

# ORSAM REPORT ON REYHANLI “MAY 11”

## ORSAM REYHANLI RAPORU “11 MAYIS”

تقرير أرسام بخصوص ريحانلي “١١ مايو”

CENTER FOR MIDDLE EASTERN STRATEGIC STUDIES  
ORTADOĞU STRATEJİK ARAŞTIRMALAR MERKEZİ

مركز الشرق الأوسط للدراسات الاستراتيجية



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# STRATEGIC INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND INDEPENDENT THOUGHT PRODUCTION

## CENTER FOR MIDDLE EASTERN STRATEGIC STUDIES

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### **History**

*In Turkey, the shortage of research on the Middle East grew more conspicuous than ever during the early 90's. Center for Middle Eastern Strategic Studies (ORSAM) was established in January 1, 2009 in order to provide relevant information to the general public and to the foreign policy community. The institute underwent an intensive structuring process, beginning to concentrate exclusively on Middle affairs.*

### **Outlook on the Middle Eastern World**

*It is certain that the Middle East harbors a variety of interconnected problems. However, neither the Middle East nor its people ought to be stigmatized by images with negative connotations. Given the strength of their populations, Middle Eastern states possess the potential to activate their inner dynamics in order to begin peaceful mobilizations for development. Respect for people's willingness to live together, respect for the sovereign right of states and respect for basic human rights and individual freedoms are the prerequisites for assuring peace and tranquility, both domestically and internationally. In this context, Turkey must continue to make constructive contributions to the establishment of regional stability and prosperity in its vicinity.*

### **ORSAM's Think-Tank Research**

*ORSAM, provides the general public and decision-making organizations with enlightening information about international politics in order to promote a healthier understanding of international policy issues and to help them to adopt appropriate positions. In order to present effective solutions, ORSAM supports high quality research by intellectuals and researchers that are competent in a variety of disciplines. ORSAM's strong publishing capacity transmits meticulous analyses of regional developments and trends to the interested parties. With its web site, its books, reports, and periodicals, ORSAM supports the development of Middle Eastern literature on a national and international scale. ORSAM supports the development of Middle Eastern literature on a national and international scale. ORSAM facilitates the sharing of knowledge and ideas with the Turkish and international communities by inviting statesmen, bureaucrats, academics, strategists, businessmen, journalists, and NGO representatives to Turkey.*

## PRESENTATION

The terrorist attack that took place in Reyhanlı on May 11th, 2013 has been a tragic indicator of how easily the instability in neighboring countries could spread to Turkey. Another tragic scene that we are used to see after the 2011 uprising in Syria and in 2003 invasion of Iraq, was witnessed also in Reyhanlı district of Hatay. Official statements and general outlook in the Turkish public opinion point out the Syrian regime as the offender of the attack. Accordingly, the attack might be read as Assad regime's attempt to punish Turkey for its Syria policy and to draw Turkey in the conflict and thus widen the war field.

The Reyhanlı attack which will be remembered as "Black May 11th" deeply affected Turkey. However, local people, namely residents of Reyhanlı, were directly exposed to violence. This situation further flamed the polarizations in the region, which is directly affected by developments as it is the border town with Syria and where a tense environment prevails. Since the beginning of events in Syria, Reyhanlı has been hosting almost as many Syrians as its population. This situation radically affects the social, economic and security situation in the region. As ORSAM, we have conducted a great number of interviews with Syrian refugees who moved in Reyhanlı since the beginning of the events in Syria and listened to their life stories. Thus, as ORSAM, we have a great knowledge on Reyhanlı. Also, we regard the terrorist attack on the district as an incident that will have long-term impacts to change the Turkish foreign policy. Hence, we attach particular importance to Reyhanlı bombings. This study is the product of the aforesaid idea. We believe that this study, which is based on ORSAM's observations and knowledge on Reyhanlı as well as the statistics on Reyhanlı, will help the public understand the Reyhanlı bombings better. We present the report to the public attention hoping that it will provide a positive outlook on Syrian refugees in Reyhanlı, and we extend our thanks to those who contributed.

*Hasan Kanbolat*  
*ORSAM Director*

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By: Center for Middle Eastern Strategic Studies,  
ORSAM

# ORSAM REPORT ON REYHANLI “May 11”

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## *Abstract*

- *The terrorist attack that took place in Reyhanli on May 11th, 2013 has been a tragic indicator of how easily the instability in neighboring countries could spread to Turkey. Another tragic scene that we are used to see after the 2011 uprising in Syria and in 2003 invasion of Iraq, was witnessed also in Reyhanli district of Hatay. The attack deeply affected Turkey. However, the local people, residents of Reyhanli, were directly subjected to violence. This situation further flamed polarizations in the region, which is directly affected by developments as it is the border town with Syria and where a tense environment prevails.*

