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EUROPE-RUSSIA BATTLE IN UKRAINE: REFLECTIONS OF THIS STRUGGLE ON POLITICAL ATTITUDES OF TURKEY

Aydın AYDIN*

Abstract

This study tries to reveal the hegemonic power struggle over Eurasia from the perspective of regional policy of Russia and European integration as the representative of the EU. Furthermore, Ukraine's status and tension that stayed between different international actors and political reflections on Turkish political life has been examined. Integrations and cooperation pressure of the EU from West and political threats of Russia from East hold Ukraine watchful for its future. The cooperation wish of Ukraine with the EU and dependency to Russia in the energy issues drags country to a division. Crimean territory participated in the Russian political system and there is still the possibility of some of Ukraine land could join to Russia. In this study, the policies of Russia- EU and Turkey will be comparatively and qualitatively discussed with chronological perspective. In order to Russia holds energy monopoly and uses this energy as a political instrument against other countries, both Turkey and EU cannot produce alternative effective policy towards Russia. Eventually, current political and military condition in region has made Moscow more powerful by comparison with its rivals.

Keywords: Russia, EU, Ukraine, Power Struggle, Turkey.

1-Introduction

The relations between Russia and Europe have become complicated and unsolvable. There was just only an alliance possible during the First World War between Britain, France and Russia. However, the Bolshevik Revolution had separated the sides once again in the history. The years of USSR were full disagreement and conflict during the Cold War era and Western and Soviet side were watchful against each other. Even the Cold War has been ended and the Soviet Union has collapsed, disagreement between Europe and Russia is still alive and still separator for each side's policies, strategies and expectations from international relations. Surely, the effect and pressure of the US is clear for direction of the between European and Russia sides.

There may be various different approaches for Europe and Russia, but after changing to EU for the European states and Russia's reconstruction after the decline of Soviet Union, for the first time after decades, EU and Russia had reached a moderate level in their relations and the sphere that they stayed on had presented opportunities for each side to act together for the regional politics and mutual relations.

Unfortunately, some serious issues have obstructed the development process of EU-Russia relations like Georgia and Ukraine disputes. In particular, after Russia's military force on Georgia, the state's struggle to hold the control of Ukraine domestic politics has made EU and Russia opposite side against each other. Domestic conflicts in Ukraine politics, reaction of Ukrainians against Ukraine government and Russian pressure, Ukraine's complicated EU adventure and lastly the intervention Russian forces to Ukraine lands have triggered the tension in Black Sea coast. Now, EU looks like lost its enlargement chance towards the Black Sea coast as a union and Russia has seized a great chance against EU to prove itself as the leader Eurasia region. In this process, Ukraine has become the battlefield of power struggle between EU and Russia. Beside, Ukraine has gained a strategic role again after many years of Soviet Union's dissolution and collapse.

Ukraine dispute for EU-Russia relations include a lot of different important and risky issues like natural gas transition, Eurasia hegemony, EU enlargement and even Middle East question. That is why Turkey is one of the sides in Ukraine dispute as an unnatural actor. However, because of Syria crisis, EU membership nomination and NATO membership, Turkey indirectly becomes an important role in this process. In particular, Turkey and Russia are opposite sides for Syria crisis and the reflections of that opposition can be seen in the process of Ukraine dispute with the EU.

There have been many studies regarding Russia - Ukraine and EU conflict in literature such as Russia-Ukraine gas dispute and effects on EU. (Pirani, Stern, Yafimava, 2009; Umbach, 2014) or using energy by Russia as a power instrument or Crimea invasion and ideological change in the region. Kolesnikov suggest that after annexation Crimea in March 2014, the Russian public has embraced an

* Assistant Professor, Süleyman Demirel University, Department of International Relations, e-mail: aydinaydin@sdu.edu.tr

increasingly conservative and nationalistic ideology (Kolesnikov, 2015:1) or as Paul claimed persecution of Crimean Tatars, human rights violations in the region after invasion of Crimea and EU reaction "European Parliament Resolution "firmly condemns Russia's act of aggression in invading Crimea" (Paul,2015). This study can be differing from previous by the putting Turkish situation in front of these disputes and Crime invasion. Therefore Turkish and EU policy against Russia will be analyzed particularly.

