The Arab Spring, Dominoes, and Turkey

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Abstract: In an era of unexpected shifts in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region and the challenges stemmed from these shifting dynamics, the question is whether the new socio-political atmosphere is sustainable in the medium to long-run in spite of politically question-able achievements? In order to address this question, some historical in-sight along with an elaboration on the concept of "domino theory" could be of some use. Did the "domino effect" of the Arab Spring work in the opposite direction and a "reverse domino effect" turn the picture upside down with authoritarian rulers acquiring power once and for all and eliminating oppositional groups as it is seen from several cases al-ready? From Lenin to Eisenhower, the analogy of "dominoes" and their "fall", referring to the potential chain reaction following a major politi-cal and/or military action / development, found their place in policy-making, and indeed, continued to do so even though direct reference to those terms became less and less popular. However, historical experi-ence implies that despite the popularity of these concepts, dominoes might not fall one after another. Rather, the "next dominoes" can strengthen their position in order to avoid the fate of the last one. Either those regimes would face an irresistible wave of "reverse domino ef-fect" or the fall of some "dominoes" would even help them act more cautiously in order to consolidate what they achieved, one thing is clear; Turkey has the potential and intention to be one of the key players to have an influence over the future and sustainability of the "tectonic shift" we witnessed, better known as "the Arab Spring". At the same time, unsurprisingly, Turkey is also one of the countries that has been and will be affected by its possible U-turn, too.

Keywords: Arab Spring, Domino Theory, Turkey, Moursi, Syria.

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1. ORSAM'da araştırmacı

Changing Dynamics and New Questions
in the Middle East and North Africa

A new era has started with the Arab Spring in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA hereafter) following the fire set by Mohammed Buazizi (Özhan, 2011) which did not only covered his own self, but jumped and seized many other countries. Demand for broader participation in political sphere, for reforms and socio-economic improvement, and for removal of authoritarian rulers signalled a major critical juncture in the MENA region. Even though the process seems come to a halt for the time being, the ideational background seems far from easily destroyable and thanks to social media, can regain its power when found another window of opportunity. It has been a process of a new regional configuration which not only triggered unprecedented popular movements but also sowed the seeds of a long-term tension between authoritarian rule and cry for a more participatory and pluralist politics. However, is that the case indeed with the Arab Spring? Or was it an illusion which shattered quite fast, reinforcing the assumption of impossibility of a more pluralist and democratic governance in the wider MENA region?

The Arab Spring / Awakening

The Arab Spring, known as the Arab Awakening as well, started in December 2010 with the protests in Tunisia, which accumulated to a point that Ben Ali had to fled in January, 2011 (Özhan, 2011), has marked the beginning of a new era when renewed hopes for a stable, democratic Middle East and North Africa with a higher emphasis on market economy and rule of law might prevail were more common than ever.

In order to understand the motivations and the main factors behind such a tectonic shift in the MENA region, the shared dynamics and setting of the countries in the region requires a closer look. Under authoritarian leaders, in the absence of an organised civil society with clear political objectives and adherence to professionalism, freedom of expression and of almost any organised social movement, controversial monarchies or junta-like establishments, the region had been left with little to no room for the people to participate in policy-making processes. This picture coupled with economic failures including high levels of foreign debts and unemployment, opening a fer-

tile ground for resistance to those power settings (Sakbani, 2011). Security challenges unsurprisingly followed the case in several countries where extremist groups utilised on these socio-economic problems in order to gain a more effective position. Lack of respect for human rights and rule of law which gave way to ill treatment and disproportionate use of violence in law-enforcement further contributed to the rise of such groups. Considering these domestic difficulties, the slogan of "bread, freedom and dignity" (Özhan, 2011) has been the perfect choice, referring not only more freedoms or political participation, but also addressing economic hardships the public has experienced. Demand for social and political reforms and political liberalism and democracy gathered people around a common theme, whereas economic problems in those countries added a welfare-based sauce to uprisings.

