriye’nin güneyinde Ürdün sınırında yer alan tarım kenti Deraa’da gerçekleşti. Deraa’da bir grup çocuğun rejim karşıtı duvar yazıları yazmasına karşılık Suriye güvenlik kuvvetlerinin sert tedbirlerle gözaltı prosedürünü uygulaması kentte geniş çaplı gösterilere yol açtı. Güvenlik güçlerinin de kentte artan gösterilere ve eylemcilerin rejimin cisimleştiği Baas Partisi’nin binalarına saldırmasına daha ağır güvenlik önlemleriyle karşılık vermesi şiddet sarmalının tırmanmasına yol açtı. Deraa’da başlayan gösteriler İdlip, Banyas, Kamışlı, Humus ve Hama’ya sıçrarken başkent Şam’da da eylem çağrıları doruk noktasına çıktı. Özellikle İslam dini açısından kutsal kabul edilen Cuma günlerinde Cuma namazı çıkışında yoğunlaşan eylemlerde doğrudan şiddete başvurma eğilimi her iki taraf açısından da açık bir strateji olarak belirlenmese de Tilly’nin “sonuçsuz kalmış görüşmeler” (broken negotiations) biçiminde kavramsallaştırdığı şiddetli çatışmalar ortaya çıktı. Daha öncesinde bu türden bir toplumsal hareket deneyimi olmayan Suriye’de en küçük gösteri bile her iki taraf açısından da şiddet içeren çatışmalarla sonuçlanma riski taşıyordu. Suriye’de çekişmeci siyaset aktörlerinden biri olan rejim karşıtı göstericiler, Suriye güvenlik güçlerine karşı meşruiyet zeminini ilk elde cuma namazları-camii-din adamları ekseninde kurmaya çalıştığı gözlenmektedir. Mezhepsel grup duygusunun

yoğun biçimde hissedilen sınırlar oluşturduğu Suriye’de bu toplumsal mücadele hattı ilerleyen süreçte daha açık görüntü veren mezhepsel ayrışmanın önünü açtı. Burada dikkat çekilmesi gereken önemli bir nokta bir kez bu eşik aşıldıktan sonra Suriye’de rejim karşıtı eylemci aktörlerin ilk elde dile getirdikleri taleplerinin büyük oranda karşılanması da toplumsal istikrarın tekrar tesis edilmesine olanak vermedi. Suriye’de olağanüstü halin kaldırılması, yerel gösterilere karşı alınan sert tutumun soruşturulması, politik tutukluların bırakılması gibi taleplerin birçoğu ilk elde Suriye devleti tarafından beklenmeyen bir hızla karşılandı. Bu duruma karşın rejim karşıtı mücadele sürecinin mezhepsel bir eksene oturtulmasıyla eşzamanlı olarak Suriye içindeki rejim karşıtı toplumsal hareketler giderek yabancı patronaj ağlarıyla ilişki kurmaya başladı. Başlangıçta zorunlu olarak yerel kaynaklara dayanan ve içeriden temini oldukça zor olan ateşli silah kullanımını sınırlayan toplumsal mücadele hattı giderek yerel nüfusun önceliklerinden çok eklemlendikleri yabancı patronaj ağlarının önceliklerine bağımlı bir biçim aldı.

Suriye’nin kuzeyinde Türkiye sınırına çok yakın bir bölgede yer alan Jisr el-Şugur kasabasında yaşanan olaylar Suriye’de organize şiddete yönelen rejim karşıtı grupların yürüttükleri mücadele yönteminin nasıl dönüştüğünü göstermesi bakımından kritik önemdedir. 2011 Haziran ayında bir grup silahlı militan Jisr el-Şugur kasabasını basarak 120 güvenlik görevlisini öldürdü. Saldırıda çeşitli boyutta patlayıcıların yanı sıra uzun namlulu silahların da kullanıldığı görüntüleriyle birlikte Suriye ve yabancı basın organlarında yer aldı. Bu derece yoğun bir ateşli silah kullanımı ve organize bir şekilde şiddet eylemine başvurulması bakımından Jisr el-Şugur olayı Suriye’de rejim karşıtı muhalefet dinamiklerinin değiştiğinin işaretiydi. Jisr el-Şugur saldırısıyla birlikte daha sonra olağan ve alışıldık Suriye temaları olacak sınır geçişleri, ordu firarileri, göçmenler gibi başlıklar Suriye’deki toplumsal hareketlerin anlatım örgülerine ilk kez girmiş oldu. Sınır hattından kaçak geçirdikleri ve kendi ordu birliklerinden kaçırdıkları silahlarla aralarında üst rütbeli ordu firarilerinin olduğu silahlı grup Suriye güvenlik güçlerine sınır kasabasında kapsamlı bir saldırı düzenlemişti. Bu saldırı sonrası ise bölgede tutunamayan silahlı grup Türkiye’ye geçerek Suriye’deki çatışmaların temel örüntülerinden birinin daha ilk