- *There might be different interrelated motives behind the Reyhanli attack such as: To punish Turkey for its Syria policy and force it to step back; to drive Turkish public opinion and the opposition to question the government's Syria policy; to attempt to create an environment of internal conflict by instigating sectarian tension in Turkey and thus to make Turkey follow a more inward-oriented policy; and to show Turkey that its “open-door policy” for refugees could backfire.*

- *The Reyhanli bombings are important in terms of showing that the cost of getting directly involved in the Syria problem and failing to find a solution could reach a critical dimension for Turkey. Besides becoming open to foreign attacks, the Syria issue is also destroying the peace environment in the society. Unfortunately, violence in the Middle East is mostly used as a means of reaching political goals. The Reyhanli bombing clearly shows the risk of becoming a target as a result of being a party to regional problems.*

- *Syrians' leaving Reyhanli started before the blast and it still continues. Rich Syrians to all across Turkey, and the poor back to their hometown. Those who continue to stay in Reyhanli do not go out, and live a prisoner's life through the help of their close neighbors who buy bread, food for them. They are waiting for the decisions to be taken by the government. They will act accordingly. They will either go to somewhere else in Turkey or move back to Syria. They are also aware of the fact that Reyhanli is split into two parts. Because while their neighbors are nice to them, other neighbors turn their back on them and insult them. Although they do not know Turkish, they can sense it.*

- *A Syrian refugee who settled in Reyhanli after the bombings in Syria said: “This is an unfortunate fate. I came here to save my wife and children from bombshells, but bombings followed us. They lump us together with all Syrians, and some of the people in Reyhanli consider us enemy. We are pointed out as the reason of people being killed. We became the target. I cannot ask for bread and vegetable everyday on the phone. I cannot even open the windows at home. I cannot work anymore and earn my living here, so I have to move back.” He left the next day.*

## 1. THE MAY 11 ATTACK IN REYHANLI AND IMPRESSIONS FROM REYHANLI IN THE AFTERMATH

### 1.1. First Bombing

The first blast occurred at 13.35 Saturday on May 11th, 2013 behind Reyhanlı city hall. The first vehicle loaded with bomb was parked under transformer on the south of city hall. It is located 100 meters away from District Police Department in the west, and on the north of settlements where Syrian refugees live and the mosque where they perform prayer. It is the neighborhood that is called the “cross-roads” where bazaar is set up every Thursday. In this area is found a photography, barber, glassware and souvenir shop, grocery store, poulterer, a beauty salon, engineering office, womenswear store, real estate agency, and a

patisserie. The bomb-laden vehicle is parked right across those shops. There are peddlers, commercial vehicles and private cars on the same street. On the other side of the street is found Atatürk Street, namely Antakya route, on the way to Yenisehir district from the city center. There are various shops and offices on this route. Besides, on the Atatürk Street is found apartment buildings and houses, where mostly Syrian tenants live.

Syrian refugees who migrated from Idlib province and districts of Syria settled in the neighborhood where the first car bomb exploded. In the first bombing, people from Idlib might have been targeted. The Syrians who were injured and killed in the neighborhood are those coming from Idlib. Turkish citizens were also injured and killed in the blast. The exact death toll in the area caused by the



blast is not known. However, it is understood as a result of talks that 10 people were killed. Two of them are Syrian citizens, while the rest of them are Turkish citizens. And those who were injured are quite a lot.

The shops and settlements near the first blast were completely devastated. Some of them were totally destroyed, and some were partially damaged. Some 500 meters of Atatürk Street is full of damaged shops and destroyed settlements as a result of glass explosions, as well as fall of shelves and furnitures. In this neighborhood, window glasses of houses were broken, doors were shaken, and window frames fell.

### 1.2. Second Bombing

The first and second car blasts occurred 10-15 minutes in row. The second explosion occurred in front of the PTT building in central Reyhanlı. Office buildings, Halk Bank, commercial offices and teaching institutions are located on both sides of the PTT building. The PTT building is located at the beginning of Atatürk Street. On the one side is found Cumhuriyet Street, while on the other side is found Kanatlı Street, former city hall, municipal passage, all kinds of shops and mosque in the city center. A massacre took place in that area. The neighborhood was completely damaged. There is a big financial damage covering the whole neighborhood. Also houses were damaged as a result of the blast. Some rooftops collapsed, and some balconies were damaged. There was a great number broken glasses. Shopkeepers were damaged to a great extent.

### 1.3. Causes of Death in Second Bombing

**First Cause:** While it was a wide street where the vehicle was parked in the first bombing, the street where the second bomb-laden ve-

hicle was parked was a narrow street of maximum 20 meters wide, including pavements. The PTT building and the office buildings across, on the right and left of the building are attached buildings. When the vehicle blew up in this narrow area, it echoed a lot and residential areas were damaged.

