

Analyzing Foreign Policy Crises in Turkey

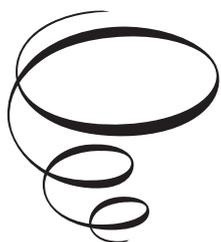
Analyzing Foreign Policy Crises in Turkey:

*Conceptual, Theoretical
and Practical Discussions*

Edited by

Fuat Aksu and Helin Sarı Ertem

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This book is dedicated to:

NURETTİN AKSU,

missing you, your curious questions and encouraging comments...

and

MELİH MURAT ERTEM,

thank you for your inspiring ideas and generous support...

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In alphabetical order.

PREFACE

This book resulted from a three-year long TÜBİTAK (The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey) Project, examining the Turkish foreign policy crises and crisis management strategies in the Republican Era. The project, which received remarkable interest in Turkish academia, allowed us to examine 34 foreign policy crises in the last 92 years since the foundation of the Republic of Turkey. It is worth underlining here that the brainstorming in our “Coercive Diplomacy and Crisis Management in Turkish Foreign Policy” course made a valuable contribution to the embodiment of this project. Colleagues and students, who encouraged us for a much comprehensive study of this critical issue, believed in the necessity of making it a book and gave their kind support by writing the chapters of it.

This book requires us to thank not only these esteemed contributors, but many other names and institutions. Among them, TÜBİTAK and Yıldız Technical University, Scientific Research Projects Coordinatorship (YTU - BAPK), deserve our special thanks for the academic and financial assistance they gave to this project. We would also like to thank the participants/staff officers of the Turkish War Colleges, The Armed Forces Higher Command and Management College, which made eye-opening contributions during our discussions there especially on the military decision making processes of the Turkish crisis management.

Prof. Dr. Klaus Brummer, our Section Chair in the 2014 ECPR General Conference in Glasgow, where the first findings of this project were shared with the academia, and a leading name in crisis studies, Prof. Dr. Charles F. Hermann also deserve our thanks due to their comments and questions that improved our researches. We also have to thank the Deans of the Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences at Yıldız Technical University, Prof. Dr. Güler Aras and Prof. Dr. Kenan Aydın, and Cambridge Scholars Publishing for their kind support during the research and publishing processes of this book.

Finally, our special thanks goes to our family members, especially our spouses and children, without whose love and patience this book would not be finished. We would also like to commemorate dear Nurettin Aksu,

whom we lost during the preparation of this book. His loving-kindness and support for his children and grandchildren will never be forgotten.

We hope this book can inspire further academic studies in the area of foreign policy crises.

Fuat Aksu and Helin Sarı Ertem
Istanbul, November 2016

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DP	Democrat Party (<i>Demokrat Parti</i>)
FP	Felicity Party (<i>Saadet Partisi</i>)
FIR	Flight Information Region
EOKA	Ethniki Organosis Kyrion Agoniston or National Organization of Greek Cypriot Fighters
FSA	Free Syrian Army
GCA	Greek Cypriot Administration
GUP	Great Union Party
ICBP	International Crisis Behavior Project
IHH	The Foundation for Human Rights and Freedoms and Humanitarian Relief
ISIS	Al-Dawla al-Islamiya al-Iraq al-Sham or Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
JDP	Justice and Development Party (<i>Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi</i>)
KRG	Kurdistan Regional Government
MB	Muslim Brotherhood
MIT	Turkish National Intelligence (<i>Milli İstihbarat Teşkilatı</i>)
MP	Motherland Party (<i>Anavatan Partisi</i>)
NMP	Nationalist Movement Party (<i>Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi</i>)
PKK	Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan or Kurdistan Workers' Party
PYD	Partiya Yekîtiya Demokrat or Democratic Union Party
RPP	Republican People's Party (<i>Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi</i>)
SNC	Syrian National Council
TFPC	Turkish Foreign Policy Crises
THY	Turkish Airlines
TMT	Turkish Resistance Organization (<i>Türk Mukavemet Teşkilatı</i>)
TPAO	Turkish Petroleum Corporation (<i>Türkiye Petrolleri Anonim Ortaklığı</i>)
TRNC	Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus
TUBITAK	Technological Research Council of Turkey
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
YPG	Yekitina Parastine Gel or People's Protection Units

CHAPTER SIX

A HUMANITARIAN FOREIGN POLICY CRISIS: THE 1989 MIGRATION OF THE BULGARIAN TURKS*

ZEHRA GÜR SOY

Introduction

In this chapter a humanitarian crisis; the 1989 exodus of the Bulgarian Turks will be examined from the foreign policy aspects of the two neighbouring countries, Turkey and Bulgaria. The aim of the chapter is to highlight how the construction of the “Bulgarian identity” changed the relations between Turkey and Bulgaria from “good neighbourhood” to “enmity” and caused a significant foreign policy crisis on the Turkish side. Regarding these questions, the chapter explains the impact of the individual, domestic and systemic factors respectively, in the formation and the management of this crisis and helps us to evaluate whether Turkey’s crisis management strategy was successful or not during this incident. As the data in the chapter presents, the military violence is not a precondition for a foreign policy crisis, thus the humanitarian issues alone can be sufficient to trigger a crisis between neighbouring countries.