örneğini verdi. Silahlı grupların kasabayı terk etmesinin ardından Jisr el-Sugur bölgesi ilk göç dalgalarına sahne olan Suriye yerleşimi oldu. Süreç içinde Jisr el-Şugur örneği Suriye'nin diğer kentlerinde de yaşandı. Rejim karşıtı silahlı grupların yerel topluluğun duyarlılıklarını görmezden gelerek kurguladıkları mücadele stratejisi yerel toplulukta rejim karşıtı muhalefete katılma konusunda tedirginliğe yol açtı. Bu durum Suriye'deki rejime etkin bir destek biçiminde tezahür etmese de silahlı grupları “hayalet şehirlerle” baş başa bırakma biçiminde pasif bir tepki görüntüsüne büründü.

Suriye'deki rejim karşıtı muhalefet odakları ile ilişkiye giren yabancı patronaj odakları esas olarak devletlerden oluştu. Diğer yandan özellikle Suriye'ye komşu Körfez ülkelerinde yerleşik varlıklı bireysel aktörler de Suriye'deki yabancı patronaj ağlarının içinde yer aldı. Ortadoğu'daki toplumsal hareket dalgası ilk ortaya çıktığında bu türden değişimleri ülkelere rapor etmekle görevli batılı ülke kurumları sürecin “aniden” gelişmesiyle ilgili bir özeleştiri sürecine girdi. Tez içerisinde geniş bir şekilde incelenen ABD istihbarat kurumlarının Ortadoğu'daki hızlı değişim sürecine yönelik tepkileri içinde en dikkat çekici olanı söz konusu ülkelerdeki olağan politik akış dışındaki muhalefet odaklarının gözden kaçırıldığı yönündeki tespittir. ABD'li istihbarat kurumları bu yöndeki bilgi açığını “sözkonusu ülkelerdeki muhalefetin ne kadar güçlü olduğunu, ne tür olanaklara sahip olduğunu ve statükoyu değiştirmek üzere ne kadar hızlı bir tepki verebileceğini öğrenmek gibi sahadaki durumun tam bir resmini görmemizi sağlayacak yönleri kaçıırıyorduk” ifadesiyle ortaya koymaktadır. Başta ABD olmak üzere birçok batılı ülke Ortadoğu'daki değişimlere ilişkin bilgi açığını kapatmak üzere yoğun programlar geliştirdi. Suriye'deki rejim karşıtı muhalefet odaklarına uygulanan ulaşma stratejisi bu anlamda sözkonusu çabaların en üst noktasını ifade etmektedir.

Suriye'de rejim karşıtı çekişmecî aktörlerle ilişkiye geçen yapılar üç ana mekanizma üzerinden bu süreci işletti. “İşbirliği tayini” olarak ifade ettiğimiz co-optation mekanizmasının, Suriye'de sahada işlev gören ve yabancı patronaj şebekeleriyle en az bağlantı kuran Yerel Koordinasyon Komiteleri üzerinde etkili bir şekilde uygulanmadığı gözlenmektedir. Bunda Yerel Koordinasyon Komiteleri'nin

