

The Future of the Role of Russia and Turkey in Karabakh Conflict from the Perspective of Decision Theory

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Abstract

Since the nature of the international system requires, each state in the international arena tries to use the opportunities and benefits as much as possible. Collapse of the USSR caused that these opportunities and challenges occur for regional and trans-regional countries. Ethnic and racial conflicts are among these challenges and issues which the newly-independent states have been inherited. One of the ethnic and territorial conflicts was the struggle between Armenians and Azeris on the region of Nagorno - Karabakh in Azerbaijan which had a long root and caused war and conflict and killing between Armenians and Azeris. This conflict began from 1988 and by establishing ceasefire between Armenian and Azeris, conflicts ended and the state of "neither war nor peace" was established. Because Russia is considered the most important regional player in the Nagorno – Karabakh conflict, in this conflict, it tries to increase its influence in the region. In addition, Turkey's reaction is against Armenia because of its union to Azerbaijan. Regarding its international status, Turkey tries to close itself to Azerbaijan as much as possible. Prolonging crisis Intervention for the competitiveness and regional and trans-regional powers for crisis management towards achieving more benefits are among the factors of entering Russia and Turkey to the South Caucasus and the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict for playing more roles in the crisis.

Key words: crisis, Karabakh, Turkey's foreign policy, Russia, Decision Theory.

Introduction

With the intensification of the globalization process, ethnic, identical, racial and territorial conflicts and challenges have increased. These contradictions have become conflicts and challenges by use of other factors including the structure of international system and had many outcomes and influences in the peripheral environment and even in the international system. During the Cold War, nationalism was under the influence of two poles and its ideology and priority was manifested. With the end of the Cold War, many ethnic-local identities grew in the Caucasus region and caused many conflicts in this region. The greatest conflict was Nagorno - Karabakh Crisis which although was controlled by a ceasefire between Azerbaijan and Armenia, there is a potential conflict between these two countries and both have prepared themselves for a future war. The Karabakh crisis is the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan on Karabakh Autonomous Region which has a long-established and old root. Karabakh state in 8th

July 1923 was shaped in as it is today. According to the 1988 census, 76.9 percent of the population are Armenian and 21.5 percent of it are Azeri Muslims and the rest of the population are of other ethnics and nationalities. The area of this land is 4400 km² which is about 5.1 percent of the area of the republic of Azerbaijan¹. At the beginning of 1988, this conflict occurred between Azerbaijan and Armenia in which more than 20 thousands of people were sacrificed and about one million people became homeless and one and a half million people emigrated. This flood of immigrations resulted in occurring a critical conditions in Azerbaijan and more than 14 percent of Azerbaijan was occupied in this arena. After that, the dimensions of this conflict was considered as one of the longest, most violent and complicated ethnic and racial conflicts after the communist atmosphere². Nagurno is a mountainous region populated by Armenians in the west of the Republic of Azerbaijan and near Armenian boundaries. This region is controlled by local Armenians and since the independence of these two countries, i.e. Azerbaijan and Armenia, it has been the resource of their conflicts³. The origin of this conflict refers to the Armenian-Azeri conflicts in 1905. When Tsarist Russia the south and the importance which the Caucasus region had for it returned to the development policy, the Soviet Union which was following the desired stability in the region by use of the lack of power due to the collapse of the Ottoman state, started the policy of Armenian immigrant settlement. These immigrations were possible via the tendency which Armenians had to establish a comprehensive state-nation since centuries ago and in the final years of Tsarist rule, particularly in 1915, after immigration hundreds of Armenians it came to be true and the conflict between them and Azeris appeared gradually⁴. This enmity became more severe since 1989 when the Republic of Azerbaijan declared its independence and since early 1992, Karabakh war began and critical region was created in the Caucasus region. When this crisis peaked, the ground of arrival of regional and trans-regional players to this crisis to manage it was prepared because the geopolitical conditions and oil resources of the Caucasus region had created appropriate motivations for the arrival of these players to this international crisis. On the one hand, Russia is to revive its influence in the Southern Caucasus region. On the other hand, Turkey is to establish and reinforce its influence in the countries of the Southern Caucasus region, which these factors are determining in the international relations and the presence of turkey in the competition with Russia and other regional players⁵. The importance of paying attention to this discussion is because the Caucasus region after the collapse of the Soviet Union is one of the most important regions which has attracted the attentions of regional and trans-regional powers to itself. The natural-geographical and strategic situation of

¹ Vaezi, M. (2007). Geopolitical crisis in the Caucasus and Central Asia. Tehran: ministry of Foreign Affairs: pp. 133-135.

