

# The Role of Geographic (Central and Marginal) Locations in Political Developments in Syria (Since the Start of the Protest Movements in 2011 until the End of 2012)

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## Abstract

Political geographers are interested in studying the role of political behaviors and events in political developments. Accordingly, it seems that central and marginal locations played an important role in political developments in the Arab countries of the Middle East (launched in late 2010). Hence, the main question of this research is as follows: "what is the relationship between the different (central and marginal) locations and the political events and behaviors in Syrian protest movements?"

Hence, the present study aims at investigating the role of central and marginal geographic locations in the protest movements in Syria. The research was performed by descriptive and analytical methods. The required data was collected from credible international news agencies using event logging method. The collected data was qualitatively analyzed based on author's arguments.

According to the results of the present study, despite the influential role of central and marginal locations in political behaviors and events in Syria, some issues such as interventions of external forces (regional and international), ethnic and cultural conflicts, armed opposition forces, the formation of religious fundamentalist terrorism have brought the country into a civil war. These factors resulted in prolonged conflicts and continuation of the civil war in Syria. Based on the findings of the present study, the central and marginal locations cannot be considered as the only factor influencing the political developments in Syria. Therefore, further studies are necessary to understand the underlying causes of political developments in Syria.

**Keywords:** Marginal location, Central location, Political developments, Syria

## 1. Introduction

Political developments in different countries have been studied from different perspectives. Due to the unique nature of political geography, it plays an important role in identification, explanation and analysis of political developments, because the most fundamental aspects of political geography are related to "location-induced policies" (Ahmadipour, 2013: 152).

The factors involved in formation, continuation and objectives of political movements should be reviewed to study the political movements in various countries and their relationships with specific geographic locations. Any protest movement occurred in real geographic space is dependent on two most important factors including human and geographic locations. The protests are mainly against dominant political, economic, religious and social situation in a geographic space or against the behavior applied to the geographic area. Therefore, the protests are dependent on the geographic location. Only people with a common destiny who live in a similar place shape and change historical circumstances by collective activity and adherence to a social and intellectual movement.

Given the important role of geographic places in political developments, political geographers analyze the political developments through studying the role of places in political behavior and outcomes. Accordingly, we sought to investigate the role of geographic (central and marginal) locations in political developments in Syria. The required data was collected from credible international news agencies using descriptive and analytical methods. The role of geographic locations in political behaviors and events in Syria was investigated using the collected data.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Geographic locations and protest movement

Any protest movement occurred in real geographic space is dependent on two important factors including human and geographic location. The protests are mainly against dominant political, economic, religious and social situation in a geographical space or against the behavior applied to the geographical area. Therefore, the protests

are dependent on the geographic location. Only people with a common destiny who live in a similar place shape and change historical circumstances by collective activity and adherence to a social and intellectual movement (Wohl, 1979: 78). Aside from the spatial dependence, important factors including location and geographic distance influence political events. The political organizers always use strategies to overcome the distance and ensure that a particular message or movement will not be limited to a place (Blickstein and Hanson, 2001:349).

The ecological relations between human and location is a strong philosophical basis for the emergence of citizenship rights and political role of human in a democratic process. According to political geography, democracy and political role of human in locations to shape the political structures and systems and related processes is a natural right. This natural right is based on the pattern of ecological relations between the geographic location and people who are living or residing in it (Hafeznia, 2006: 174). For this purpose, a part of political behavior is emerged as agreement or disagreement with political trends and decisions. Given the specific functions of locations, they evoke a sense of identity and therefore a different spatial sense among different groups in community (Kavianirad, Azizi, 2010: 56).

One of the major factors to achieve the goals of a protest is dependence to a specific location in any protest or political action. Therefore, only people with a common destiny who live in a similar place shape and change historical circumstances by collective activity and adherence to a social and intellectual movement (Wohl, 1979: 78). Confirming that revolutions succeed by creating a new space, Henry Lefebvre believes that a revolution that is not able to create a new space is unable to recognize its potential capabilities. In fact, such a revolution is failed because it has changed its life. A social change with truly revolutionary features should express a creative capacity to influence daily life, language and space (Lefebvre, 1991,54). Indeed, this new space is a political climate created by the people and defended by public political action (K. Lee, 2009).