From Tunisia to Libya, Yemen and Egypt, this new era sent threatening signals to the authoritarian rulers of these countries, highlighting the fact that not only the rise of liberal and democratic values in the region, but also booming impact of social media and youth movements gradually turn into new "kingmakers". The new media or "social media" contributed to the process to a great extent, showing that it is now as effective as millions of dollars' investments and encouragement, vast number of established NGOs and/or a massive arsenal of weaponry to be used against rival groups. Twitter and Facebook has greatly helped the youth to organise, people to know what is going on in different parts of their country, and to publicise the developments to the world in order to raise awareness and gather international support if possible. Compared to phone calls and text messaging, this new wave of communication allowed mass movement of information in a matter of seconds. The whole process showed how social media can help organise people around ideas and push them to act for those ideas rather than being a channel of communication solely for the sake of sharing pictures, statuses or competing over the number of followers or "likes" a particular account received. This instrumental use of social media, far from the original codes of conduct of these new channels of communication, explains why the head of Google in Egypt, Ghonim appreciated the role of Facebook in the demise of Mubarak and noted that he would love to shake hands with its Chief Executive and co-founder Zuckerberg if he had a chance to meet him (Benhabib, 2011). Under authoritarian rulers and quite limited room for social

interaction for political purposes, these channels offered a back door to challenge established elites and rulers, not only by spreading the narrative against them and pumping oppositional discourse, but also by helping organising mass protests by publicising time and venue details. For the governments who were caught unprepared for such an intensive use of social media, monitoring this unprecedented flow of information and take necessary steps against it was almost impossible.

However, the question is whether in spite of all those new ideas, themes, and means which made such a change possible, whether the domino effect the world witnessed during the uprisings can be "reversed" or it was "reversed" already due to changing regional and local dynamics. Up to now, the cases of Egypt and Syria whereas the political situation in Tunisia and Libya is in question too, reinforced the idea of the "end of the Arab Spring" or even a "reversal" of it. Does domino effect always work on the international stage, whether it can be reversed and whether "dominoes" can deliberately improve their standing once they saw the coming of an age of falling dominoes is some questions that require a closer investigation? Prior to offering insights into the answers to these questions, elaboration on basic concepts and the intellectual background attached to them will be given.

Domino Effect in Historical Context

Before elaborating on the concept of "reverse domino effect" within the context of the Arab Spring and beyond, a brief historical background about the "domino theory" would be given. In order to elaborate on the use of "dominoes" analogy in politics and to link it to the Arab Spring and its aftermath, the origins of similar use of the term seem to be a proper starting point. This sort of use of the concept was not only witnessed during the Cold War by the US-led camp, but more historically Lenin's early writings and the USSR's early years with an ambition to export its revolution was also full of implicit references to a belief in the "domino effect".

The term was quite popular among the leaders in the early Cold War years. Especially in the U.S., the term enjoyed a high level of circulation within the context of the need to step up in order to support allies in different regions. This discourse was greatly shaped by the memories of the appeasement policy back in the 1930s and its traumatic consequences. The

emergence of the term thus, also has an indirect link to the appeasement policy towards Germany back in the pre-WWII era where the fall of first domino, referring to "let" Germany take an aggressive stance towards its neighbours thanks to the quite soft stance of Britain, France, better known as the "appeasement policy" did not avoid the threat to spread but quite the opposite(which would in a quite short span of time turn into a Blietzkrieg, devastating whole Europe) and provided self-confidence on the German side. Furthermore, as an additional side-effect "other dominoes" on Nazi Germany's way lost the feeling of security and the would-be Allied camp took a major blow to its credibility and trustworthiness in case of a possible aggression in the eyes of the people in those "other dominoes", starting a long and devastating war. Even earlier, Lenin's writings had mentioned a potential domino effect which could spread the revolution in Russia to the world. The concept of a "world revolution" is not only seen as the key to free the proletariat all over the world but also the key to make the revolution in the Soviet Russia more powerful and help it last forever. In order to do so, the idea was to support like-minded groups and political parties all over the world and help them achieve the ruling position in the near future. Each expected revolution will make it easier for other countries to replicate the "success story" of the previous one along with the possibility of further support from the previous domino to the other financially, politically etc., engendering a red "domino effect".