yerel nitelikli olası ve Suriye’deki şartlar göz önünde bulundurulduğunda bu gruplara yabancı patronajının ulaşmasının kolay olmadığı göz önünde bulundurulmalıdır. Diğer yandan Yerel Koordinasyon Komiteleri yaptıkları açıklamalarda Suriye’deki süreçte yabancı ülkelerin müdahalesine karşı olduklarını açık bir şekilde ortaya koymuşlardır. Bu duruma karşın sınırlı düzeyde de olsa Yerel Koordinasyon Komiteleri Suriye dışındaki patronaj odaklarıyla ilişki içine girmiştir. Yerel Koordinasyon Komiteleri üyelerinin asıl olarak içinde yaşadıkları gerçeklik içinde toplumsal mücadeleyi sürdürme zorunluluğu yabancı patronajının stratejik tercihlerine karşı yerel mücadele koşullarının baskın gelmesinde büyük rol oynamıştır. Benzer bir durum Suriye Ulusal Konseyi açısından geçerli değildir. Üyelerinin birçoğu yurtdışında yaşayan ve uzun yıllar birçok batılı ülke ve Körfez Ülkelerindeki varlıklı donörlerle temas halinde olan Suriye Ulusal Konseyi, “işbirliği tayini” mekanizmasının en etkili işlediği rejim karşıtı çekişmecî aktör durumundadır. 2011-2012 yılları içinde varlık gösteren silahlı gruplar açısından da benzer bir durum söz konusudur. Varlık koşulları büyük oranda dış desteğe bağımlı olan silahlı gruplar “işbirliği tayini” mekanizmasının etkin bir tarafı olarak işlev görmüşlerdir.

Bu çerçevedeki diğer bir mekanizma olan “dış onay” olarak adlandırdığımız certification mekanizması Yerel Koordinasyon Komiteleri için devreye sokulmuştur. Uluslar arası alanda bir tanıma aracı olarak harekete geçirilen dış onay mekanizmasında Yerel Koordinasyon Komiteleri Suriye’deki rejime karşı tutum alan ülkeler nezdinde makul bir aktör olarak tanıtılmıştır. Ancak Suriye Ulusal Konseyi örneğinde karşılanan düzeyde karşılıklı değil daha çok yabancı patronaj uygulayan aktörlerin tek taraflı eylemi olarak dış onay mekanizması işlemiştir. Suriye Ulusal Konseyi açısından ise dış onay mekanizması ilk günden etkili biçimde dolaşıma sokulmuştur. Burada patronaj ilişkisi karşılıklı olarak harekete geçirilmiş, Suriye Ulusal Konseyi, Suriye’deki mevcut rejim dışında bir iktidar odağı olarak uluslar arası alanda tanıtılmaya çalışılmıştır. “Suriye’nin Dostları Grubu” ve bu gruba katılan ülkelerin toplantıları bu çerçevede en etkili araçlardan biri olarak görülmelidir. Suriye’nin Dostları Grubu aracılığıyla Suriye Ulusal Konseyi üzerinde bir yandan hegemonik yönlendirme süreci işlerken bir yandan da Konsey’e patronaj

uygulayan ülkelerin stratejik tercihleri etrafında oluşturulan alanda hareket etme olanağı yaratılmıştır. Bu süreçte sadece retorik araçlar değil; Suriye Ulusal Konseyi üyelerinin organize olabilmesi için gerekli maddi destek de sağlanmıştır. Bu durum Konsey'in üyelerinin açıklamalarına yansımıştır. “Dış onay” mekanizması açısından sorun yaşayan asıl çekişmeci aktör silahlı gruplardır. Suriye'deki silahlı çatışmaların yoğunlaşmaya başladığı ilk yıllarda yabancı patronajı uygulayan aktörlerin Suriye içindeki silahlı grupları açık bir şekilde “dış onay” mekanizması içine dahil etmesi mümkün olmamıştır. Bu süreç daha çok “ülke içindeki halkın kendilerini korumak üzere silahlandığı” şeklinde ifade edilerek organize şiddet eylemleri düzenleyen silahlı gruplara alan açma çabası içine girilmiştir.