### *2.2 Central and marginal locations<sup>1</sup>*

Some places play a strategic role in the formation and continuation of political movements to achieve their goals. These places can be central locations in major cities (squares and main streets) as the realm of political protesters. Regarding the significant role of central places (squares) in political events, Erick Soingdo (Professor of Geography and Environmental Engineering, University of Manchester) believes that these places play a central role in political events. Central locations such as the Tiananmen Square, Bastille Square in Paris, Red Square in Moscow, Alexanderplatz Square in Berlin, Al-Saha Al-Khadra Square in Sudan, Syntagma Square in Athens, Sydney Green Square and Wenceslas Square in the Czech Republic are among places with ancient roots in our world as the symbolic revolutionary geographic locations. Their names indicate the titles meaning the achievement of democracy, development, freedom, sharing, unity and salvation. These political and national places emerge through a political action to confirm the ability of self-management and self-organization through a dynamic intervention. Through this, the public space is re-configured to create a new spatial-social order (swyngedouw, 2011:3).

Since the major cities, especially capitals are geopolitical phenomena, they provide a location for political actions and struggles with politics over access, control and representation. Political geography concerns political relations of power and its spatial implications (Kavianirad and Azizi, 2011). Thus, the symbolic (central) places in major cities, especially capitals are a substrate for the protesters of the national governing policies. In other words, the central places are politically charged with the presence of political protesters and gain a national and political identity. Hence, the central places become a space to deliver the message of opposition to the policies of the ruling system in line with their wishes. Indeed, political movements are trying to occupy and control central places through wide aggregation to achieve their goals. In such a situation, governments primarily try to control political movements through warn and intimidation in response to political protests. But in the case of continuous movement against the ruling system, the government kill people and create a tightly secure geographic space leading to martial law. In such a case, the government will be faced with a serious threat and it may adopt reforms in the country's affairs according to the wishes of people. But if it is not accepted by the people, the political movement will lead to political changes, overthrow of dictatorship or revolution through capture of the place and continued resistance. On the other hand, if the protest place is controlled by the ruling system such that the political movement is not able to control and occupy the location, the political movement will be faced with frustration, oppression and disintegration resulting in the failure of the movement. In such a case, these political protest movements are deprived of a symbolic protest place to achieve their goals.

Other places that may play a dynamic and strategic role in the political and protest movements are those located in marginal positions. The marginal spaces are influenced by political decision-makers and their management practices. Such places reflect the behavior and decisions of the central government. If the management of the country's affairs results in unjust geographic distribution of facilities and services, deep economic, political, ethnic and racial gaps will be emerged among them. The geographic injustice will result in social injustice. Thus,

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<sup>1</sup> According to the political organization, marginal locations include all urban and rural settlements located in peripheral position relative to the political capital of the country and are run under the Capital City.

the geographic locations will be politically charged leading to the formation of social protest networks and protest movements against the regime. In such a situation, governments are alarmed and try to control or suppress the protest movements. If the protests continue, they can involve other marginal places in the form of political movements to include focal areas and central places through persistence of protest movements.

### 3. Research Methodology

Since each protest movement is related to the intrinsic nature of the geographic location (central or marginal) and these places play a pivotal role in protest movements, they have received much attention by political geographers. Thus, the main question of this research is as follows: "what is the relationship between the different locations (central and marginal) with political behaviors and events of Syrian protest movements?" Accordingly, the hypothesis is formulated as follows: "it seems that there is a relationship between different (central and marginal) locations and political behaviors and events of Syrian protest movements".

This research is categorized as a theoretical research. This descriptive-analytical study was performed by event logging method. Given the nature of the research topic, the required data was collected from international networks and news agencies using desk study. This is a theoretical and fundamental study in terms of objective. The collected data was analyzed using a qualitative method based on the author's arguments.

### 4. Environment

Syria is located in Western Asia. Syria is bordered to Turkey from north, Iraq from east, Jordan from south and Lebanon and Israel from southwest. Syria is also bordered by the Mediterranean Sea coastline. Syria is a mountainous, semi-desert country with a surface area of approximately 185,180 km<sup>2</sup> (encarta, 2009).