² Axundov, Fuad (2008) "co_chairs Against Azerbaijan, the UN General Assembly Against co_chairs", regionplus, no.7. p.51.

³ Toyserkani, M. (2010). An analysis of the levels of intervention in the Karabakh conflict. Islamic Sciences computer center. Pp. 1-2.

⁴ Amir Ahmadian, B. (1999). The process of developments in the Karabakh conflict. . Islamic Sciences computer center. P. 32.

⁵ Abbasof & Haritonchakhartian (2004). Nagorno-Karabakh ideals and realities. Translation and publication: Abrar Institute of Contemporary International Studies and Researches.

the Caucasus causes that the attentions of many countries be attracted to it; therefore, the identification of Karabakh crisis and the estimation of the influences of other countries on this crisis have a significant importance, while the state of "neither war nor peace" between Azerbaijan and Armenia has survived the fear of starting marital operations and conflicts. Therefore, for countries bordering, the identification of the crisis is important. In the present study, it tries to investigate the roles of Turkey and Russia in Karabakh crisis using the Decision Model. This article, using descriptive-analytic method and using the information and library research and the Internet tries to answer this question how the continuance of Karabakh crisis has provided the required cause for the presence of the west and Russia in Azerbaijan and Armenia?

Authors are to first present a definition of the concept of crisis and then investigate the role of Russia and its aims in the region as the most important power in the region. They also investigate the aims of Turkey and its objectives and factors in Karabakh crisis. And to answer the main question the Decision Model as the analysis tool is used.

Theoretical framework

Foreign policy model (decision approach)

Decision definition: multiple definitions have been presented for decision, Karl Anderson defines decision as " the simplest definition of decision refers to the selection of a strategy from among potential strategies available and adopting a strategy does not mean the end of a decision making process, but every decision with the advent of issue and problem starts its own process and usually the decision made is the representative of the difference between status quo and achievement to the desired status in the future⁶. In this line, the Decision theory to find and applying a solution which in every time and place is the best and based on the expected subjective desire select wisely to remove the problem. Nowadays, decision is one of the most important discussions in the arena of theorizing and conceptualization in the foreign policy. However, the main roots of the Decision theory expand in economy and management science, the range of this theories has reached the most important arena of political decisions, i.e. foreign policy. To understand better the decision theory, it is better to first be familiar with the definitions of the concepts of decision and decision making. Decisions are the outputs of the political structures through which values are authoritatively distributed in a society. Decision making is the act of selecting among alternative solutions or available items about which we have no certainty and uncertainty⁷. Decision making in foreign policy (decision-making approach): the evaluation of the behaviors of states is based on the decisions which policy makers adopt in different fields. Therefore, the decision method is one of the frameworks considered for investigation of the international relations⁸. Accordingly, it can be claimed that political analysts investigate the political issues with two systemic approaches and decision approach. The policy making approach (decision model) emphasizes the policy makers'

⁶ Anderson Carl. R (1988). *Management*: Alyn. 8 Bacon. Inc, 2nd ed. P.130

⁷ Duertty, J. & Faltz, G. (2009). *Competing theories of international relations*. A. Tayyeb & V. Bozorgi (Trans.). 5th ed. Tehran: Ghumes: p. 719.