The term “exodus” has different interpretations in separate areas.¹ In migration/refugee literature, it indicates oppression, flight and establishment of pure homeland.² This chapter uses “exodus” to define a massive excursion of people, who were separated from their homelands by

* This chapter is supported by the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey - TÜBİTAK 1001 Project (Project No: 112K172).

¹ Exodus is a book in Bible, also it refers the departure of Jews from Egypt and literally it means ‘going out’. June, 10, 2015. <http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=exodus>

² Jonathan Boyarin, “Reading Exodus into History”, *New Literary History*, Vol. 23, No. 3, History, Politics, and Culture (Summer, 1992): 525.

psychological, physical, social and economic enforcements. According to Gönül Erhan, who studied the exodus of the Bulgarian Turks, the term also indicates “*nation-building processes in population displacement.*”³ Regarding the experience of the Bulgarian Turks, one can say that first, they were persecuted systemically; but when they resisted this persecution, they were forced to leave Bulgaria. The exodus of the Bulgarian Turks occurred suddenly and there had been mass flows from the hostile practices of the then Bulgarian government.

When Bulgaria was established as an independent nation-state in 1878 with the Treaty of Berlin, she legally recognised Turkish Muslims as a minority. Before the 1877-1878 Russo-Turkish war, Turks were the majority in Bulgaria.⁴ By the end of this war, however, the Ottoman Empire’s authority terminated in the Balkan region and Turkish emigration from Bulgaria appeared as significant issue as the dissolution of the Empire brought about the migration of large masses from Bulgaria to Anatolia. This migration successively continued during the Republican era, which started by 1923. Thus the 1989 events did not occur suddenly and the dispute between Bulgaria and Turkey has a long history.⁵

The Bulgarian Turks’ exodus from Bulgaria to Turkey in 1989 has been studied from different aspects.⁶ In this chapter, Bulgarian Turks’ exodus to Turkey will be examined as a crisis situation in Turkish foreign policy. It will first evaluate what a “humanitarian crisis” is. Then it will

³ Gönül Erhan, “The Exodus of the Bulgarian Turks and the Constitution of Turkish Rational Identity”, *Center for Migration Studies Special Issues*, Vol.11 Issue 4, (1994): 227.

⁴ Ali Eminov, “The Turks in Bulgaria: Post-1989 Developments”, *Nationalities Papers: The Journal of Nationalism and Ethnicity*,27:1, (1999): 31.

⁵ Except 1989 crisis, there is one more crisis between Bulgaria and Turkey in 1935. As Brecher noted this crisis occurred because Bulgaria refused to recognize the status quo which established by post World War I. Upon this situation, Turkey concentrated its troops on Bulgarian border. The background of the crisis in 1935 did not rest on a long-term dispute as in 1989. Non-violence conclusion was the joint point of the both crisis. 1989 crisis was considerably different than 1935, it is a humanitarian crisis. Therefore it needs to be examined as a humanitarian crisis. See: Michael Brecher and Jonathan Wilkenfeld, *A Study of Crisis*, (University of Michigan Press, 1997).

⁶ Darina Vasileva, “Bulgarian Turkish Emigration and Return”, *International Migration Review*, Vol. 26, No. 2, (Summer, 1992): 342-352, Lilia Petkova, “The Ethnic Turks in Bulgaria: Social Integration and Impact on Bulgarian – Turkish Relations, 1947-2000”, *The Global Review of Ethnopolitics*, Vol. 1, No. 4. (June, 2002): 42-59, Ayşegül İnginar Kemaloğlu, *Bulgaristan’dan Türk Göçü (1985-1989)*, (Ankara: Atatürk Araştırma Merkezi Yayınları, 2012).

underline the turning points of the 1989 crisis between Turkey and Bulgaria. The third part of the chapter will focus on the way Turkey managed this crisis.

Humanitarian Crisis

There are different characteristics of a crisis. According to the researches made during the Turkish Foreign Policy Crisis Project, which gave birth to this book, crises are classified according to its type of occurrence, quality and subject.⁷ The subject of a crisis changes to the occasion triggered by the crisis. The content of the crisis can consist of diplomatic/political, security/military, environmental, economic/developmental, legal, cultural/situational, moral or humanitarian issues. A foreign policy crisis can be political/diplomatic, military or humanitarian and can also occur because of a natural disaster or as a result of technological deterioration.⁸ Actually, there is no general agreement on what constitutes a humanitarian crisis.⁹