Methodologically, this paper focuses on chronology of Russia-Ukraine relations since the collapse of Soviet Union briefly. In particular, the relations of two countries during the Vladimir Putin era and the Europe oriented Ukrainian governments are prior issues of this study. Beside, "Orange Revolution" period and Russian intervention to the Ukrainian political side are located as the trigger effect for the tension in the Russia-Ukraine relations. Turkey's regional political activities and EU's future projects on the Eastern another trigger factors to evaluate the Russia-Ukraine relations as problematic. At the same time, all the sub-factors counted above are effective during the development process Ukraine dispute directly and indirectly.

The basic purpose of this article is about evaluating the prior actors and sub-factors of Ukraine dispute; because Ukraine's situation, actually, has a decisive role for the regions like Europe and Eurasia. Its presence on the EU side may make the union more effective against Russia, but Ukraine's Moscow choice may make Russia more effective on Eurasia region and more threatening against the West. For now, although Ukraine has been divided, Russia's military and political operations on Ukraine have made Moscow more powerful to rule the region and to show its capacity to the regional rivals.

2- Background of Russia-Ukraine Relations

The relations of Russia and Ukraine do not have historical depth; however, their relations in political and economic have given shape the Black Sea coast and rest of the former Soviet Union region. That is why their relations light up an era's details and the future of international politics on the Eurasia territory.

Ukraine was one of the most vital members of USSR after the 1950s and covered system of Soviet Union had made pressure on each and every member of Soviet Union like Ukraine. However, the relations of Russia and Ukraine were not on the expected level even during the Cold War years and after Soviet Union's decline period for many years and those relations had caused serious political financial conflicts (Özdağ, 2013: 48).

Through end of Soviet Union hegemony on Eastern Europe, Ukraine was one of the first states to wish to join the European integration. While it was a beginning for contention in Russia-Ukraine relations, Europe integration was the basic trump of Ukraine side. On the other hand, European integration had been evaluated as the only way out for Ukraine for the new future of country as an independent and as a modern state.

Actually, theorists and political authorities had predicted that Ukraine and Russia would make a good connection and work together in the new period of Russia and independent Ukraine after the collapse of Soviet Union. However, Russia had decided to follow the Soviet mentality (not completely) during the first years of President Vladimir Putin and had aimed to protect the hegemony on the former members (Torbakov, 2001:298) of Soviet Union.

Perhaps, it was not possible to live that dream again, but Putin had taken up that dream seriously and had chosen to make pressure on domestic politics of Soviet geography's states. Ukraine was not the only state for the targets of Russian foreign policy; a lot of former member states of Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact had been located on the center of political approaches of Moscow.

Although Ukraine and Russia has direct relations for many years, it was a result of obligations for both sides. In particular, Ukraine's dependency to Russia had made their relations necessary. However, in time, Ukraine's attitude towards Moscow changed deeply and Moscow saw the Kiev government a prospective enemy for the Russian interests on the region because of West-Ukraine convergence (Akdemir, 2014: 62). Indirectly, that perception triggered the tension between EU and Russia at the same time.

During the first years of its independent years, Ukraine had wanted to act as extremely free on especially its foreign politics, but its perception as an independent and a modern country was not suitable with new Russian foreign policy. In particular, new ideologies in Ukraine, which were about turning the face of country to the Western block, has disturbed Russia's reconstruction hopes as successor of Soviet Union (Torbakov, 2001: 300).

Ukrainians' hopeful dreams were not close to reality without consider Russian factor in the international and regional politics; so, Moscow had become the prior nightmare for Ukraine. Ukraine's efforts were about proving that the country was not the natural part of Eastern block and it belonged to the European political system and those efforts are valid for today's complicated Ukrainian policies.

3- Orange Revolution: Awakening of Ukraine, Russia's Reaction and EU's Role

Since the first period of its independence, Ukraine's basic expectation was about being a part of Europe family and Ukraine politics had focused on acting like a European state. On the other side, during

the integration process of Europe, Ukraine had been evaluated as a serious and a precious actor for the future plans of EU. Nevertheless Russia had not wanted to lose the connections with its former partners' presence during the "Commonwealth of Independent States" period. That is why Russia was the basic obstacle of Ukraine's Western integration (Özdal, 2013: 48).