Therefore, the term has a long journey for decades and travelling around different countries and even continents. The next section will elaborate on this journey in more detail.

Eisenhower and Before: Coining the Term

During the Cold War, in the rhetoric of the US-led camp, the concept of "domino theory" is widely used in order to highlight the potential risks of a soft diplomacy towards the countries on the brink of a communist takeover. There was an historical experience and thus an implicit reference here to the appeasement policy of the European allies. The argument proceeds that allowing one country to fall into this abyss might automatically trigger the same process in the others. Plus, within the context of the Cold War where Hitler is not the one, anymore, who can   encourage such a move, commu-

nist groups in neighbouring countries can be encouraged by this lack of proper resistance and act more eagerly in order to support like-minded groups abroad if not actively involved in   acts to topple governments and install communist ones instead. Under the framework of such assumptions, flank countries such as Turkey and Greece had enjoyed a great deal of support in order to improve their standing in a way that countering a potential communist threat towards their regimes would be possible. The discourse on the concept further refers to the assumption that failures to fulfil commitments towards a particular state would not only cause other states to feel insecure and open up a space for communist takeover, but also impose a great damage on the image of the allied camp which would have serious consequences in an environment where the fight is not only for military superiority but for hearts and souls, or in other words ideological attractiveness. Within this context, Eisenhower coined the term in 1954. His use of the concept was directly linked to the US' responsibility to avoid South Vietnam's fall into "communist hands" which can trigger similar processes in other countries.

However, even though the term was not officially coined back then, before Eisenhower, in 1947, at a time of the American supported   Greece, the motivation behind Acheson's mentality was saving particular countries which might otherwise controlled by the USSR either directly or indirectly "like apples in a barrel infected by one rotten one". Overall, the idea was that potential loss of Greece to communism could have resulted in the loss of Middle East, Africa and would encourage communist parties even in Western European Achesonian design. In a similar manner, NSC documents from 1949-1952 period is full of such statements referring to a possible domino effect that the fall of a country in Asia would result in the fall of Indochina, Far East, Middle East and even Africa. Coupled with the potential psychological impact of the fall of the first domino, calls directed at the government to step forward and act against this danger were frequently made (Slater, 1993). Thus, even though the concept was already there before Eisenhower, he was the one who officially coined the term and significantly contributed to wide circulation of it. However, the concept has a deeper historical background in the other bloc. Indeed, probably this historical background in the Soviet camp was a key reason why and how the concept and the ways to resist it enjoyed greater visibility in the Allied camp.

An Earlier Reference from the USSR:
The Dream of a World Revolution by Forcing Dominoes to Fall

A significant contribution to the historical baggage of the concept came a few decades earlier than Eisenhower, from Lenin. Lenin's hope was that the revolution in Russia would trigger revolutions in Germany, France and possibly some other European countries. Actually, it needs to be pushed further in order to fulfil this expectation for strengthening the base upon which the very Soviet revolution stands. This particular reading of Marxism in Lenin's writings offered the idea of "world revolution" (on the concept, see Melograni, 1989 and Page, 1959), referring to not only Russian triggering of revolutions in capitalist European countries, but also a process of fortifying communist revolution in Russia with a communist takeover of capitalist Europe which would put an end to capitalist dominance over the continent. However, this policy line, underwent a change in the Stalin era toward the policy of "communism in one country", referring to putting emphasis on the fortification of the revolution and communism in the Soviet space rather than using excessive energy to "export" the revolution. This change was primarily due to a disappointment with the failed efforts over time and the USSR's need to focus more on its borders, defend them, and economic reconstruction after the war rather than export its regime in the WWII and beyond. The transformation also meant that the USSR would also be presented as the unique and truest form of a communist rule rather than an important part of a global change in favour of the proletariat which shed some light for the future tension between itself and China and Yugoslavia.