⁸ Ghavam, A. (1991). *Principles of foreign policy and international politics*. 1st ed. Tehran: SAMT. P. 39.

performance in the crisis. The crisis in this model is a stage of discrepancy which Halstey considers the signs of crisis from the point of view of decision makers as: 1. the feeling of greatness of threat 2. Response time limits 3. Surprising 4. The feeling of creating the disastrous outcomes because of not acting⁹. In this model, the human and psychological aspects in the process of foreign policy making are emphasized and the personal role in decision making is considered by experts. Ghavam believes that decision making in foreign policy (decision making approach) is the evaluation of the behaviors of states based on the decisions made by policy makers in different fields¹⁰. In this line, Bercher states that in the model of foreign policy emphasizes the perceptual state of decision makers in the highest level based on the existence of pressure or pressures which have foreign origins¹¹. Since the critical condition to fit the severity of the threat, time continuity and knowledge degree are different, each of three factors determining the crisis (time, surprising) may be located in the highest severity and importance and in the lowest level and classification of crisis should be measured¹². Here, defining the concept of crisis, the authors describe the role of Russia and Turkey in Karabakh crisis based on this theory.

The concept of crisis:

One of the discussions rooted in the international relations and strategic studies particularly in the recent years is the discussion that is crisis and its management. All researchers disagree on this issue that crisis management is related to attentive control of political issues by the elite of higher levels; however, the role of these elites and policy makers as the main factor in dealing with crisis. The term crisis applies vastly not only in the realm of politics, but also in humanities and social sciences and even natural sciences. Its application can be seen under the titles like air pollution, workers strike crisis, fuel crisis, financial crisis, food crisis and so on. In these cases, crisis is a particular concept which refers to general notions and in these applications, crisis refers to different senses such as threat, conflict, lacking and In political science, crisis is one of the most used terms and when this term used by politicians, it indicates the existing challenges in the process of their decision making and the pressures due to it on these politicians. However, in the texts and theories of international relations, the term crisis is applied both in relations between countries and international system and the whole international community. It can cover the concepts like threat, war, collapse, fall and ...¹³. Therefore, its high breadth and diversity causes that one cannot have a comprehensive and complete definition of crisis and consequently, crisis is a defined and redefined concept not a relative perception and one cannot present a comprehensive and absolute definition of it in

⁹Halstey, J.K.(1994). Principles of International Politics. B Mostaghimi & M. Tarom Sari (Trans.). Tehrn: Ministry of foreign affairs: p. 614.

¹⁰ Ghavam, A. (1991). Principles of foreign policy and international politics. 1st ed. Tehran: SAMT.

¹¹Bercher, M. & Yelkelfland, J. (2003). Crisis, Conflict and Instability. A. Sobhdel. (Trans.). Tehran: p.52.

¹² Kazemi, S. A. A. (1987). International Crisis Management. Tehran: Office of Islamic culture. P. 24.

¹³ Kazemi, S. A. A. (1987). International Crisis Management. Tehran: Office of Islamic culture. P. 13.

this sense that the concept of crisis can be applied for diverse fields and different times and places. It is not a cognitive concept, i.e. it cannot be applied in the mind in the same sense. To analyze crisis, Bercher investigate the role of players and affectedness of crisis from the structure of the system or interference of other forces in the crisis¹⁴. Here, with the adoption of the term crisis for Nagorno – Karabakh, the role of regional players and the method of managing them using Decision model are investigated. In discussing crisis management, by the advent of the events and occurrences, decision makers of foreign policy encounter three criteria of time, surprising and threat and in spite of the different atmosphere, using appropriate tools and tactics, they decide in line with achieving logical results. According to the definition presented from the concept of crisis, it can be said that the conflict and issue of Karabakh is considered as a kind of long-established conflict (continuous). In its process, there is a kind of stoppage, this conflict may be stopped for a while; however, this stoppage does not mean the end of the crisis. Therefore, one can say the Karabakh crisis is continuing.

The formation Factors of Karabakh crisis

Karabakh crisis is one of the longest ethnic wars in the Soviet Union which has a vast internal complicatedness and is among the crises which is influenced by geopolitical, cultural, religious and historical factors. The geopolitical factors includes: the existence of convex boundaries, geographical situation, the existence of ethnic-racial region, water network, lack of legitimacy and undermined borders and cultural, historical and political factors are as follows: historical negative feelings of Armenians, contrasting regional approaches of Azeris and Armenians, discriminatory policies against each other, the policies of the Soviet's nations about the races and the competitions of interfering powers. Below, the grounds of formation of the crisis will be discussed briefly.