This pressure of Russia had forced Ukrainian people to decide their destiny for future well in the beginning of 21st century by the presidential elections. However, it was hard to predict the aftermath of elections because of the complicated ideological and political situation of Ukraine in those terms.

Before the presidential elections, two rivals, Yanukovich and Yushchenko had aimed different things for their own and for Ukraine's interests. As a Russian ally, Yanukovich had aimed an integration of Ukraine in political area with Moscow government and Eurasia region. On the other side of competition, as a Western ally, Yushchenko had promised an EU and NATO member Ukraine. While Yanukovich's promises had not disturbed too much persons and groups in the Europe and the American side, Yushchenko's promises had irritated Moscow (Emami et al., 2013: 260).

Thus, on November 21, 2004, when Russian supporter Viktor Yanukovich was elected as President of Ukraine, it was the beginning of serious conflict and rebellion serious all around the country. The elections had been criticized by Western states' authorities, too. According to Yanukovich's rival Victor Yushchenko, who was supported by the US and the EU at the same time, had claimed that Yanukovich had organized a fraudulent election process and had been elected as President of Ukraine (Youngs, 2011:33). That claim had triggered the tension between Ukraine, Russia, the EU and the US. Yanukovich and Yushchenko's competition had divided the country two camps; Western idealists and Eastern traditionalists.

By the support of West and Western supporter Ukrainians, Yushchenko had led a series of protest, which was called "Orange Revolution". Those protests had been evaluated as awakening of Ukrainians against Moscow. Ukrainians' high number attendance to the Orange Revolution protests was a message of society to the West and Russia at the same time. The message to West was related the EU membership of Ukraine; Ukrainians had wanted to be a part of Western democracy. The other message, which was to Russia, was related the pressure and secret threats of Moscow to reduce these aggressive attitudes and to see their country an effective actor on their region (Simon, 2009:14). In particular, Ukrainians message to the EU was like an S.O.S. signal under the pressure of Russia.

Under the pressure of the EU authorities, institutions and non-governmental organizations in Ukraine, the elections were reorganized and Western supporter Victor Yushchenko won the elections on December 26, 2004 (Tüyzsüzoğlu, 2011:68). Presidency of Yushchenko had meant the first serious step in Ukraine's history to be a part of Western alliance, member of the EU and NATO. In contrast, presidency of Yushchenko was a serious caution to Russia to revise its foreign policy on Ukraine and to see Ukraine as an important regional actor on the Black Sea coast.

From the beginning, Russia had seen the Orange Revolution as an "anti-democratic", an "imported" revolution and a "coup attempt" because of its rebellious nature on the Ukraine squares. Although the Orange Revolution is evaluated the awakening of a country and a nation, it was a beginning for the separation of Ukraine's from Russian chains and approach to the EU and Western block (Karatnycky, 2005:46). However, separation of Ukraine's from Russia was the greatest threat for the near future of country.

On the other hand, Russia did not see the Orange Revolution as a part of Ukrainians' own will; Moscow government had believed that revolution was a reflection of American and European pressure on Kiev government. That is why Russian side had aimed to rescue the Ukrainians from the chains of EU especially (Herd, 2005, 18). That belief had made Russia encouraged to interfere on Ukraine domestic politics and indirectly the foreign politics. Despite the presence of a democratic revolution attempt, Moscow had not seen the Orange Revolution realistic.

Ukraine's choice to be a Western ally has affected the directions of relations with Russia. Due to new roadmap of Ukraine, Moscow had decided the new rules. Although Ukraine had its own trumps against Russia to act independently after Yushchenko's election, Ukraine's energy dependency to Russia was on the high level and is still the same. The basic example of that was lived in the year of 2006. In that year, Russian natural gas company Gazprom had increased the level of tension between two countries by the directions of Moscow. To increase the energy dependency level of Ukraine, Gazprom decreased the natural gas amount, but increased the price. It was for increasing the debt rates of Ukraine and using the threat to cut the natural gas transition to Ukraine and to the Europe indirectly. In the end, by the pressure of EU, Ukraine has accepted prices (Gallina, 2009:46), which had been decided by Gazprom.