Generally the discipline of international relations is based on a security, military and political language. In fact; migration, natural disasters, environmental problems directly affect the people of a state. Therefore decision makers' management styles of difficult situations certainly affect the people. In addition, the ways of protecting the state security are related to the issue of "survival". The survival of the state, however, depends on the "maintenance of its sovereignty," whereas the survival of the society depends on the "maintenance of its identity."¹⁰ For the "maintenance of its identity", systematic policies have been conducted, like national freedom, which is gained against a foreign domination.¹¹

The movement or exclusion of people is an international problem. It is related to the human rights. States are bound to protect their people's

⁷ "Kriz Analizi-Yönetimi Kavramlar-Terimler Sozlugu", http://www.tdpkrizleri.org/index.php?option=com_seoglossary&view=glossaries&catid=1&Itemid=188&lang=tr

⁸ "Crisis management", http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_49192.htm. [Accessed on: 10.4.2015]

⁹ Alex Politaki, "Greece is Facing a Humanitarian Crisis", *The Guardian*, February 11, 2013, <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/feb/11/greece-humanitarian-crisis-eu> [13.4.2015]

¹⁰ O. Waever, B. Buzan, M. Kelstrup, and P. Lemaitre, *Identity, Migration and the New Security Agenda in Europe*, (London: Pinter, 1993): 24–25.

¹¹ Berna Pekesen, "Expulsion and Emigration of the Muslims from the Balkans", <http://ieg-ego.eu/en/threads/europe-on-the-road/forced-ethnic-migration/berna-pekesen-expulsion-and-emigration-of-the-muslims-from-the-balkans>. [13.4.2015]

rights and have the responsibility to provide them with safety. Violation of human rights in a state creates humanitarian problems. States are not independent rational actors as the classical realism suggests.¹² The rulers of the states determine the political choices on their own territories. However, the consequences of their choices can affect the other states' policies. In this way, states' behaviors can create disputes, conflicts, crisis or wars. Therefore the states can have problems on humanitarian issues such as protection of human rights, minority rights, natural disasters, famine, and epidemics. Human life is threatened by the policies of states during the crises they go through with the other states. The situation is critical for the survival of people. Therefore, the protection of people's lives becomes an ethical obligation in the international arena.

Humanitarian crisis in a certain period of time forces decision makers to consider the problem as a risk or a threat against their basic values. This pushes the decision makers to take an action. As their decisions affect people directly, they have to be rigorous when they employ their decisions against the opponent. They should especially pay attention not to create a negative impact on the lives of the people.

All policies of states definitely affect people but in crisis situations particular humanitarian problems between states occupy the foreign policy agenda and force decision makers to manage the situation. The problem might get worse, escalate and need an urgent solution if the time is limited. The dispute between the two sides can be political but due to the humanitarian dimension of the situation, the dispute can escalate and occur as a foreign policy crisis. This crisis can be solved by using military/security instruments or practicing diplomatic/political means such as negotiation, mediation or condemnation. Humanitarian intervention is also effective but it is controversial to apply due to the absence of collective will of the states or the high political/military costs of the situation.¹³

The Crisis between Turkey and Bulgaria

In frame of the 1925 Turkish Bulgarian Residence-Agreement, until 1949, 218.998 people emigrated from Bulgaria to Turkey. Between the years of 1950 and 1952, 154.393 people were settled in Turkey. For the family re-unification, Turkey and Bulgaria signed Close Relatives

¹² Stephan D. Krasner, "Rethinking the Sovereign State Model", in *Empires, Systems and States: Great Transformations in International Politics*, (Eds.) Michael Cox, Tim Dunne, Ken Booth, (Cambridge University Press,2001): 17.

¹³ Thomas George Weiss, *Military-civilian Interactions: Humanitarian Crises and the Responsibility to Protect*, (Rowman&Littlefield Publishers, 2005): 11.

Migration Agreement. According to this agreement, signed in 1968, 116.521 migrated from Bulgaria to Turkey until 1979.¹⁴

Despite this huge flow of people from Bulgari to Turkey, the situation was not a foreign policy crisis between the two sides and mutual relations were considered to be relatively good. What caused a foreign policy crisis right in 1989 was the then Bulgarian government's policy practice that targeted the basic features of the Turkish minority's identity. Under the policy called "national revival", Bulgaria forced the Turkish minority to change their names, language, religion, culture, customs, and traditions.

Bulgaria began to see Turkey not as a neighbouring state but as the motherland of the Turkish minority¹⁵ and it became quite hard to develop good relations between the two countries from that moment on. Under the renaming campaign of Bulgaria; 2.000 people, resisting to this policy, were killed and 18.000 were exiled.¹⁶ Turkish minority faced the strong pressure of the Bulgarian administration in other matters of daily life as well. For example, people who resisted changing their names couldn't take their salaries from banks. Bulgarian decision makers' "national sovereignty" policies caused a problem which was totally humanitarian. As Jeri Laber explains, "the problem of Turks in Bulgaria was part of a special category of human rights violations deriving from a systematic policy of supressing the rights of an ethnic minority..."¹⁷

The threat on Turkish minority caused Turkish decision makers, such as the then President Kenan Evren, asking Bulgarian President Todor Zhivkov on January 15, 1985 to give up the "renaming campaign". This brought no outcome as the Bulgarian decision makers defended the notion that this was something voluntary.¹⁸ Bulgaria continued its efforts to change situation in favor of it. While going on the renaming campaign, she arrested and sent people to the concentration camps, insisting that there were no Turks inside of its territories but "Islamized Bulgarians".