Convex boundaries:

Boundaries of Azerbaijan adjacent to the republic of Armenia have a curve which in a general scale, keeping these borders safe is more difficult than smooth boundary without protrusion or indentation. Therefore, this convexity of Azerbaijan's orders causes a strategic weakness in keeping its borders safe. The boundaries of these two countries in this region is among the worst kinds of political borders between countries, which are mainly mountainous and have many notches, convexity and dents. This geopolitical stable factor causes a long conflict between these two republics¹⁵ and these issue always has been a concern for the republic of Azerbaijan.

The existence of an ethnic-racial region:

Many scholars believe that 21st century like the previous century will be the arena of ethnic conflicts and struggles and likely in the future, the ethnic and identity crises will be expanded and the international system will be faced with the political and security conflicts and

¹⁴ Bercher, M. & Yelkelfland, J. (2003). *Crisis, Conflict and Instability*. A. Sobhdel. (Trans.). Tehran: p.57.

¹⁵ Bayat, K. (1992). Azerbaijani-Armenian border clashes. *Nehgah-e-now*. No. 11. Pp. 125-141.

upheavals. The Caucasus region having about 50 ethnic-racial groups with many differences and diverse religions has a great potential for occurring conflicts and ethnic crises¹⁶.

Water network:

Among other natural factors is the water network which during history it has been different roles since World War II the water network had a dissuasive role, but because of technological advances, nowadays rivers have had a different and much more important role and have had a certain geopolitical importance. Primarily, in all complaints which Armenians sent for the central government about the issue that people of Karabakh complained that they did not benefit from water of Karabakh and in addition, the rivers in Azerbaijan cross Karabakh mountains and cause that seizing the control of the conditions in Karabakh is important¹⁷, which in the present study some issues are discussed because stating other issues needs a separate article.

Because in the Caucasus region particularly in Karabakh region, multiple and diverse players in playing roles. In addition to three countries of Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia are three regional players, i.e. Iran, Russia, Turkey and trans-regional players, i.e. USA and EU and some international players like UN and NATO are actively present. The reason of the presence of international players is the existence of many ethnic-racial crises in the region particularly Karabakh crisis which in this part first, the role of Russia as one of the most important internal player in this conflict is investigated, then the role and position of Turkey in Karabakh crisis will be discussed and how they are present which has caused in increasing the crisis¹⁸.

Russia:

Russia is still considered as a political power in the competition with the West is pursuing to keep their realm safe particularly in the Caucasus region and is trying to decrease the USA's role in the form of NATO in the Caucasus, Russia considers itself as the heir of communism and the Soviet and keeps his power to prevent the influence of the other powers in the Caucasus¹⁹.

Because Russia remains as the greatest country of the Soviet Union which plays a role in Karabakh crisis and pursues to keep its own interests, this conflict makes Russian relations with other newly-independent republics complicated and endangers the stability of the region²⁰. Moreover, Russia is the most player of the region which tries to attain its own interests through inciting ethnic-cultural differences, which can keep the influencing realm of Russia. Russian officials were happy of any measure which incited ethnic-cultural conflicts and used this issue in sake of its own authority, which the upheavals of Armenian regions is the exemplar of Russian

¹⁶ Vaezi, M. (2003). Karabakh conflict legacy of Soviet ethnic challenges. *Journal of Central Asia and the Caucasus* .12th year. No. 42: p. 15.

¹⁷ Karami, T. (1995). Regional factors of prolongation of the conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia. *Middle East Journal*. No. 5. P. 465.

¹⁸ Moradi, M. (2006). Prospects for cooperation between Iran and Europe in providing security and stability in the South Caucasus: limitations and possibilities. Tehran: Ministry of Foreign Policy: p. 58.

¹⁹ Shafiee, E. & Jahangardi, P. (2011). Review the NATO Council - Russia, *Journal of Political and International Studies*. No. 6. Spring 2011. P. 50.