Behind this narrative of the Soviet export of a world revolution to continental Europe -which already had a more fertile ground for such a shift theoretically due to its industrialisation- was Marx's own writings. Karl Marx regarded the then Czar of Russian Empire, Nicholas, as the biggest obstacle on the way towards a communist shift (Page, 1951). His point follows that if a revolution, even in Russia, can take place, with a much crowded labour force, -i.e. meaning a populous class of proletariat -, capitalist societies of the West can more easily witness such a radical change. Following Marx's footsteps, Lenin himself named Russia as the "largest and most backward" country of Europe. If it succeeded to revolutionise its society and state, this would not

only offer a prospect for the West but also get Asia moving toward a similar shift (Page, 1951). Thus, he also believed that in Asia, fights against colonialism and series of independence wars had the potential of contributing to the emergence of future communist governments, which would in turn; act as regional launch pads for a global proletarian fight against capitalism. He believed that without a world revolution, Russian revolution would not be a complete and truly successful endeavour. Moreover, it would not have the chance to consolidate its regime and defend it against future waves of capitalist attacks. However, while on the one hand each subsequent Communist International stepped back a bit from this idea, in Russia itself, after especially 1925, the idea of "socialism in one country" gradually gained higher popularity, also thanks to the elimination of Trotsky and Sinoviev and the rise of Stalin. Without a single doubt, the WWII and the need to have a more inward-looking approach in the immediate post-WWII era was the final nail in the coffin of the term in the Soviet literature even though future efforts to spread and defend the revolution was not absent whereas the Western camp started to use it even more extensively. Chinese objection to imitate the Russian example in its own experience of revolution and its insistence on pursuing its own reading of communism was no less important in reinforcing this approach, showing that while revolution in the West is turning into a utopia, the East promised no significant prospect to be hopeful for a "world revolution", either (Florinsky, 1932).

Domino Effect: Reality or Myth

So far, several most famous uses of the idea of domino theory under different names are briefly covered. Key figures around the world, either referring to a more defensive use or a more expansionist tendency, mentioned their belief in the interactivity between different actors in the system and correlation between a shift that took place in a particular actor and shifts in others. It is still questionable though, whether domino theory is as valid as it is believed to be, considering the relatively limited "domino effect" of the revolutions in Guatemala in 1954, in Cuba in 1959, and in Nicaragua in 1979. Neither Chinese revolution nor the communist victories in North Korea or Vietnam resulted in the emergence of a "red Asia". Moreover, each revolution underlined the need for a stronger stance for possible future

spread and brought further outside support for potential target countries. Thus, their sphere of influence was further constrained when the communist takeover in those countries even motivated further American support to the other countries of the region. Indeed, the revolutions acted as perfect tools for not only legitimising Eisenhower's doctrine, but also strengthened other possible dominoes' resistance against such change. Even though falling dominoes and transforming Asia into a hostile communist region proved to be far from the reality, this possibility served to empower anti-Communist discourse and groups in those countries.

Only Nicaragua might have affected two other revolutions in Ethiopia and in Angola, an impact which is indeed quite questionable. And, it is also questionable that the credibility of patronage in order to stop dominoes from falling is as effective as it is believed on the Soviet side, considering the Soviet interventions in Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968 (see Slater, 1993). The theory has some potential in a way that a regime can support like-minded groups, organise society or cooperate with some political figures in another country to trigger a particular change it looks for. However, the theory seems suffering from some serious empirical weakness. A revolution and change in a neighbouring country might also result in a more cautious policy line in other countries in order to avoid "export" of a regime change and even has the potential to gather elites, interest groups and a massive support from constituency if it is regarded as a direct or indirect foreign intervention into its domestic politics. This could be the case especially if that particular state has a political inclination to nationalist notions, experienced (or have experienced) an identity or power-related tension for some time or have historical cleavages with its neighbours as in the case of Japan vis-à-vis the revolution in China or Turkey vis-à-vis socialist-nationalist coups in its neighbouring regions and vis-à-vis the revolution in Iran.