Koalisyon oluşturma biçiminde ifade edilen “coalition formation” mekanizması asıl olarak Suriye Ulusal Konseyi'ne uygulanmıştır. Asıl çekirdeğini Suriye'de kurulan Müslüman Kardeşler örgütünün uzun yıllar ülke dışında yaşamış üst düzey yöneticilerinin oluşturduğu Suriye Ulusal Konseyi farklı ülkelerinin patronaj ağlarını yansıtacak biçimde çeşitli siyasi bileşimleri içinde taşıyan bir yapı olarak ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu durum Suriye Ulusal Konseyi'nin toplantılarına ve yöneticilerinin açıklamalarına da yansımıştır. Konsey içindeki yoğun hizipleşme ve Suriye'nin geleceğine yönelik örtülü olarak farklı gündemler belirleyen Konsey üyelerinin varlığı “koalisyon oluşturma” mekanizmasının çoğu kez tam tersi sonuç vermesine yol açmıştır. Suriye Ulusal Konsey üyelerinin farklı patronaj ağlarına bağlanması aynı zamanda yabancı patronaj odaklarının “dış onay” mekanizması üzerinden Suriye'de mevcut rejimden başka etkili bir meşruiyet kaynağı yaratma girişimlerini sonuçsuz bırakmıştır. “Koalisyon oluşturma” mekanizması Suriye içindeki silahlı gruplar açısından geniş bir uygulama sahası bulamamıştır. Bu durumda, yukarıda bahsettiğimiz “dış onay” mekanizmasının bu tür çekişmeci aktörler üzerinden işletilmesinin zorluğunun yanı sıra doğrudan silahlı gruplar üzerinden meşru odak yaratma çabalarının 2011-2012 yılları içinde Suriye'de mümkün görünmemesidir. Çatışmaların henüz Suriye devletini tamamen belirli bir bölgede devreden çıkarak düzeye ulaşmadığı bu evrede yabancı patronajı uygulayan

aktörler kendi stratejik tercihleri çerçevesinde henüz etkili biçimde silahlı gruplardan verim alamamaktadır.

Sonuç olarak değerlendirildiğinde yabancı patronaj şebekeleriyle üç ana mekanizma üzerinden bağ kuran Suriye'deki rejim karşıtı çekişmeci aktörler bu mekanizmaların işleyişindeki içsel gerilimler ve yabancı patronajına bağlanma dolayısıyla Suriye'deki yerel halkın duyarlılıklarının kenara itilmesi nedeniyle ilk elde beklenen halkın harekete geçirilmesi hedefini yakalaması mümkün olmamıştır. Tilly'nin çerçevesini çizdiği anlamda “dış onay, işbirliği tayini ve koalisyon oluşturma” mekanizmaları çekişmeci aktör(ler)in mücadele kapasitesini arttırmak yerine yerel halkın sürece katılımı bakımından tersi bir sonuç çıkarmıştır. Rejim karşıtı silahlı grupların etkili olduğu bölgelerde yerel halk göç yolunu seçerek Suriye rejimine destek vermese de pasif biçimde silahlı grupların yöntemlerine direnmiştir. Suriye Ulusal Konseyi gibi görece şiddet dışı yapılar sözkonusu olduğunda ise sonuç alanda varlık gösteremeyen; varlık koşulu sürekli biçimde “dış onay” mekanizmasına bağlı bir çekişmeci aktör görünümü biçimindedir. Yabancı patronaj mekanizmaları Suriye'deki rejim karşıtı çekişmeci aktörler açısından bir yandan kolay kaynak ve sembolik varlık olanakları kazandırırken öte yandan bu grupların Suriye'deki geniş kesimler için etkili bir toplumsal bağlılık odağı sunması açısından aşıl topuğunu oluşturduğu değerlendirilmektedir.

APPENDIX E

TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

ENSTİTÜ

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü

☐

Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü

☒

Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü

☐

Enformatik Enstitüsü

☐

Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü

☐

YAZARIN

Soyadı : KAYA

Adı : MUSTAFA

Bölümü : ORTA DOĞU ARAŞTIRMALARI

TEZİN ADI : FOREIGN PATRONAGE MECHANISMS
IN THE CONTENTIOUS EPISODE IN SYRIA: 2011-2012

TEZİN TÜRÜ : Yüksek Lisans

☒

Doktora

☐

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.
2. Tezimin içindekiler sayfası, özet, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.
3. Tezimden bir bir (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi alınamaz.

☐☒☐

Yazarın İmzası:

Tarih:.....