²⁰ Dina Mayshewa, "the conflict in Nagorna – karabakh: its impact on security in the Cospian region (1998), STRRI year book 1998: Oxford University.p.266.

leaders' policies²¹. In formation of Karabakh crisis, Stalin as a determining official in the Soviet policies, had key and superior role and he emphasized domination over other nations. By changing the Soviet constitution in 1963, Stalin gave an autonomous structure to small nations which did not have required conditions to apply the rule over a land; however, in practice, these social changes were conducted everywhere with the objective of elimination of national identity²². Therefore, Stalin's performance had two different aspects: first apparent respect to the constituent nations and then propensity to eliminate all causes of nationalism among which one can mention the exiles of 1920 onwards²³. In case of the Caucasus particularly Karabakh, the policy of breaking up identities and dispersing the ethnics in different countries were conducted by Stalin. In this way, he tried to not allow that Azerbaijan have no geographical connection with Turkey and also endeavored that in the republics of Azerbaijan and Armenia, there were enough Azeris and Armenians to achieve the objectives of Moscow. Its peak was placing Karabakh with Armenians in majority under the rule of Azerbaijan²⁴. Since after the Caucasus countries achieving independence of from Russia, after a short time, it was identified that Armenia is Russia's only trusted ally and Azerbaijan and Georgia were deeply anti-Russian and Russian endeavor was to keep ethnic conflicts in the region to keep and revive its own power²⁵. As observed, in the next periods after Stalin, i.e. Khrushchev, Brezhnev and other leaders of the Communist Party, the efforts are based on this fact that the period of national differences in the Soviet had been gone and the homogeneous nation of the Soviet Union had been formed, while Armenian wants have not been considered²⁶. What is clear is that the Caucasus is always considered as the vital filed of Russian interests and among the issues of foreign policies, Russia suffers the least challenge among different and sometimes opposing intellectual tendencies. Therefore, Russia in the Caucasus region pursues fulfilling their own objectives, continuing the presence and political – security and martial influence and through following dual policy in dealing with the crisis to achieve its objectives. Sometimes, controlled instability Policy is applied through continuing regional conflicts and keeping military stations and sometimes, to prevent expansion of crises and instabilities into national borders, Russia supports stability and peace in the Caucasus. Russian strategy under Putin and also Medvedev is more representative of the unofficial image of Russia about the region which tries to continue regional conflicts of the Caucasus and in spite of the efforts which intermediary groups has

²¹ Ismailzade, Fariz (2008), "Moscow Declaration on Nargo_Karabakh: A View From Baka", Turkish policy Quarterly, Vol.7, no.3. p.68.

²² Vali, V. (1996). Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and Gorbachev's policy in the Muslim republics. Central Asia and Caucasus Studies. No. 13: p. 225.

²³ Arfaei, A. (1993). The issue of Nagorno -karabakh. Journal of Central Asia and Caucasus Studies. No. 2. Pp. 169-170.

²⁴ Gouble, P. (1993). Prospects for conflict and opportunities for peace in the southern region of the former Soviet. Gh. Maleki (Trans.). Journal of Central Asia and Caucasus Studies. No. 1. Pp. 275.

²⁵ Cornell, Svante E. (1999), " The Nargo-Karabakh Conflict", Report No.46, Department of East European Studies, Uppsolo University. Pp 53-4.

²⁶ Sheikh Attar, A. (1992). The origins of political behavior in Central Asia and Caucasus. Tehran: ministry of foreign affairs.

done regarding Karabakh peace, there has been no serious agreement in this period between Armenia and Azerbaijan in peaceful line with the conflict and in these periods, Russia has used this conflict for controlling Azerbaijan²⁷.