Does Changing Dynamics in Egypt and Syria Signal the Beginning of a Process of Reverse Domino Effect?

Both for the states that the Arab Spring made major changes and the ones that had little to no effect such as Algeria, Morocco, Jordan and Bahrein, the problem might have been arisen due to the problem that they had quite limited time for transition to establish a working state structure without au-

thoritarian rulers. Within this context, newly established political parties as well as the military's continuing authority, coupled with a weak state apparatus and bureaucracy lessened their chance to survive. As it was the case in the beginning when the turmoil in Tunisia gave hope to other states, a failure to advance this wave in Syria caused others to be more suspicious about their own fate. Still, it should be recalled that during the Libyan experience, this feeling was also there for some time since Qaddafi had seemed to be able to cling to power more than expected. His fall provided the people in the Middle East and North Africa with a further hope about the future of the Awakening.

The sentence is too long better to be rewritten) However, more recently, the question has become that whether the Arab Spring phenomenon came to an end in the MENA region. This was firstly due to Assad's ruthless oppression of the people who demanded economic and political reforms Assad had long been promising. His attitude was indifferent including both civilian and armed groups, which turned the situation into a full-fledged civil war with international engagement. Egypt followed the suit in a different way where Moursi government was toppled by Al-Sisi-led coup. The Western reaction was extraordinarily silent during toppling the Moursi government, further questioning the global position regarding gradual democratization of the region via popular movements. Still, the term post-Arab Spring might only be useful in order to draw limits on a broad historical period. However, it might well be argued that the process of the Arab Spring has not come to an end even after its tragic halt in Syria or its "failure" in Egypt for the time being. Since the process does not only refer to government and/or regime changes, but also introduction of new ideas and a spirit of resistance into the political sphere in the broader MENA region and new ways to organise people and gather them around these new ideas, the process can, to some extent, be regarded as a successful one. This is the case not only in terms of changing political settings in particular countries, but also of sowing the seeds for future change. So it'd be wise to name the process as an open-ended one which in the long-term has the potential to witness a gradual increase in the people's demands for more rights and freedom and political participation which could easily renew the "government change"-dimension of the whole process. In the short term though,

absence of detailed programmes for future, established institutions that would help to maintain what is achieved and necessary social and economic reforms in order to consolidate democratic regimes would be quite a challenge (Sakbani, 2011) as we already witnessed in the last few years of a U-turn / "reverse domino effect" in the broader MENA region following the Moursi's fall and the Syrian Civil War.

Where Does Turkey Stand in the Context of Domino Analogy?

> "…the Turks are currently gaining back important footholds in the Arab world. The Arab rebels and the new regimes in their counties are welcoming the Turkish role in supporting revolutions and defending the kind of democratic rule that those new regimes are calling for."
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> <div align="right">Elias Harfoush (Sakbani, 2011)</div>

It should be noted that, in terms of how Turkey has approached the process, its support to the people and for reform-minded regimes with the capability of integrating vast majorities to policy-making processes, rather than oligarchy -like and/or authoritarian regimes has been the key to understand its position.

Coupled with Turkey's stance against some Israeli policies in the region and its stance regarding the sanctions on Iran, this line of action during the Arab Spring reinforced its image as a possible candidate to fill the power vacuum in the region with its soft power or at least as a power that oppositional groups look, for both material and immaterial support, in their fight for a new order in their respective countries. With its multi-party democracy, market economy and a wider participatory political sphere, it presented a unique case to be studied and even imitated by these groups (in order to gain some brief insight into Turkey's "return" to the region both politically and economically in the last decade, see Kirişci, 2012; Kınıklıoğlu, 2010; Abramowitz and Barkey, 2009; Aktay, 2010; Altunışık and Martin, 2011; Aras and Karakaya Polat, 2007).