¹⁴ All the migration data above are taken from the official document of the Turkish state on the Turkish migration from Bulgaria. For details see: "Bulgaristan'dan Türk Göçleri", (Ankara: DPT Sosyal Planlama Başkanlığı, 1990).

¹⁵ Vesselin Dimitrov, "In Search of a Homogeneous Nation: The Assimilation of Bulgaria's Turkish Minority, 1984-1985", *Journal on Ethnopolitics and Minority Issues in Europe, JEMIE*, Issue 2 (2001):8, <http://www.ecmi.de/fileadmin/downloads/publications/JEMIE/JEMIE01Dimitrov10-07-01.pdf>. [10.4.2015]

¹⁶ "Bulgaristan'da 1 Milyon Türk Bulgarlaştırıldı", *Milliyet*, March 15, 1985, 6.

¹⁷ Jeri Laber, *Destroying Ethnic Identity: The Turks of Bulgaria*, (New York: A Helsinki Watch Report, 1986): 4.

¹⁸ "Turks March Against Bulgarian Treatment", *The Toronto Star*, March 22, 1985, 131.

Turkish decision makers, however, admitted the pressure on Turkish minority in Bulgaria by February 18, 1985 and planned to develop a response against Bulgaria's aggressive behavior. This caused the issue to turn into a conflict where Turkey tried to persuade the opponent to stop aforementioned practices. Turkey felt threatened and needed to develop a certain foreign policy behavior against Bulgaria, but Bulgaria considered the issue to be a domestic problem of its own. After that, Turkey began to call the attention of the international organizations and this was considered by Bulgaria as an aggressive campaign against it.¹⁹ Bulgaria and Turkey began to accuse each other in various ways and the decision makers' threat perception became definite. In the conflict period between February 18, 1985 to the end of the crisis, Turkey devoted itself to receive the attention of the international public opinion. This was the beginning of Turkey's struggle to manage the crisis.

Bulgaria's pressure on the Turkish minority didn't change despite Turkey's attempts for international support. On the contrary, Bulgaria continued to increase its pressure which would finally end by expelling of the Turkish minority from its territories. In 1986, 1987 and 1988, Turkey could not do something concrete to prevent Bulgaria's pressure that increased within the time gained. By the end of 1988, however, Turkey finally admitted that there was no change in Bulgaria's actions towards the Turkish minority. Under these circumstances, Turkey decided to apply some problem solving measures. First of all, Turkey wanted economic sanctions from the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) by March, 1989. Then, she complained Bulgaria in a conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, on April, 1989.

The situation became much complicated by May, 1989 and the disagreement on the Turkish minority's status concluded with an "exodus". Bulgaria enacted a new passport regulation on May 9, 1989 to deport the Turkish minority. Bulgarian authorities' forcing 72 people to leave the country on May 21 and killing some others on May 23, 1989 were the apparent signs of the escalation of the crisis. Increasing violations of the rights of the Turkish minority forced the Turkish decision makers to take effective decisions to end this humanitarian crisis. Turkey revised its strategy in this period; cancelled some meetings with Bulgaria. Turkish Parliament condemned the events and invited foreign diplomats to inform them about the situation. The then Prime Minister Turgut Özal mentioned the problem at a NATO summit as well again to receive international support.

¹⁹ "Bulgarlar Bir Adım Geri", *Milliyet*, May 3, 1985. 14.

Bulgarian leader Zhivkov called Turkey to open its borders on May 30, 1989 and Turkey opened them by May 31, 1989 and the conflict period evolved into a crisis. Hostile verbal claims and practices of Bulgaria in the conflict period became concrete with the exodus of people and the occurrence of the crisis. Turkey's accepting the fleeing Turkish minority without any migration agreement was the onset of the crisis on May 31, 1989.

The name-changing campaign during the conflict era resulted in the exodus and caused a crisis. During the crisis era, Turkey began to act more actively in the international arena to persuade Bulgaria for a migration agreement. The then Turkish Foreign Minister Mesut Yılmaz together with the ambassadors of other countries and foreign press visited the Turkish border in Edirne. In the international level, Turkey also met with the Soviet Union to discuss the issue. In national level, the ruling Motherland Party (MP / Anavatan Partisi / ANAP) also arranged a demonstration to protest against Bulgaria on June 24, 1989. However, all attempts to solve the crisis became inconclusive. Turkey was insufficient to support its crisis strategy with much more forceful means. That is why, the crisis continued till the end of August.