Russia's interests in continuing Karabakh crisis:

Continuing the presence of Russian military and security forces in the region particularly in Armenia

Insecurity in the western routes, energy transit and consequently the superiority of northern routs passing Russia

Russian political presence in the region under the pretext of resolving the Karabakh conflict

Controlling Azerbaijan using the lever of Nagorno-Karabakh conflict with the help of Armenia

To create the balance of power between Armenia and Azerbaijan and to prevent the domination one on the other and to adopt a mutual policy in Russia's agenda to reach its own objective, Russian mutual policy in suppressing Karabakh movement on the one hand and concurrent with it adopting social-economic plans for this region to stand against the expansion of great powers' influences on the other hand, which in this arena, this issue can result in severity of the crisis²⁸.

Among the geopolitical interests of Russia in the Caucasus which tried to keep are as follows: controlling over its realm of influencing, i.e. the Caucasus, controlling regional (Iran, Turkey) and trans-regional (USA) players, preventing from the anti-Russian axis by regional countries and keeping its own authority in the Caucasus region, exploiting the possibilities of the Caucasus and keeping its influence in the region, the active and powerful presence in the economy of newly-independent countries of the region, presenting a strategic map in solving conflicts and struggles like that of Karabakh which confirmed Russia's influence in the region. Since the election of Putin as president of Russia, Russia's vast endeavors in various dimensions for supplying national interests and keeping the Caucasus²⁹. This region has a priority of vital interests for Russia and Russia may resort to deconstructive measures in the region to fulfill its objectives. Moreover, by defining the close outside region (newly-independent countries after the Soviet collapse), it considers its borders impenetrable and does not accept the presence of foreign forces³⁰. Because the Caucasus is placed in the axis of regional policies of Russia for different security-economic and strategic reasons and Russia based on a long-term plan adopts a serious endeavor to achieve its objectives. With the presence of other powers in the Caucasus

²⁷Moradi, M. (2006). Prospects for cooperation between Iran and Europe in providing security and stability in the South Caucasus: limitations and possibilities. Tehran: Ministry of Foreign Policy: pp. 183-185.

²⁸ Dehasti, Rexane (2000), "International Organizations as Mediator in Intra-state Conflicts", The OSCE, Frankfurt am Main. P.128.

²⁹ Afshordi, M.H. (2002). The Caucasus geopolitics and Iran's Foreign policy. Tehran: Sepah Pasdaran. Command and General Staff College, the higher course of war. P. 218.

³⁰ Zargar, A. (2007). Great-power rivalry in the Caucasus and its impact on regional security. Journal of Central Asia and Caucasus Studies. No. 58. P. 467.

region, Russia feels in danger and to keep its own privileged situation against the West and to prevent the influence of USA in the Caucasus, it uses every solution³¹.

Turkey:

Other regional player considered as the main player in the region and in Karabakh because of its proximity and historical and cultural commonalities and the union which have with Azerbaijan³². Based on this policy, Turkey adopts an anti-Armenian policy and by breaking off relations with Armenia and interrupting traffic and railways and ..., indicates its response against Armenia and Karabakh crisis³³. Because turkey considers itself historically to be beneficiary and believes its unique role playing in the region. Turkey's objectives and interests is evolving on the basis of economic and energy issues and from the ancient, this country had much desire to exploit energy resources of the Caucasus region, exploring and mining them and determining energy transfer lines out of the region. In this line, Turkey is to increase its own economic influence in the region to increase its incomes and military-security and ideological motivation or promoting pan-Turkism in later stages are the objectives of Turkey's foreign policy³⁴. The transposition of the importance of Turkey's objectives in Karabakh crisis is the arrangement of the policy makers of this country and when Turkey is alarmed, in terms of security (like the time of Intensity of Karabakh crisis) these security objectives in the Caucasus is prioritized and particular decisions and positions are adopted regarding the crisis. With the rise of AKP, Turkey's foreign policy has changed from the one-dimensional and westernized policy into a multi-dimensional one, which it pursues taking advantages. The theorist and founder of this approach is Ahmet Davutoglu, Foreign Minister of Erdogan's government and the college professor who in 2001, designs this approach in his book "Strategic Depth". This book which is in fact is the manifestation of the governing party in the realm of foreign policy can be observed in the following statement:

- A) The bases of Turkey's power are its history and geography. In other words, if Turkey in the 21st century is to increase its power and raise its status in the region and the world, it should look at its history and geography as power resources and the starting point of its movement. In fact, the theory of strategic depth is the guide of using these power resources and put them into practice and in a logical framework.
- B) The theory of strategic depth emphasizes self-reliance, self-confidence and avoidance of coming under the umbrella of other countries and achievement of the superior power of the region.