However that situation was one of the greatest disappointments for Ukraine in the relations with EU. Brussels administration had left Ukraine alone in a critical process against Russia. In the year of 2009,

after Ukraine and Russia signed a natural gas transition agreement for 10-year period, Ukraine's dependency to the Russian natural gas has increased (Yüksel, 2013:18).

4- Ukraine in the Middle of EU-Russia Contention

Vladimir Putin's Russia is today's one of the decisive states in the international politics. It was not an expected thing for the future of Russian lands after failure and collapse of the Soviet Union. However, Putin's era has presented a regional leadership and hearing for Russian politics. Surely, Russia's that rise is a disturbing fact for its regional and international rivals. Although there are high tone critics for Putin era, current Russian President has no doubt to protect his position and to improve his country's dominated power in its own region at least.

In this process, Russia is like an enemy for its international rivals like the US and China, but the EU is the closest international political actor to evaluate Russia as an enemy. In time, despite the cooperation tries of European integration process and Russia after Soviet Union era, the projects has not worked and Russia has preferred to stay alone against the EU. Disagreements are still valid for both sides and the energy trump of Russia in the region makes the country a little more powerful in the regional politics. At the same, that is why the EU cannot go back on Russia easily. Nevertheless it does not mean that Brussels is in a search of permanent peace with Moscow to reduce the tension and limit the influence of Russian foreign policy on the region.

The Eastern Europe vision of EU has become always a contention with Russia. When Russia gathered strength in the beginnings of the 2000s, new Eurasianist vision has encouraged Russian foreign policy to bring the former member states of Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact under the ruler role of Russia. However, EU's efforts to obstruct these plans worked in the first period of union and a lot of former members of Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact. In particular, when Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania have become the members of the EU officially during the Fifth Enlargement Process of EU in 2004, Russia had disappointed. On the other side, the EU had a serious advantage against Russia to decide the rules in the Eastern Europe region.

In this view, Ukraine seems like the last option and the last castle for Russia to strengthen its current political structure in the region against the EU. Despite Ukraine's complicated domestic and foreign political structure, Russia has a serious part of political control in Ukraine after the last intervention of Russian troops on Crimea. Perhaps, the EU could have the countries like Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, which have border with Russia, Ukraine's geopolitical importance and role in the energy transfer from Russia to the Europe makes Ukraine a little more effective and precious than the other former Soviet Union member states.

During the first period of Ukraine's independent foreign policy process, there were three basic reasons for Moscow to criticize Kiev administration (Torbakov,2001: 308):

- Serious energy debt of Ukraine to Russia that debt was still an "unpaid status" debt to Russian side (this debt is around \$9 billion for the current time),
- Ukraine had planned to remove the Russian language and motive from the culture of country; this situation had been evaluated as a "threat" for Russian minorities' right by Moscow,
- Ukraine had preferred to be a part of "anti-Russian" block unions or organizations insistently, while Russian side waited for Ukraine to be a part of Commonwealth of Independent States.

These factors were the basic points on Moscow's agenda to use as trump against Kiev and the conditions have not changed for today; the same conflicts are valid in Russia-Ukraine relations. In particular, the energy issue is extremely determinative factor in these states' relations. Russia made pressure on Ukraine about energy transfer during the Soviet period and afterwards. At the same time, Russia also used the issue of energy transfer as a threat against Ukraine authorities, which had anti-Russian approaches in domestic and foreign politics (Torbakov, 2001:304). However, Russia's pressure and threat was not limited with Ukraine borders; Ukraine, as a transition point of Russian natural gas, is important for EU and Russia's aggressive policies were effective negatively on European countries.

Generally, the rate of Russia-Ukraine economic relations is %32 of Ukrainian national economy; in other words, Russia provides the %32 of Ukraine's needs. This rate is %31 in EU- Ukraine economic relations. According to these numbers, there is a tough competition between EU and Russia to be first economical partner and provide of Ukrainian economy (Sağlam, 2014:439). So, both sides, EU and Russia do not want to lose the Ukraine market in this period. They are sure about Ukraine's dependency their support, but Russia is on one step ahead of EU because of its natural gas support to Ukraine.