Turkey could neither solve the problem by opening its borders nor could force Bulgaria for an agreement on the status of the Turkish minority. The crisis continued to escalate as Turkey could not estimate the number of people who would leave Bulgaria. The higher number of immigrants changed the risk and threat perception of the Turkish decision makers. As a result, they began to think about closing the borders.

The Bulgarian government gave the Turkish minority a little time to leave the country and the number of the Turks who left the country increased dramatically as about 4.000 people were entering Turkey in one day.²⁰ From June 1 to August 22, 1989, approximately 300.000 people migrated from Bulgaria to Turkey. Turkey's attempts to persuade Bulgaria were fruitless. Turkey believed closing the borders might force Bulgaria to negotiate for an immigration agreement. Turkey was certainly in a difficult position as the majority of the unexpected numbers of refugees were settled in school dormitories and tent camps etc. Turkey's words to keep its borders open were not backed by her actions. As the borders were closed²¹, Bulgarian authorities claimed that this was prevention of the right of free travel. Turkey tried to ease the situation by limiting the flow by enforcing a visa obligation. Bulgarian authorities' exodus of the Turkish

²⁰ Ted Zang, *Destroying Ethnic Identity: The Expulsion of The Bulgarian Turks*, (New York: A Helsinki Watch Report, 1989): 29.

²¹ "Sınır Kapatılıyor". *Cumhuriyet*. August 21, 1989, 1.

minority was contradictory with the status of the Turkish minority in Bulgaria. Therefore Turkey demanded from Bulgaria:

- an immigration agreement that would guarantee ethnic Turks to dispose of their property and
- Negotiation with Bulgaria to protect the rights and status of Turkish minority.

Turkey clearly expressed her demands to Bulgaria, but also began to accept the Turkish minority without any immigration agreement. When it closed its borders, however, it actually contradicted its former discourse of “open borders”. Studying this huge humanitarian problem, one can claim that Turkey did not engage in an effective decision making mechanism. The Council of Ministry met for only two times during the escalation period of this crisis. In fact, this crisis didn’t escalate as a result of the Bulgarian attitudes but of the failure of Turkey’s long-term strategy.

From the end of August to the beginning of October 1989, Turkey preferred to focus on domestic problems like presidential elections and the terror problem in the southeast. Bulgaria, on the other hand, went to a systemic change in its policy that enacted a law on free travel. On October 3, 1989, Bulgarian authorities called back the Turkish minority if they were still Bulgarian citizens.²² Hence, with the systemic and domestic changes, the crisis de-escalated by time. Third countries were also taking part to decrease the tension. Among them, Kuwait invited Turkey and Bulgaria to meet and discuss about the problem on October 30, 1989. Turkey had long been open to such an idea. Bulgaria first refused to meet Turkey but finally accepted Kuwait’s invitation and discussed the issue which went beyond being just a matter of minority rights but a significant issue of mutual relations.

Turkey’s main demand was to make the Turkish minority be accepted by Bulgaria back. The political dialogue that could be formed gave a second chance to re-develop good relations between the two states. This decreased the tension and, the risk and threat perception diminished in the minds of Turkish decision makers. This brought about the end of the crisis and on December 29, 1989, Bulgarian government decided to give Turkish minority the right to choose their names and restored the minority rights of them legally.

In fact, the lack of any coercive action on the Turkish side made Bulgaria not feel a strong pressure to materialize Turkey’s abovementioned

²² “Sofya’dan Sünnete Yeşil Işık”, *Cumhuriyet*, October 3, 1989, 15.

demands. By ignoring Turkey's demands, Bulgaria continued its pressure on the Turkish minority and argued that Turkey was interfering her domestic policies. The start of the collapse of the communist system was the main factor that strengthened the quests for a better democracy and caused the gradual materialization of Turkey's demands.

The Role of PM Turgut Özal as a Predominant Leader

In the crisis analyses, the decisions are very important. As they are taken by the decision makers, it is significant to examine leaders' behaviours and characteristics. Especially the predominant leaders have a significant role in foreign policy decision-making process which actually needs to involve various other actors and institutions. Margaret G. Hermann is one of the scholars who successfully studies the impact of the leader characteristics and attitudes on foreign policy decision making. She defines a predominant leader as "a single individual who has the power to make the choice and to stifle the opposition".²³ Predominant leaders eliminate other alternatives in foreign policy decision making process. Their characteristics are considerably deterministic for the constituting foreign policy decisions. Their ideas, beliefs, views and interpretation of the relevant information are effective especially at times of a crisis.