³¹Heidari, Gh. (2011). Geopolitical position of the Caucasia in large power systems. *Journal of Political and International Studies*. No. 7. Summer 2011. P. 217.

³² Aydin, Mustafa (2010). "Turkeys Caucasus policy", *Turkish foreign policy, UNISCI Discussion papers*, No.23.p.10.

³³ (hurc, 2008: 18) –Hurc, Yakup (2008), "The Karabag Policy of Turkey, Turkish Dress of the time, Department of History Institute of Social Science. Univesity of Kahraman maras Sutsu Imam.P.18.

³⁴ Foruzan, I. (2003). Investigating the objectives of development cooperation in the South Caucasus. *Defense Strategic Studies Quarterly*, 17: p. 151.

- C) Historically, Turks are considered to be Asian and already has many bonds with some of the countries of the Central Asia, according to this theory, they considers Asia as important in spite of their westernized views.
- D) One of the points that should be deemed as important in the theory of strategic depth is minimalizing Turkey's challenges with its neighbors. Therefore, Turkey looks at the surrounding crises as opportunities not threats. Accordingly, the surrounding crises are opportunities from which Turkey's government can have the most exploitations³⁵.

Turkey's objectives in Kahrabakh crisis:

The emphasis on the importance of the role of Turkey in the Caucasus region in order to merge completely in European society and the west³⁶ is supporting the independence and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan in Karabakh³⁷ and decreasing the influence of Russia in the Caucasus for reducing Russians' pressure on Azerbaijan³⁸. Since Turkey is the enemy of Armenia because of historical issues (the root of this enmity is deportation and massacres of Armenians living in Anatolia) this issue makes Turkey's and its policy makers' positions towards Azerbaijan clearer³⁹ and Turkey, in line with achieving its objectives and exploitation of Azerbaijan's oil and its exploring and mining, interferes in the crisis. It may be claimed that the conflict of Armenia and Turkey is the most important factor effective in the orientation of foreign policy regarding Karabakh crisis which by increasing Turkey and Azerbaijan overland connection and defending this country against Armenia, increases helping Azerbaijan's domination over the region of Nagorno – Karabakh.

In general, in case of Turkey's role in Karabakh crisis, it can mention some points:

- A) Turkey has taken Kamalism and non-intervention in foreign affairs as the basis of its foreign policy.
- B) The pressure of western forces including NATO to prevent from Turkey's intervention in Karabakh crisis, since western forces are afraid of this issue that any Turkey's intervention results in increasing conflicts and standing Russia and Turkey against t each other.
- C) On the other hand, Turkey does not intend to strain its relationship through unlimited intervention in Karabakh crisis because of the relationship which it has with Russian Federation⁴⁰. In line with Turkey's foreign policy based on maximizing national interest in pursuing their own foreign policy, it can be said that Turkey is trying to achieve a kind of ethnic-cultural proximity in the region by focusing on ethnic and Turkish culture and reviving neo-ottoman thought and also playing the leadership role of the world's Turks,

³⁵ Fallah, R. (2012). Turkey's strategic objectives and challenges in the developments in Syria. Basirat: at <http://www.khabaryaab.com/News/630050>

³⁶ Karami, J. (1998). New Great Game in the Caucasus and its impact on the future of Iran, *The Journal of Defense Policy*, Year VIII, No. 12: pp. 13.

³⁷ Ibid:23

³⁸ Kolaei, E. (1999). Iran, Armenia, and Russia: factors of development of relations. *Journal of Central Asia and Caucasus Studies*, No. 26: pp. 145.