Ukraine's dependency to Russia is related mostly the energy relations between the sides. Russia's systematic and wealthy natural gas transfer to Ukraine makes that country desperate to refuse the support of Russian resources. Since the first period of Russia-Ukraine relations in energy transfer, Ukraine has a serious debt to Russia and that debt increases the Russian pressure on national economy of Ukraine (Özdal, 2013: 49).

In last few years, the numbers of illegal applications in economic area have increased in Ukraine; this situation is evaluated as a reason of national economy among the Ukrainian authorities. In this process, EU and Russia make pressure on Kiev administration to provide assistance; both sides wait for cooperation with Ukraine in return (Sağlam, 2014:436). Although the Kiev administration wants to be a Western alliance member, domestic and foreign pressure from the Russian side directs the decision-making process.

However, Kiev government does not want to discuss the political and financial details with Moscow; basic target of Kiev is about discussing the future of country with Brussels. Actually, Ukraine's separation from the Soviet block with the other former Soviet Union states had made happy the Western allies the most; Ukraine's new age on the region had been seen as a new opportunity for EU and NATO's Eastern Europe enlargement. That is why after the achievement of Ukraine's independency process, the US had provided a serious support for that country to be a member of EU and the Western block (Torbakov, 2001: 305).

Basically, today, Ukraine has a key role in Eastern enlargement process of EU and NATO. In particular, about the issue of natural gas transition, Ukraine has vital role for Russia and EU both; Russia needs Ukraine lands to transport the natural gas by the pipelines and the EU needs Ukraine to get that energy potential directly for its members. As one of the world's most important political strategist, Zbigniew Brzezinski emphasized that importance of Ukraine in his book "The Grand Chessboard..." and stated the key role of Ukraine in EU-Russia relations (Sağlam, 2014: 440).

Moreover, although Ukraine has sufficient petroleum and natural gas reserves for itself to sustain the energy needs, Russia's great reserve and provider role is not just important for Ukraine; there is also a serious need for the EU and the other European countries about especially Russian natural gas. Beside, Ukraine is still the number one natural gas customer of Russia and it is not easy to refuse Russian cooperation in this issue for Kiev government. At the same time, Russia extremely wants to protect Ukraine market; not just for holding Ukraine, it is also about holding the European market (Giusti and Penkova, 2010: 133-134).

Perhaps, the only powerful trump of Ukraine is about country's transporter role of Russian natural gas. An important part of 14,000 km natural gas pipeline between the Europe and Russia needs to be located on the Ukraine lands. Right in this point, Ukraine has opportunity to get the cheapest Russian natural gas and to keep Russia as a compulsory ally. On the other hand, the most of European continent's countries are needy for Ukraine's to keep its transporter role alive (Samur, 2009: 29). With that way, Ukraine has a chance to keep the EU on its side to accept the country to the union as a permanent member. However, Ukraine has not used these trumps until the current time effectively for the interests of Ukrainian people.

However, EU's plans and projects for Ukraine's future is not clear; moreover, EU does not predict any stable and permanent membership to the EU for Ukraine in the near future. Instead of the membership option, EU authorities offer an "Eastern Partnership Project", which includes economic alliance, visa exemption and military support etc., to Ukraine. However, this option has not been accepted by the Kiev government until the current time; because Ukraine still waits for a stable and permanent membership invitation from the EU side like they did to Poland. Desolation of Ukraine in the Western alliance issue makes the country an open target for Russia (Sağlam, 2014:437) and Russian intervention to Ukraine domestic politics was the clearest sign of that situation.

By the direct interventions of Russia to the Ukraine political area and insufficient reactions of the West, it is clear to see that the EU is not still ready to accept Ukraine as a permanent member of the union. The basic ideal of EU is about creating an economic and military cooperation with Ukraine. However, according to some authorities, the EU evaluates Ukraine as a great shield and a trump against Russian attacks and pressure on the West. At the same time, Ukraine is seen as a balance point in the relations of EU and Russia. So, the basic purpose of EU is about seeing Ukraine as a strategic partner for the regional issues (Özdal, 2013: 10). However, Kiev government does not see that offer as sufficient for its safety and future position against Russia on the Black Sea coast.