During the crisis experienced with Bulgaria in 1989, the then Prime Minister Turgut Özal came forward as a predominant leader. Foreign policy decisions were dominantly taken by him and practiced accordingly. Özal's political life began after the 1980 coup. In the 1983 general elections, the Motherland Party (ANAP), founded by him, won the elections and Özal came to power as a civilian leader. His political philosophy was based on freedom of conscience and thought, freedom of religion and free enterprising.²⁴

Together with these principles, his approach towards the Bulgarian Turks had shaped the crisis. In his view, Turkey had to protect the heritage of the Ottoman Empire and it should not ignore the rights and interests of Turks living out of Turkey.²⁵ Bad treatment to the outside Turks would

²³ Margaret G. Hermann and Charles F. Hermann, "Who Makes Foreign Policy Decisions and How: An Empirical Inquiry", *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 33 No. 4 (December, 1989): 363.

²⁴ Feride Acar, "Turgut Özal: Pious Agent of Liberal Transformation", in *Political Leaders and Democracy in Turkey*, (Eds.) Metin Heper and Sabri Sayari, (Lexington Books, 2002): 172.

²⁵ "Özal: Türkiye'nin Önünde Hacet Kapıları Açılmıştır!" *Türkiye Günlüğü*, (September 3, 1992): 5-24.

directly affect the Turkish citizens in Turkey as they were ethnically tied to each other as kins. For that reason, Özal believed that the freedom of the outside Turks must be guaranteed.

Regarding the method to solve the problems, however, Özal generally favoured political means. He always advocated that the Turkish-Bulgarian dispute in 1989 could also be solved through political means. That is why, Turkey's crisis management strategy in the 1989 crisis was not in favour of using violence. On the other hand, Özal's approach prolonged the crisis and caused Bulgarian government to continue its pressure on the Bulgarian Turks for almost five years.

Özal's discourse was mainly based on an "open door diplomacy" towards the Bulgarian Turks. He was ready to accept the Bulgarian Turks in²⁶, saying that they will be welcomed by Turkey "with open arms".²⁷ But he couldn't predict the number of Turks who would come, and that hardened Turkey's approach and caused it to close the border. The situation was also related to Özal's risk-taking characteristics. He advocated that Turkey should pursue an active foreign policy in its region. But this received the reaction of other actors, including the West. The Council of Europe, for example, asked Turkey to avoid proactive discourses²⁸ and according to The New York Times, the remarks of PM Özal caused the number of immigrants to rise.²⁹ However, as a strong political figure, he managed to receive a wide support of the Turkish public. He was acting pragmatically and giving response according to the incidents.³⁰

It is also worth noting here that there was not enough information about the events in Bulgaria because it banned the entrance of foreign press to the country. For that reason, Özal, as the decision-maker, was lacking adequate information and his assessment of this limited

²⁶ Don Oberdorfer, "Bulgaria Oppressing Ethnic Turks, U.S. Says", *The Washington Post*, April 02, 1985, http://articles.latimes.com/1985-04-02/news/mn-19331_1_bulgarian-turks. [12.4.2015]

²⁷ Marvine Howe, "Bulgaria Accused of Persecuting Ethnic Turks", *The New York Times*, February 15, 1987. <http://www.nytimes.com/1987/02/15/world/bulgaria-accused-of-persecuting-ethnic-turks.html>. [12.4.2015]

²⁸ "Situation of the Ethnic and Muslim Minority in Bulgaria, Parliamentary Assembly, Resolution 927 (1989)" <http://assembly.coe.int/ASP/Doc/XrefViewPDF.asp?FileID=16338&Language=EN> [12.4.2015]

²⁹ "Bulgarian-Turkish Tensions on Minority Rise", *The New York Times*, November 4, 1987. <http://www.nytimes.com/1987/10/04/world/bulgarian-turkish-tensions-on-minority-rise.html> October 4, 1987 [12.4.2015]

³⁰ Fahir Armaoğlu, "Soydaşlarımız ve Politikamız", *Tercüman*, June 30, 1989, 6.

information led to the escalation of the crisis. Özal did not have enough information to estimate Bulgaria's possible actions towards Turkey.

There are different factors that lead the decision-makers to take wrong decisions.³¹ Generally, when leaders decide on an option, they don't look for other alternatives. Revising the preferred option can be costly or time consuming. Leaders usually have an effort that urge them to constitute their discourses compatible with their choices³² even if they are wrong. High stress also affects leaders' perceptions and cause them take immediate decisions,³³ which might be wrong from time to time. As in the case of the exodus of the Turkish minority from Bulgaria, PM Özal decided to use diplomatic/political means against the opponent and he did not look for other options such as applying economic sanctions or the threat to use force. Seeing his strategy failing, he preferred to increase the political, diplomatic and international pressure against Bulgaria, believing that Bulgaria's economy would collapse, if it sends away the Bulgarian Turks.

Advisers, colleagues and cabinet members were also suffering from the lack of sufficient information. That's why, these figures could not develop alternative options to prevent the escalation the crisis.