According to the World Bank Report in 2011, Syria's population was 20,820,311 (World Bank, 2011). Of this, 57% were urban inhabitants (with a growth rate of 2.5% per year) and 33% were rural inhabitants. In terms of age distribution, most of the population aged 25 to 54 (36.9%) and 0 to 14 years (33.9%) (cia.gov, 2011). The Syria's GDP in 2011 was 59,147,033,451 with annual GDP growth of 3.2%. Before the civil war in 2011, the human development index in Syria was equal to 0.632 with a global ranking of 119 (World Bank, 2011). 74% of the Syrian population are Sunni Muslim, 16% are Alawite and Druze Muslims and 10% are Christians. Jewish minority live in Damascus, Aleppo and Al-Qamishli. In terms of ethnic groups, 90.3% are Arab and remaining (9.7%) are Kurds, Charkas, Armenians and other groups (cia.gov, 2011). Syrian territorial space is composed of 14 provinces including Damascus, Reef Damascus, Qanitreh, Daraa, Soveida, Homs, Tartus, Lattakia, Hama, Idlib, Aleppo, Al-Riqqa Deir Al-Zoor and Al-Hasaka.

The protest movements and riots in Syria began in 2011. Damascus, Homs, Hama and Idlib in the central and northwestern Syria and the southern province of Daraa are considered as the epicenter of the protests and riots.

#### 4.1 Damascus

Damascus is a province in the Arabic Republic of Syria. Damascus is the capital of Arabic Republic of Syria and also the capital of Damascus province. After Aleppo, Damascus is the second most populous city in Syria. The city is surrounded by steep rocky hills and Brada river which passes through the city.

Damascus is the gate of history and it is known as one of the oldest cities in the world. It has been a place for human habitation from 8 to 10 thousand years BC. This is why Damascus is called the first capital of the world. The city has witnessed the rise and spread of the oldest human civilizations in the East. Damascus has been the capital and administrative center of various dynasties and empires. Damascus became the capital of Islamic world and the most important city in the world since 636 AD. Once Damascus became the capital of Umayyad Caliphate, it reached its peak in a short time. As the largest Muslim government, Umayyad empire spread from Pyrenees mountains in Europe to Middle Asia and to the borders of China. Damascus had a special place in all periods, because it was the capital and administrative center of the great empires and kings for thousands of years with cultural, art and literature achievements. Prominent male and female historians, scientists, thinkers, poets, astrologers, prophets and religious leaders emerged from this territory and made much efforts in the course of the development of culture, knowledge and wisdom and promoting various religions. For this reason, Damascus was chosen as the cultural capital of the Arab world in 2008 ([Http://fa.wikipedia.org](http://fa.wikipedia.org)).

#### 4.2 Reef Damascus

The province was established in 1972 consisting of 9 regions, 27 districts, 28 towns, 190 villages and 83 farms. Reef Damascus is located in the northern part of the southwestern Syria. It constitutes 9.7% of the total area of Syria with an area of about 18,000 km<sup>2</sup>.

Reef Damascus is a link between southern provinces of Daraa, Qanitreh and Sovieida with central and northern provinces. The province is also considered as a link between Lebanon in west and northwest with Iraq and Jordan in east and southeast. It links Syria to neighboring countries through international highways.

In terms of geography, the province is divided into three regions: high mountains are located in the west and northwest of Syria, hillside areas are located in the south and east and plain areas are located in the center of the province.

High mountains form the backbone of Reef Damascus province and are connected to Lebanon Mountains in the east. Due to water resources, Reef Damascus is one of the most fertile areas in Syria (<http://www.farsnews.com>).

#### *4.3 Daraa*

The capital of the province, Daraa, is located at 100 km of Damascus in the southeastern Syria. It is the center of Hawran region and is bordered by Jordan. Daraa is the focal point connecting Oman, Israel, Haifa and Damascus. The city includes the ruins of Greece and Rome and a mosque built in 1253 AD. The province also has been the scene of battles during the First World War (Britannica, 2013). The province is of historic areas in Syria containing the memorial of many different religions and cultures. Today, the province is a habitat for Syrians (Wikipedia, 2011).

#### *4.4 Idlib*

Idlib province has an area of 6100 km<sup>2</sup>. Idlib City is the capital of the Idlib province. The city is located in northwestern Syria at 60 km from Aleppo. The city's population in 2010 census was 164,983, most of them were Arabs with Turkish and Kurdish minorities. Most people in this city are Sunni with Christian and Druze minorities. Idlib is a very fertile region where cotton, cereals, olives, figs, grapes, tomatoes, sesame seeds, wheat and almonds are produced. Idlib City is important from historical perspective. There are many "dead cities" and ancient hills in this region.