³⁹ Ibid:27

⁴⁰ Ibid:66

and can achieve its own objectives based on this strategy and active diplomacy in the Caucasus region. Since Turkey is the enforcer of many of the ideas of the West and US, is against Russia; however, Erdogan's foreign policy is based on minimalizing conflicts with neighbors, what is observed in reality from Turkey's foreign policy in Karabakh crisis is trying to achieve its interests and keeping its status in the region as an active force.

Suggestions:

1. Regarding the existence of ethnic crisis between Azerbaijan and Armenia, these two countries pursue the policy of reinforcing their independences of great powers, and they themselves solve their problems by considering their bordering and economic commonalities.
2. Armenia and Azerbaijan, to solve the crisis, try that the role of Russia and Turkey will be reduced in their own foreign policy and remove threats to facilitate the process of building trust between Azerbaijan and Armenia and use diplomacy and negotiation as a tool for solving the crisis between themselves.
3. Exploitation of the presence of great powers in the region and understanding convergence among the members of the Caucasus region, in this case, the countries of the region, by focusing on their commonalities and understanding proximity and convergence, can solve the crisis and conflicts and contribute to advances of the region by focusing on their energy and resources.

Conclusion:

As mentioned, in foreign policy, for logical and rational decision making, first the identification of the problem is investigated and then after defining and determining the objectives of foreign policy, the policy makers decide and present solutions, which if this concept is investigated in case of the effect of decision makers of foreign policy of Turkey and Russia regarding Karabakh crisis in line with the answer to the main question of the present study (how is the role of Russia and Turkey in Karabakh crisis and in line of what objectives is it?), one reaches this important issue that after the end of the Cold War, many ethnic-local identities grew in the Caucasus region and this issue resulted in the formation of conflicts in the region and then Russian and Turkish policy makers, in line with achieving their own objectives, have taken their position in this conflict by evaluation of their objectives and interests because this conflict has more political than legal aspect. In this conflict, they stand against each other for two principles of preservation of territorial integrity and the right of determination of nations' destinies in this conflict. In addition, the entered players consider this conflict in this region for providing their objectives. Russia is trying to represent itself as the superior power and does not allow the influences of other powers and their intervention in its backyard because the Caucasus always consists of the vital interest of Russia. Among the issues of foreign policy, Russia devotes to itself the least challenge among different intellectual tendencies and sometimes antithetical to its interests. Therefore, Russia is pursuing the fulfilment of its own objectives and continuing the political - security presence and influence and also keeping their military forces. Sometimes it applies the controlled instability policy through continuing regional conflicts and preservation of military bases and sometimes to prevent contagion crises and instabilities into its national

borders, it support stability and peace. Strategy of Russia in the period of Putin and Medvedev's is more representative of the unofficial image of Russia regarding the region, which it has tried to continue the regional conflicts on the Caucasus and in spite of all endeavors which intermediary groups have done about Karabakh peace. There has been no serious agreement in this period between Armenia and Azerbaijan in line with the peace of the conflict. In addition, Turkey to supply energy and geostrategic and geopolitical situation of the region tries to play a role in the Caucasus region. Since the ancient, it has tended so much to exploit the energy resources of the Caucasus region, their exploring and mining and determining power transmission lines out of the region, and also Turkey has been pursuing to increase its own economic influence in the region to enhance its incomes. Among the other objectives of the Turkey, military-security and ideological motivations with promoting pan-Turkism in mind can be mentioned. In general, in spite of the fact that Karabakh conflict brings instability in the region, the geopolitical and geostrategic situation of the Caucasus region results in remaining the conflict and crisis unsolved. Therefore, none of these powers can present solutions to be able to end this conflict and because of policy makers' demands in line with achieving their own objectives, the intervention and influence in this crisis is considered as complicated. Azerbaijan is supported by Turkey and Armenia supported by Russia and their efforts are to enhance the understanding of threat from the other part. This issue causes that there is no presented no peace solution. It can be said that the root of this crisis helped to consider the grounds of this crisis that are Stalin's understanding of the threat of shared identity of ethnics and separation of these nations and also Turkey's positioning against Armenians and the understanding of the threat have from each other. For the time being, by decision making of the decision makers and the understanding which they have of their interests and their being threatened in the Caucasus region one can observe.

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