5- Ukraine Dispute: Russia's Intervention, International Reactions and Turkey's Attitude

Perhaps, the year 2013 was the milestone for the history Russia-Ukraine relations. In that year, Ukrainians have been separated to the different ideological group to support their homelands or to choose being a part of another state. The sides of that separation period were Western supporter Ukrainians, who want to be a part of EU and NATO structure; on the other side, Ukrainians, who belong to the worker class, live in the industry regions of Eastern Ukraine and support the convergence policies of Kiev with Moscow administration (Sağlam, 2014:435).

In 2013, after President Victor Yanukovich delayed signing the Partnership Agreement with the EU, that separation caused a domestic crisis in the country. Protests of Western supporter Ukrainians on the squares were just about the internal matters of country; however, in time, when the area of protests was enlarged and Russia joined the process, the protests won an international attribution (Erol, 2014:2). Western

supporter Ukrainians' expectation of European integration was not suitable for the current ideology and plans of Kiev government and that disagreement triggered the conflicts on the street.

On the other side, Russian supporter Ukrainians in Crimea had different approach for their future; their expectation was about integrating to the Russian administration. Thus, they declared their independence on March 11, 2014 and Crimea Parliament has joined Russia on March 16, 2014 (Erol, 2014:2-3). In this process, Ukraine and Russian troops were in a minor war and Russia's heavy forces have taken the control of Crimea territory.

The other reason of Russia's intervention on Crimea was about future plans of Russia on the Black Sea coast. In military mean, Russia's fleet, which is located in Sevastopol, has a great importance for Russian diplomacy. Moscow trusts in this fleet on the Black Sea and Ukraine's importance increases a little more (Özdal et al., 2014: 9). The Black Sea region, Sevastopol and Ukraine have a common and a vital point for Russia altogether. In other words, Ukraine does not have just a diplomatic value for Russia; there is also a defense matter for Russia as a precaution against the attack or pressure of NATO's naval forces.

Actually, the first circumstantial evidences of Russian intervention on Ukraine had been seen during the intervention of Russia on Georgia in 2008. Georgia's President in those years Mikheil Saakashvili was a defender of idea, which was about his country's Western alliance like Viktor Yushchenko, and he had decided to be in partnership with NATO. However, Russia's leader Putin had not wanted to see a Western alliance near the border of Russian and Russian troops had bombed Georgian lands on August 8, 2008. Russia had showed its force against Georgia and NATO; that incident was a message to Ukraine, which was close to Western alliance (Sağlam, 2014:442).

In 2013 and 2014, Russia protected its attitude and applied the same policies on Ukraine. Surely, it was not possible for the EU and the other Western allies to evaluate Russia's intervention and occupation on an independent country as legal. However, the EU was desperate to change the route Russia and to keep Kiev on the European side. Thus, because of the EU avoided fighting against Russia (Bayraklı, 2014: 5) on the battlefield, due to energy dependency. Russia seems like the winner of the struggle on Ukraine.

For decades, it was hard for Ukraine to follow a stable and a permanent foreign and domestic policy as an independent state. The basic reason of that Ukraine was under the pressure of European mentality in the West of country and the pressure of Soviet-Russian mentality in the East of country. Mostly, according to this view, domestic policy of Ukraine is so sensitive and one of the basic reasons of rebellions, which started in 2013, were related that sensitivity. Those rebellion incidents were about the reactions against governmental applications and those rebellions actuated Moscow government to interfere on Ukrainian lands (Derman and Ongarova, 2014:18).

During the intervention of Russia to the Ukraine dispute, regional states, which are close to Western alliance, declared their reactions to Russia's attitude. As one of them, Turkey criticized Russia's style of using force. One of the basic reasons of Turkey's reaction was related Turkey's strong relation with the US and the EU. As already a candidate state for the EU membership, Turkey decided to be a part of Ukraine dispute to act together with its political alliance. However, basically, Turkey's direct and powerful financial relations with Russia (Şenay and Koçak, 2014: 16) obstructed Turkey to continue the opposite posture against Russian intervention. Also serious energy dependency is another reason that shows noninterventionist attitude of Turkey against Russia in this process. During Russia and Ukraine crisis, Turkey adopted a cautious approach to the problem. While Turkey advocated Ukraine's territorial integrity and did not accepted the annexation of Crimea, and offered Ukraine a \$50 million loan and called for the protection of Crimean Tatars. At the same time, it also refrained from an outright criticism of Moscow's actions (Atlı,2016).