Strategy of Turkey

Management of a crisis includes strategies of countries and their strategies direct the route of this crisis. Rogers suggests that in a crisis bargaining situation; leaders can use persuasion, coercion and/or accommodation.³⁴ In the crisis on the exodus of the Turkish minority in Bulgaria, Turkey employed persuasion and accommodation. As mentioned above, it avoided forceful options that could cause violations/clashes between the two sides. Here Alexander George's study to analyse the

³¹ Ole R. Holsti, "Crisis Management", in *Psychological Dimensions of War*, (Ed.) Betty Glad, (Sage Publications, 1990):116-142.

³² Rose Mcdermott, *Political Psychology in International Relations*, (The University of Michigan Press, 2004): 120.

³³ Ole R. Holsti, "Theories of Crisis Decision Making", in *International Conflict and Conflict Management*, (Eds.) Robert O. Mathews, Rubinoff, J. Gross-Stein, (Canada: Prentice Hall, 1989): 70.

³⁴ J. Philip Rogers, "Crisis Bargaining Codes and Crisis Management" in *Avoiding War: Problems of Crisis Management*, (Ed.) Alexander. L. George, (Westview Press, 1991): 415.

success of crisis strategy can be applied on Turkey.³⁵ Regarding the 1989 crisis, Turkey's crisis bargaining strategy was "Try and see".³⁶ Turkey did not give time to accommodate with the opponent, but just tried to employ pressure on Bulgaria to make it feel the urgency of the issue. This urgency was created by applying the means of internationalization of the issue and isolation of Bulgaria.

At various international summits, Turkey condemned Bulgaria's actions towards Turkish/Muslim minority and expressed the problem in its bilateral meetings. In Ankara's eyes, a humanitarian crisis could be solved by receiving international support. In Turkish decision maker's minds this was an international problem and Western states could not be indifferent to it. Democracy, human rights, freedom were the core principles of the Western states so they could intervene in the situation. Surely, Turkey did not want a military intervention. For Özal, Bulgaria could be persuaded to abandon from its aggressive actions through a limited diplomatic or economic pressure. Thus it preferred to escalate the international pressure on Bulgaria to prevent this humanitarian crisis.³⁷

In the essence of "try and see" strategy, the defender moves step by step. Thus, Turkey first tried to comprehend the situation in Bulgaria and searched for the accuracy of the assimilation campaign despite the limited sources of information. When it learned about the "reality", the next step for Turkey was warning the opponent. At this point the situation was perceived by decision makers as a risk. Turkey urged Bulgaria to give up its challenge against the status quo and tried to persuade it with her verbal statements. But Bulgaria continued its aggressive assimilation policy. It was moving away from acting rationally. Bulgarian authorities referred to the fleeing Turkish minority as tourists who were going to travel abroad.³⁸

Turkey could not deter Bulgaria from her actions from the beginning of 1985 to the end of 1989. The pressure it had applied was not enough to persuade Bulgaria. This situation enforced Turkey to apply much more effective policies in the international arena. Bulgaria's inhumane attitudes

³⁵ Alexander L. George and William E. Simons, "Findings and Conclusions" in *The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy Laos, Cuba, Vietnam*, (Eds.) Alexander L. George, David K. Hall, and William R. Simons, (Little, Brown and Company, 1971): 270-275.

³⁶ Look up for the strategies; Alexander L. George, "Strategies for Crisis Management" in *Avoiding War: Problems of Crisis Management*, (Ed.) Alexander L. George, (Westview Press, 1991): 379-383.

³⁷ "Özal: Bulgar Silahı Geri Tepti", *Cumhuriyet*, July 6, 1989. 13.

³⁸ Clyde Haberman, "Turkey Closing Borders to Refugees From Bulgaria", *The New York Times*, August 22, 1989, <http://www.nytimes.com/1989/08/22/world/turkey-closing-borders-to-refugees-from-bulgaria.html> [12.4.2015]

were the triggering element of the crisis, but it did not prefer to use violence against Turkey either. The solution was in the hands of international society. Therefore it acted on legitimate ground of international law. Neither Bulgaria nor Turkey risked going into a military conflict. The sanctions Turkey thought about was “not to use Bulgarian trucks in export, condemnation of Bulgaria in international platforms and applying the UN Security Council”. These were relatively weak sanctions which were not fulfilled with various reasons.

Unlike Turkey, Bulgaria was in favour of a *fait accompli*. In the beginning it rejected the pressure on Turkish minority. Then it suddenly began the exodus without any regulation between the two sides. This was rather a surprise for Turkey which could not take the necessary measures to accommodate these people. Although its general crisis management strategy was applying controlled pressure, Turkey lost the control on Bulgaria.