#### *4.5 Aleppo*

Aleppo province is located in northern Syria with an area of approximately 18,498 km<sup>2</sup>. Euphrates and Afrin rivers pass the province. Aleppo province constitutes 10% of the Syrian area. Aleppo is located at 355 km from Damascus and 456 from Daraa, the southernmost region of Syria. The capital of the province is Aleppo, the economic and industrial center of Syria. In 2012, the population was 4,016,143 million. Aleppo's population in 2012 census was 1,959,515 as the most populous city in Syria ([alp-city.org](http://alp-city.org)).

#### *4.6 Homs*

Homs is one of the most famous cities in western Syria. The city is bordered with Lebanon from the west and with Iraq and Jordan from the east. Homs is located at a distance of 215 km from north Damascus. It is the largest province in Syria with an area of 42,000 km<sup>2</sup>. The province has a total population of 1,763,000. Homs is the third largest city in Syria called (Ἡμεσσα) in antiquity. The Homs' population was about 720,000 in 2011. Baba-Amro is among central regions in Homs (Wikipedia, 2012).

#### *4.7 Hama*

Hama province is located in north Damascus between Aleppo and Homs provinces. Province's population was 1.452 million in 2009. The province has an area of over 8883 km<sup>2</sup>. Hama City is the capital of province with an area of 698,628 km<sup>2</sup>. Salamiyya is the most important city in Hama province. The majority of inhabitants are Ismaili Shiites. In 1982, the city witnessed a major uprising against Syria's ruling Baath party. Syrian army performed large operations to break up the riots and killed about 20 to 40 thousand people. Besides the Black September conflict in Jordan, this is considered as the bloodiest operations of Arabic governments against their own nations. Rifaat Assad, brother of Syrian leader Hafez al-Assad led the operation against insurgents who were Islamist groups, particularly Muslim Brotherhoods.