Even though the danger of a "reverse domino effect" puts Turkey's short-term potential within this context in question after a moment of high hopes of Turkey's increasing impact in the region before the process tended to take a U-turn; in the long run, it has the potential to produce and re-

produce Turkey's window of opportunity. Putting aside this realpolitik dimension, Turkey's positioning has been also important to show Turkey's commitment to democratisation and reforms as well as the effort of socialising the region with the Western political and economic structure (Oğuzlu, 2008). Turkey did not only welcomed and somehow encouraged the revolution in Tunisia, it was one of the first countries that suggested Mubarak to resign before violence might occur and probably the most determined regional power regarding the turmoil in Syria, repeating its desire for reforms in Syria numerous times and pushed Assad regime towards that end.[2]

The process resulted in shifts in Turkey's dramatically increasing popularity in the region as well. While Turkey enjoyed a higher popularity than ever in the immediate pre-Arab Spring era as well as the uprisings in the MENA, "falling dominoes" pushed correspondents in such questionnaires towards a less positive attitude. However, even though the level of Turkey's positive perception dropped to 59 percent from more than 70 percent in 2011, it is still the fourth power that is perceived most positively after UAE, China and Saudi Arabia according to TESEV's poll. It seems that Russian and Chinese rise to higher rankings in this list is due to this very U-turn and their support to it, especially in Syria. This halt of revolutions resulted in not only increasing number of correspondents voting for those powers in favour of Assad regime in Syria (Akgün and Senyücel Gündoğar, 2014) as well as a result of Egypt's post-Moursi political settings and its tension with Turkey, both of which directly and indirectly affects the level of Turkey's popularity in the region in such questionnaires. This can also explain the drop of the level of perception that the Arab Spring was good for the region from 77 percent to 42 percent in one year (Akgün and Senyücel Gündoğar, 2014), due to the large number of correspondents from Syria and Egypt that are possibly much more concerned about expressing their views more openly after changing circumstances, which is fair enough.

Unsurprisingly, the least supportive voices for Turkey came from Egypt

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2. See "Arab Awakening Boosts Turkey's Confidence", *Strategic Comments* 17:8 (2011) and Eduard Soler i Lecha, "The EU, Turkey, and the Arab Spring: From Parallel Approaches to a Joint Strategy", October 2011, <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/Digital-Library/Publications/Detail/?ots591=0c54e3b3-1e9c-be1e-2c24-a6a8c7060233&lng=en&id=134444>, accessed 28/06/2014.

and Syria. Especially, the change from 84 percent to 38 percent in Egypt (Akgün and Senyücel Gündoğar, 2014) speaks for itself, showing the link between the fate of the "Egyptian Spring" and the perception of Turkey. Since it does not make sense to assume that the same population would respond to the very same question differently with such significant drop of percentage (almost 50 percent in the Egyptian case) for no obvious reason in such a short period of time, either Turkey's attitude or Egyptian people's concerns about the new regime's potential should be the key to understand this anomaly. Since Turkey's attitude has been quite critical of Mubarak regime and then supportive of Moursi and it adopted a strict anti-Sisi stance from the very beginning, changing internal dynamics in Egypt can be the answer. People's concerns about risking themselves by responding such questionnaires in a way that criticise al-Sisi government can help us understand this dramatic shift within only several years.

To summarise the statistical data in a wrapped-up fashion, it is noteworthy that even though it also witnessed a slight decrease, the level of support for Turkey to play a more active regional role is still 60 percent overall (Akgün and Senyücel Gündoğar, 2014). Therefore, the Arab-Spring process has not only been a litmus test for Turkey's commitment to liberal democratic values and reform. It also provided a signpost that Turkey is not only eager to play a greater role in the region now but also its positioning can pay off in the long-term, too, considering the high level of public support to Turkey in the region, which is a highly valuable asset to operationalise any means of soft power.