Although Turkey saw the limits of Ukraine dispute did not give up criticizing the Russian politics. Ukraine would be a good partner for Turkey, but not enough to alienate Russia. Actually, despite Turkey's membership to NATO, Turkish-Russian relations have been in the normal level until the Arab Spring period. However, Arab Spring has uncovered the specific details and difference between Turkish and Russian foreign politics about the Middle East region. In particular, Russia's support to Syria President Bashar al-Assad in Syria crisis and Turkey's support to the Syrian insurgents against Assad's military operations have separated Russian and Turkish policies. The negative reflections of Syria crisis are felt in the Ukraine dispute between these states, too. Turkey is close to EU's approaches (Kardaş, 2014: 5) and Turkey indirectly supports the territorial integrity of Ukraine.

Basically, because of the relationship of Turkey and Russia about the nuclear energy issues on Turkish lands, especially for Russia, Turkey has a serious importance. In 2010, Turkey and Russia has agreed about building a nuclear facility on Turkish lands to develop the nuclear energy power for Turkey (Künar, 2010: 79). Actually, that agreement had prepared a suitable sphere for the energy transition from Turkish lands for Russia. In other words, nuclear agreement between Turkey and Russia had created a chance for

Russia to find an alternative partner to carry its energy resources to the European lands, if Russia cannot find expected support from its neighbors like Ukraine and Belarus, which have border with the EU territory. However, it was the last chance and scenario for Russian foreign policy. In time, Turkey's foreign policy has changed and today there is serious problem regarding the nuclear agreement between Turkey and Russia, after Turkey shoots down Russian warplane on Syria border.

Perhaps, Turkish authorities had aimed to assist the international politics by assuming a mediator role; however, Turkey has a serious obstacle to be a side of Ukraine dispute. Regionally, because of Syria has a border with Turkey, during the Syria crisis, Turkey is natural interlocutor of that matter. In the Ukraine dispute, Turkey can just declare its approach verbally and Turkey can be evaluated as an indirect interlocutor of that question, but this does not make Turkey as a natural interlocutor against Russia (Kardaş, 2014: 6). That is why Turkey has not joined discussions and conflict about the future of Ukraine. Russia has already solid attitude against Turkey's role in Ukraine dispute.

Actually, except Russia and Ukraine, Turkey is the most important international actor in Ukraine dispute. Perhaps, Turkey has no direct relations with Ukraine, but Turkey was the only state for Russia to discuss the Ukraine dispute indirectly at least until shooting down a Russian military aircraft; because Moscow refuses to stay together with Brussels on the same table to discuss the process and Turkey's mediator role was seriously important for the EU and Russia at the same time. However, Turkey's political mentality, expectations and applications on Syria are the basic obstacles for a successful mediator role for Ankara.

In the basis of changing Russian foreign policy perception and logic against the states like Ukraine and Turkey, there is just one specific transformation process. While there was an "Atlanticist" idea, which means close relationship with Western alliance and NATO, on Russian foreign policy as a hegemonic approach, by the beginning of 2000s, there is an "Eurasianist" idea, which means hegemony and leadership on the Eurasia politics, on Russian foreign policy as a directive approach (Tellal, 2010: 204). Turkey and Ukraine are not only finding themselves on the same situation in the sense they are both perceived as enemies by Russia, but they are also facing the obligation of calibrating their regional economic relations by creating alternatives to lost Russian business. As of January 1, 2016, Russian sanctions against both Turkey and Ukraine have taken effect. The current condition of relations caused strong corporation between Turkey and Ukraine, Turkey's trade with Ukraine rised to \$5 billion in 2014 (Atl,2016).