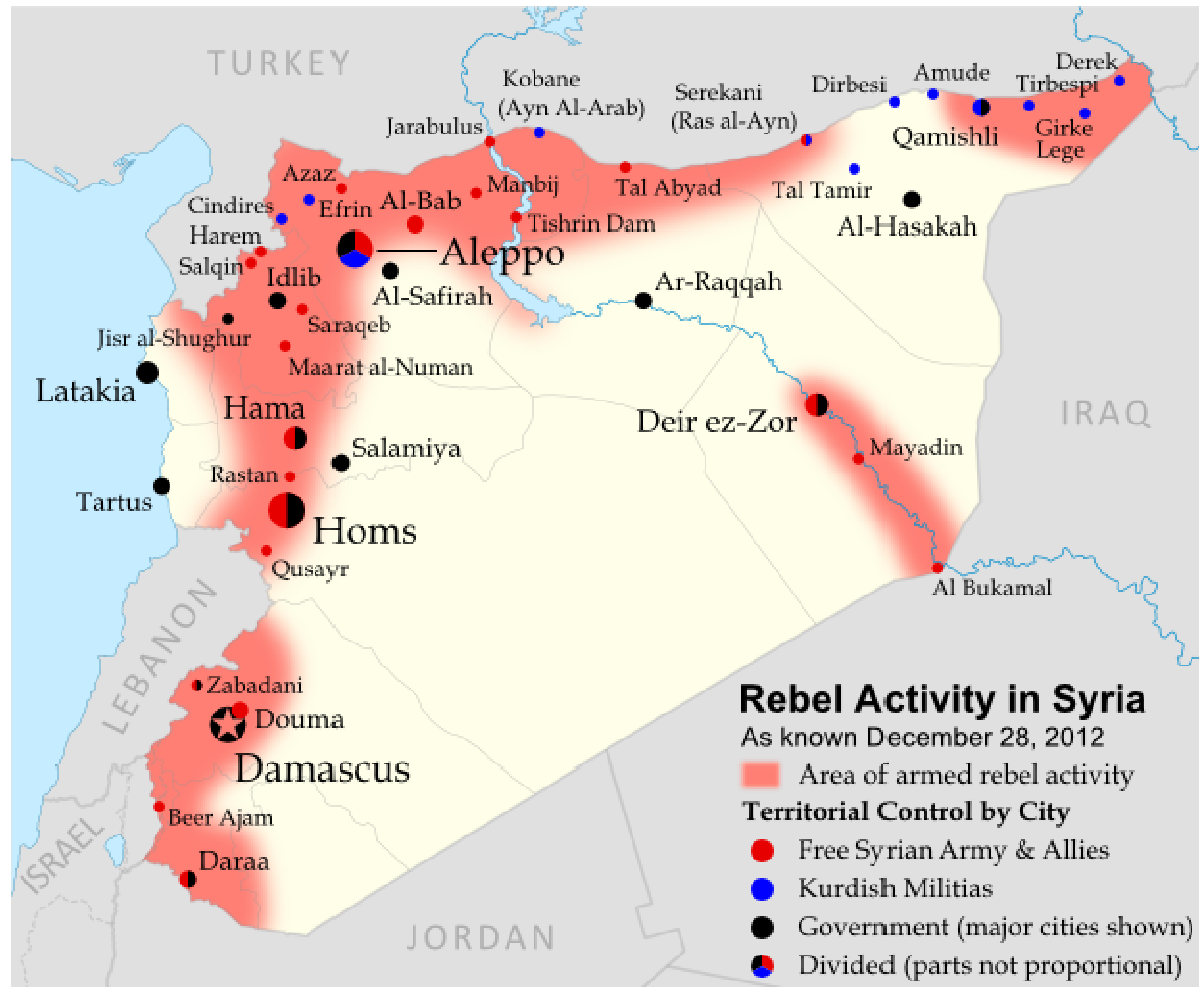


Figure1. Activity and cities held by rebels and other groups in Syria  
 (Source: www.polgeonow.com-December 2012)

#### 4.8 The political structure of Syria

Syria is run under emergency conditions since 1963 and many political and civil liberties are suspended (state.gov, 2012). Syrian political life has been very unstable since independence in 1946. Severe friction was created between the social, religious and political groups. In 1970, Syria was under the authoritarian rule of Hafez al-Assad. The main goal of Hafez al-Assad was achieving national security, internal stability and the withdrawal of Syrian territory occupied by Israel in the 1968 war. Assad spent national budget on arms accumulation instead of national development. After Assad's death in 2000, his son Bashar al-Assad became the Syrian president. Despite the initial steps in the direction of political reform, Bashar al-Assad adopted his father's governance style and used army and security services for political repression. This led to dictatorship, chaos and discontent in Syria. The grievances and protests against Assad's policies reached a peak in 2011 and led to a prolonged civil war in Syria (Britannica, 2013).

Syria is composed of Alawite Shiites and Christian minorities with a Sunni majority. There were long-standing sectarian strife and massacres in Syria. Assad clan are from Syria's Alawite minority. Alawites have the highest positions in government as well as military and security services in Syria (bbc.co.uk, 2012).

#### 5. Research Findings

Protests in Syria began in January 26, 2011 in Al-Hasakeh and other Kurdish areas in northeastern Syria and quickly spread to other cities. The protests were then intensified in Daraa, Deir-AlZoor, Lattakia, Al-Qamishli and Baniyas. But the intensity of protests in the southern Daraa was higher than other cities. Assad's supporters attended in Homs, Aleppo, Al-Hasakeh and Damascus. These cities were under the Syrian government control. The country came into a civil war following continued protests in many cities. Severe clashes occurred between the protesters and the Syrian army.

Initially, Assad promised political reforms and addressing the problems and formation of a new cabinet in April 2011. However, these promises were not realized and the protests spread to major cities including Daraa, Deir-AlZoor, Tartus, Idlib, Baniyas, Al-Qamishli, Homs, Hama and other cities with anti-government protests through

cyberspace with the name of protest Fridays. Thereafter, Syria took a particular security mode and clashes between the army and the Syrian Liberation Army were intensified. The violence by government forces was intensified in Homs, Aleppo and Daraa so that dozens of people were killed and wounded and thousands are refugees in surrounding countries such as Turkey. Conflict between the government and opponents were intensified across Syria in early 2012. The protests continued on protest Fridays and the government used heavy weapons to crush them in different cities, particularly in Idlib, Aleppo and Reef Damascus. According to Table 6, the intensity of protests and murders in cities across Syria is rising until the end of 2012. The clashes between Syrian army and Syrian Liberation Army was intensified so that the government practiced air raids in some cities such as Deir-AlZoor, Aleppo and other cities in Damascus suburbs.