Still, in order to limit the impact of this potential reverse domino effect, Turkey's attitude towards the Middle East and North Africa in the foreseeable future would be highly important. In order not to step into a "self-containment" cell, the distinction between authoritarian rulers and people which has been successfully made so far, should be kept mentioning frequently. Moreover already established transnational contact with the NGOs and the more "pro-Arab Spring" countries in the region should be maintained and even strengthened in years to come. It should also keep an eye on Syrian-Iranian axis that might overtly and covertly support such a U-turn and/or might try to benefit from the power vacuum in the region. It is not something brand new for Turkey and for Iran obviously, since both

have quite a long experience of not only wars up until the 17th century, but also had a low-intensity cold war during Pahlawi era with Iranian ambition on the rise to be the regional leading power and during the post-1979 era with conflicting readings of statehood and democracy. Rather than each domino's increasing impact on the fall of the other, quite the contrary, it is also possible that this reverse-domino effect might bear another consequence to counter it, as in the case of the Cold War rivalries in Asia and Africa. This can happen via increasing awareness and precaution to counter such "reverse domino effect" by countries and groups that still strive for a change or to keep what they achieved more wholeheartedly. The "next possible dominoes" would even aim at doing so with more productive and well-thought economic and political programmes, coupled with a focus on more effective leadership, and higher levels of professionalization and institutionalisation in order not to follow the suit in Egypt and partially Syria. Such long-term prospects and desires would require support not only from domestic sources but also from countries such as Turkey, which would keep offering Turkey new windows of opportunity to contribute to a stable neighbourhood with democratic governance, which in turn would provide it with further chances of raising its profile in the region. Therefore, the key for Turkey to make most of the new environment is its continuing commitment to the values which made it a potential source of inspiration in the region and its determined stance to have a gradually increasing role in its surrounding regions with cost effective calculation of its abilities and political / economic / military reach in the MENA region.

Özet: Ortadoğu ve Kuzey Afrika'da belenmedik değişimlerin meydana geldiği ve değişen dinamiklerin yeni meseleler doğurduğu bir atmosferde ortaya çıkan soru, tartışmalı siyasi kazanımları göz önünde bulundurulduğunda, yeni sosyo-politik atmosferin orta-uzun vadede sürdürülebilir olup olmadığıdır. Bu sorunun ele alınması noktasında domino teorisi konseptinin faydalı olacağı öngörülmüştür. Arap Baharı bağlamında domino teorisi tersine çalışmış ve otoriter rejimlerin gücü yeniden ele almasını sağlamış ve muhalif grupları belirli örneklerinde görüldüğü üzere saf dışı edilmesiyle mi sonuçlanmıştır? Lenin'den Eisenhower'a

kadar domino, dominoların düşüşü ve bu düşüşün oluşturabileceği siyasi ve askeri zincirleme etki siyasi literatürde her ne kadar terminolojinin kullanımı popülerliğini zamanla yitirse de kendine bir yer bulmuştur. Öte yandan, tarihi tecrübe göstermektedir ki tüm popülaritesine karşın dominolar pek çok örnekte de birbiri ardına düşmemiş, aksine her düşen domino bir sonraki aktörün daha güçlü direnç oluşturma çabasını tetiklemiştir. Arap Baharı'nda gelinen noktada sürecin hangi ihtimali takip edeceği üzerinde soru işaretleri olmakla birlikte net olan nokta Türkiye'nin sürecin geleceği ve sürdürülebilirliğine etki etme noktasında potansiyeli ve isteği olduğudur. Bu durum öte yandan bir "ters domino" etkisinden etkilenen ve etkilenmeye devam edecek ülkeler listesinde Türkiye'nin üst sıralarda bulunmasını da beraberinde getirmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Arap Baharı, Domino Teorisi, Türkiye, Mursi, Suriye

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