In the Atlanticist approach, the ideology of Moscow was about making connections with NATO and former Soviet Union members like Ukraine. However, in the Eurasianist ideology, Moscow has oppressive, solid and Russia-oriented approaches NATO, the EU and the US. Moscow makes pressure on the states like Ukraine to make a decision choosing a side, Moscow or Brussels.

Current Russian foreign policy is about bringing all the former Soviet Union members again. Creating of "Eurasia Union" was related that and Russia aimed to control the domestic politics of Eurasia Union members in the future. The pressure of Russia on Ukraine is a part of that control mechanism against the EU territory (Özdal, 2013: 49). Ukraine is like a wall to protect the Eurasia Union's political and ideological mentality.

Conclusion

Surely, Russia is not happy with the EU's Eastern enlargement towards the Russian lands like Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania's membership to the union. Ukraine seems like the last option and the last castle for Russia to strengthen its current political structure in the region against the EU. Despite Ukraine's complicated domestic and foreign political structure, Russia has a serious part of political control in Ukraine after the last intervention of Russian troops on Crimea.

Energy trump of Russia in the region makes the country more powerful in the regional politics. At the same, that is why the EU cannot go back on Russia easily. The struggle between the years of 2013 and 2014 was about that; having the control and defending the territory for personal interests of the EU, Ukraine and Russia. Surely, Kiev government and the Western supporter Ukrainians were the most ineffective actors of war on the Ukrainian lands. It is not clear to say that Russia was the only winner of that war on Ukrainian lands; however, by the pressure of Russian troops, Moscow has given a serious message to Brussels to reconsider its plans and strategies on Ukraine and Russia border. At the same time, Moscow has given the similar message to the Kiev government to decide their well for the future of their country.

Actually, when Ukraine had its independence, the expectations from country were about high development process and financial progress. The expectations like them were just hopes. In reality, Ukraine governments had not carried the country those levels and the country had stay behind against the countries like Poland and Belarus. Ukrainians blamed Moscow about that failure and regression; according to young generation and Western supporters, the only solution for Ukraine's future was hidden in the relations with the EU. This approach is still valid for some part of Ukraine society.

The hegemonic idea was about that the absence of Ukraine in Moscow's foreign policy would make limited Russia's ability to manage the region. Beside, absence of Ukraine would limit Russia's hegemony area with Asia and Russia would not have chance to enforce the EU in the Eastern Europe territory and the US in the Middle East region. In particular, Ukraine has key role to show Russia's ability to manage its borders with ease and Ukraine's choice to act with Russia will encourage Moscow against the EU authorities.

Beside, Moscow's message is valid for the states, which wanted to be an actor in the Ukraine dispute like the US and Turkey. Perhaps, Turkey has not joined the process as an active actor, but Turkey's idea to compress Moscow because of the Syria crisis was not a logical foreign policy practice. Actually, Turkey's approach and concerns were not meaningless; because as a member of NATO, as candidate state for the EU and as having direct relations with Ukraine and Russia by the Black Sea coast, Turkey's reaction to obstruct the military operations of Russia on Ukraine was completely natural. However, Turkey's dependency on energy issues and nuclear issues to Russia and Turkish construction companies' investments on Russian lands are the other issues for Turkey to consider simultaneously.

However, Turkish side had not calculated the political competition and conflict between the EU and Russia well; it was too early for Ankara to be direct actor in the Ukraine dispute. Russia had already given that message to Turkish authorities during the operation on Crimea territory especially. Moreover, when a serious part of people in Crimea has decided to be ruled under the Moscow's politics, there was no chance for Turkish side to evaluate, criticize or join the process directly. Turkey and Russia have different approaches on Syria and its leader Assad, Russia's support to Assad and Assad's resistance destroys the hopes of Turkey to remove Assad from the political process of Syria. In this view, it seems like Russia has an advantage against Turkey about Syria crisis. The topics like Assad's resistance, occupation on Crimea, nuclear issues, and shooting down Russian warplane on Syria border and energy dependency are the most effective ones for Moscow against Ankara to sell on the Russian foreign policy. Despite, the US, NATO and EU's suggestion to Turkey about Russian opposition, as an effective and critical country for the regional politics, Turkey should reconsider the relations with Russia in positive mean.

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