Table 1. Political behaviors and events in Syria, Since 2011 until the end of 2012

Time of political behavior and event	Political events and outcomes	Central location	Marginal location
<b>January 26, 2011</b> <b>January 28, 2011</b> <b>March 12, 2011</b> <b>March 15, 2011 (Rage Day)</b> <b>March 18, 2011 (Vaghar Friday)</b> <b>March 19 to March 31, 2011</b> <b>April 1, 2011</b> <b>April 2 to April 29, 2011</b>	Hasan Ali self-immolation and the state of protests  To protest the killing of two Kurdish soldiers  Demonstrations by thousand of Kurdish protesters  -Assad supporters demonstrations in Al-Hasakeh, Homs, Tartus and Hama  Informing protest Fridays through cyberspace  Promises of reform and removing gaps between citizens and government and formation of a new cabinet by Assad	Damascus      Unsuccessful efforts of protesters to enter Damascus through Doma in April 15.  Scattered demonstrations in Damascus	- Al-Hasakeh -Protest began in Al-Riqqa -Al- Hasakeh, Al-Qamishli -demonstration in Al-Hasakeh, Daraa and Deir-AlZoor - Protests in Daraa, Homs, Baniyas, Al-Qamishli and Deir-AlZoor Protests in Daraa, Homs, Al-Qamishli, Deir-AlZoor and Lattakia  Damascus suburbs  Protest Fridays in Daraa, Lattakia, Tartus, Idlib, Baniyas, Al-Qamishli, Homs and Damascus suburbs
<b>May 2011</b>  <b>June 2011</b>  <b>July 2011</b>  <b>August 2011</b>	Intense control by security forces  Baniyas, Homs, Tefs near Daraa, Rastan and Telbesiyeh were seized by State  Internet disconnection by State  Military forces to central Damascus   The killing of protesters in the Daraa, Deir-AlZoor, Idlib, Aleppo, Homs, Hama	Scattered protests in central Damascus  Intensified protests in Damascus in middle July  Protests in central Damascus to support Hama	-Protest Fridays in Damascus suburbs, Homs, Hama, Al-Qamishli, Al-Hasakeh, Daraa, Deir-AlZoor  -Protest Fridays demonstrations in Hama, Damascus suburbs, Daraa, Aleppo, Lattakia  -Protest Fridays demonstrations in Hama, Damascus suburb, Daraa, Aleppo, Lattakia, Al-Qamishli, Deir-AlZoor  Protest Fridays in Deir-AlZoor, Hama, Al-Qamishli, Aleppo and Daraa
<b>September 2011</b>  <b>October 2011</b>  <b>November 2011</b>  <b>December 2011</b>	Thousands of people against Assad's regime, demonstrators seek international helps to stop pressures of the Syrian government on Al-Qamishli in North East, Homs in central Syria and Deir-AlZoor in East  Clashes between security forces and protesters  Demonstrations in Idlib and Homs were controlled by government, intensive crackdown in Damascus  Clashes between security forces, army and protesters	Scattered protests in Damascus    Intensified protests in Damascus	-Protests in Deir-AlZoor, Homs and Daraa  -Protests in Idlib, Hama, Homs, Lattakia, Al-Zobdani, Al-Qamishli and Damascus suburbs  Intensified anti-government demonstrations in Aleppo, Hama, Deir-AlZoor, Daraa, Damascus suburb  Protest across Syria, particularly in Hama, Idlib, Homs, Daraa and Deir-