The Influence of the Global/Strategic Environment

Global/Strategic environment in a crisis structurally determines the route of a crisis. The global strategic environment changed a lot between 1985, when the crisis on the Turkish minority in Bulgaria first occurred, and 1989, when it ended. In 1985, there was the Cold War atmosphere with serious disputes between the Soviet Union and the USA. Occupation of Afghanistan by the Soviet forces in 1979 tensed the relations after the Détente era and received a rigorous reaction of the USA. By 1988, Soviets began to withdraw from Afghanistan and on February 1989, the occupation was completely over. This gave chance to the parties for better relations once again.

This international/systemic atmosphere affected the 1989 crisis as well. The behaviour of the two block leaders affected the members of their blocks as well. Similar to Afghanistan, Turkey and Bulgaria were open to the changing influence of the USA and Soviet relations. By the end of the 1980s, central European countries began to go through democratic changes and this affected Bulgaria as well both internally and externally.³⁹ Finally, conjectural changes like Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev’s Glasnost policy influenced Turkish minority and they began to disobey and organize against Bulgarian government. By the end of 1989, Bulgaria had to recognize the rights of the Turkish minority.

³⁹ Vasileva, “Bulgarian Turkish Emigration”..., 343.

Bulgaria's aggressive behaviours between 1985 and 1989 were backed by the Soviet Union as expected due to the Cold War conditions. Therefore it was a difficult task for Turkey to manage the full isolation of Bulgaria. Besides, Turkey was in a difficult situation with its NATO allies due to its unexpected operation against Cyprus in 1974.⁴⁰ In addition, Soviet Union was one of the members of the UN Security Council and this made it harder for Turkey to bring the problem to the council.

Thus, Turkey was lacking international support. Third actors' support was not enough and Turkey was not in a situation to be able to defend itself alone.⁴¹ It wanted third actors to condemn Bulgaria, but until 1989, there was not an effective condemnation of the European and Islamic countries.⁴² Turkey received the biggest support from the USA, which played an important role as a third actor. The Bush administration frequently criticized Bulgaria for its human rights policies. In addition, the U.S. Senate voted for imposing embargo on Bulgaria on June, 1989.

Despite these fluctuating international support, which was influenced by the changing route of relations between the two blocks, Turkey was receiving a significant amount of support from its own public inside. Turkish society, which has been famous for its nationalist inclinations, was highly sensitive to this issue, organizing demonstrations to protest Bulgarian government's behaviour towards the Bulgarian Turks. There were already a certain amount of Bulgarian Turks, who migrated Turkey before the last exodus and these people helped the new comers/their relatives to bear the problems such as accommodation and employment. Opposition parties as well as national media organs were also supportive about the government's stance on this issue.

Post -Crisis Period

In the era started by the end of the crisis, the relations between Turkey and Bulgaria improved once again and the parties returned back to the pre-

⁴⁰ Dimitrov, "In Search of"..., 11-12.

⁴¹ Rogers, "Crisis Bargaining Codes"..., 382.

⁴² Bulgaria was condemned by European Council but as it was not a member of this community it didn't feel an obligation to obey the resolutions of this community. Amnesty International and Helsinki Watch also took decisions to condemn Bulgarian government, but these were symbolic acts. Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC) was also away from satisfying Turkey's demands due to its anger about Turkey's good relations with Israel. See: Muzaffer Erendil, *Tarihte Türk-Bulgar İlişkileri*, (Ankara: Genelkurmay Askeri Tarih ve Stratejik Etüt Başkanlığı, 2004): 145.

crisis period. The Zhivkov regime ended and Bulgaria recognised the rights of the Turkish minority. In this way the threat to the Turkish minority was removed and Bulgaria guaranteed the rights of its Turkish citizens. About 100,000 people returned to Bulgaria until December 1989, which hints the failure of the crisis management process of Turkish decision makers. In the long-run, the Movement of Rights and Freedoms was established as a political party in Bulgaria and Turkish minority had the necessary political means to defend themselves. Thanks to the EU membership, Bulgaria could solve its isolation problem to a significant extent and escaped a bloody civil war like Yugoslavia.

Conclusion

International politics is profoundly based on the hard power of states. Contrary to the hard power means, such as military and economics; identity is also an important instrument of modern states. The Turkish minority in Bulgaria migrated to Turkey not because of an armed conflict between the two sides but because of the threats against their identity which were as significant as the other threats. Their desire to protect their ethnic identity contradicted with the Bulgarian policies and, Turkey's historical and ethnic ties with these people made them stand against Bulgaria's aggressive acts.

The Bulgarian government's practices created the 1989 humanitarian crisis in Turkish foreign policy and Prime Minister Turgut Özal's perception of this crisis affected the route of Turkey's crisis management strategy. In addition to the leader factor, Turkey's external and internal conditions influenced the crisis as well. Turkey had to limit its objectives due to the lack of sufficient international support.

Using military means was not an option for both of sides as they did not see the problem as a high threat against their basic values. Consciously, Bulgaria and Turkey did not want to escalate the crisis up to a level of using military means. The crisis included aggressive statements of the parties, but they had never used military instruments. This eased their chance to repair the relations in the post-crisis era.