			AlZoor
<p><b>January 2012</b></p> <p><b>January 7 to late January</b></p> <p><b>February 2012</b></p> <p><b>March 2012</b></p> <p><b>April 2012</b></p>	<p>Bombing in Al-Meidan killed dozens in Damascus, bombing was attributed to terrorists and condemned by government.</p> <p>Bashar Assad maintained at power</p> <p>Arab League summit and Saudi proposal for the transfer of power to Vice President, Farouk al-Shara</p> <p>The control of Homs, Hama and Idlib by Syrian army in January 23</p> <p>Severe attacks by Syrian army killed hundreds of people Homs</p> <p>Resolution of the UN General Assembly with 137 votes in favor of Assad resignation</p> <p>Syrian army gained control on Homs, leaving 4,000 people from Homs, many dead in Homs and Aleppo, Annan met with Assad in Damascus</p> <p>Thousands of refugees into Turkey from Aleppo province,</p> <p>Homs bombardment</p>	<p>Scattered demonstrations in central square in Damascus</p> <p>Damascus under the control of government forces</p> <p>Scattered demonstrations in Damascus</p>	<p>January 1-6, demonstrations in Idlib, Hama and Homs</p> <p>Protest Fridays in Homs, Idlib, Deir-AlZoor, Daraa and Al-Zobdani. Government forces killed protesters.</p> <p>Protest Fridays in Daraa, Homs, Al-Qamishli, Damascus suburbs, Lattakia, Idlib and Aleppo. Government forces killed protesters.</p> <p>Demonstrations across Syria in protest Fridays</p> <p>Great demonstrations in Aleppo, Lattakia, Deir-AlZoor, Daraa, Idlib, Hama and Homs</p>
<p><b>May 2012</b></p> <p><b>June 2012</b></p> <p><b>July 2012</b></p> <p><b>August 2012</b></p>	<p>Army clashes with the Syrian Liberation Army</p> <p>Increased killed across Syria by the army, particularly in Homs, Daraa, Lattakia, Idlib and Deir-AlZoor</p> <p>Dozens of Syrian army were killed by the Syrian Liberation Army</p> <p>Tens of people were killed by the Syrian army</p> <p>Al-Tarimseh Battle and Syrian army clashes with Syrian Liberation Army killed tens of people</p> <p>Continued attacks by the Syrian army to Hama, Aleppo and Damascus</p> <p>The army used heavy weapons to attack Aleppo and Damascus areas, increasing killed especially in Aleppo, Damascus and Damascus countryside</p>	<p>Demonstrations in protest Fridays</p>	<p>Continued demonstrations and killing by Syrian army and security forces in Aleppo, Homs, Hama, Daraa, Idlib,...</p> <p>-Demonstrations in Aleppo, Lattakia, Deir-AlZoor, Idlib, Hama, Homs and ...</p> <p>Demonstrations in protest Fridays in major cities</p> <p>Demonstrations across Syria in protest Fridays</p>
<p><b>September 2012</b></p> <p><b>October 2012</b></p> <p><b>November 2012</b></p> <p><b>December 2012</b></p>	<p>- Bombing in central Damascus, Aleppo and Daraa bombardment and increased killed in Damascus suburbs, Idlib and Aleppo by Syrian Army, clashes between Syrian Army and rebel forces</p> <p>- Clashes between the Syrian army and the Syrian Liberation Army in Damascus suburbs</p> <p>- Air strike to Deir-AlZoor</p> <p>- Military attacks to Idlib province</p> <p>- Increased killed in the Damascus suburbs and Deir-AlZoor</p> <p>- Clashes on Lebanon border</p>	<p>Demonstrations in Damascus</p>	<p>Protests across Syria</p> <p>Protests in Aleppo, Deir-AlZoor, Al-Riqqa and Damascus suburbs</p> <p>Demonstrations in protest Fridays in major cities</p>

(Source: Authors)

## 6. Conclusion

The role of central and marginal locations in political developments in Syria was investigated. Based on the research findings, the protest movements in Syria began from border cities like Al-Hasakeh, Al-Qamishli, Al-Riqqa and other Kurdish cities in northeast Syria. The protest spread to other cities, especially in the south and center of Syria like Daraa, Homs, Aleppo and Hama. However, Damascus, the capital of Syria, is under the control of government forces. Despite the spread of protests to suburbs of Damascus, government does not lose its control over the capital. In other words, the government suppressed armed anti-government protesters using

violence. It is noteworthy that protests and riots in Syria is a full-scale civil war rather than a political movement against the Assad's regime. This caused continued conflicts and unrest in Syria.

Based on the data and findings of this research and to answer the research question, we cannot introduce the central and marginal locations as the only factor influencing protest movements in Syria (started since early 2011 until the end of 2011). Several factors were involved in the orientation of protest movements in Syria. Among them are ethnic, religious and civil strife, especially among the Muslims. In addition to the involvement of some regional countries in Syria's protest movement, the intense fighting between the Syrian army, opponents of Bashar al-Assad and his supporters led to a civil war in Syria. Hence, it can be concluded that the change of protest movement into the civil war is of the most important factors imbalanced the role of political events and behaviors in connection with the geographic central and marginal locations. The fragmentation and heterogeneity created in the geography of Syria provide the grounds for various factors influencing the continued situation. Since the research hypothesis is not proven, various factors involved in the evolution of the political situation in Syria should be furthered investigated.

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