**Second Cause:** As the first blast occurred next to the city hall, it both scared and worried people in the city center. Most people hopped on their vehicles, motorcycles and headed out to go to the city hall. However, the accumulation in front of PTT building caused to congestion of the street. It was how the explosion occurred. Taxi drivers, motorcyclers, people getting off their work, customers of coffeehouses nearby, students, and those waiting in the ATM line in front of bank... The whole crowd was stuck in an area of some 100 meters, and the bomb-laden vehicle was right in the middle. The traffic jam, and pavements full of people led to a disaster with huge death toll in the neighborhood. More than 40 people were killed during the second blast. Some two hundred people were injured. Hundreds of offices were destroyed and burned to ground.

The blast was planned to take place on Saturday. If it had occurred on a weekday, it could have been a second "Hiroshima" for Reyhanlı. Because it would have been a total disaster for municipal employees, bank employees, other people who work in the neighborhood, police building, nursery school right next to the police building, shopkeepers, grocery, shops, bazaar. If it had been a workday or a pay day at Halk Bank or at PTT building, where the second car bombing took place, hundreds of people could have been killed.

Shipping companies were damaged most in the second blast. People were killed in the offices of those companies.

#### 1.4. Syrians in Reyhanlı

There are some 60 thousand Syrian refugees in Reyhanlı, and 75 percent of them are from Idlib province; while others are from Aleppo, Hama, Homs, Damascus and Latakia.

In Reyhanlı, many restaurants that cook Syrian dishes, bread and desserts were opened between 2012-2013. Besides, there are goldsmiths, phone shops, second-hand equipment stores, taxi-cab and truck operators from Syria in the area. There are tens of people who make their living off peddling things at a stand. Those who cannot afford to buy it sell coffee, tea, cigarette, lemon thyme, turkish bagels, pastry, turkish delight and halvah on cardboards or in plastic bags. On the other hand, some Syrians do not own anything, thus work as porter, work in coffeehouses, restaurants and as agricultural laborer in fields. Among Syrian refugees, there were those who paid 1500 TL for rent to stay in a fully furnished apartment; and also those who rent houses in slums for 200-300 TL. Some of them collected fruit and vegetable from garbages at the end of bazaar in the neighborhood.

Aid organizations such as Kimse Yok Mu, Ufuk-Der (Reyhanlı Ufuk Eğitim Derneği), İHH (Foundation for Human Rights and Freedoms and Humanitarian Relief) and Syrian El Selam al-Ittihad and Al Arabit al Huvviyye have been providing the refugees with financial aid, food, clothing, refrigerator and blankets. Some Syrians refugees in Reyhanlı have been receiving aid collected by people from Middle Eastern countries, as well as the U.S. and EU countries. And those who receive aid send them to both those who stay in Reyhanlı and also the tent cities in Bab-al Hawa and Atma.

#### 1.5. “We don’t want Syrians in Reyhanlı” March Held in Reyhanlı on May 4th

As from the beginning of 2013, provocateurs were striving to drive a wedge between people from Reyhanlı and Syrian refugees. On Saturday 4 May 2013, a week before May 11th, some local people from Reyhanlı marched by chanting, “We don’t want the Syrians here any more”. Syrians were manhandled, and some vehicles were damaged. Hence, Syrians did not go out if not necessary.

#### 1.6. Political Impressions on post-May 11 bombing in Reyhanlı

The main reason why less Syrians were killed on May 11th in the aforesaid bombing than Turkish citizens is the fact that violence against Syrians in Reyhanlı started following the May 4<sup>th</sup> march. However, opposition parties did not reflect it as it was to their party members who visited Reyhanlı. There was a difference between the reality and what they were told.

It was not even mentioned that the march held on May 4th a week before the May 11th bombing scared and worried Syrians, and thus the fact that not many Syrians were injured and only a few vehicles were damaged, as well as Syrian refugees in Reyhanlı were even afraid of going out between 4-11 May was not reflected.

#### 1.7. Polarization against Syrians in Reyhanlı

The local people in Reyhanlı have split into two groups regarding Syrians who took shelter in Reyhanlı. There are families who have mercy on Syrians, employ them, and provide aid. In Reyhanlı, the local people hired and helped Syrian refugees. Friendships have been formed, some Turkish and Syrian people married and started a family. But also in

Reyhanlı, Syrians were stoned, insulted, humiliated and threatened.

Syrians' leaving Reyhanlı and their moving to other Turkish cities began way before the May 11 attack and it still continues. Rich Syrians to all across Turkey, and the poor back to Syria. Those who continue to stay in Reyhanlı cannot go out, and live a prisoner's life through the help of their close neighbors who buy bread, food for them. They are waiting for the decisions taken by the government to be put into practice. They will act depending on the result. They will either go to somewhere else in Turkey or move back to Syria. They are also aware of the fact that Reyhanlı is split into two parts. Because while their neighbors in Reyhanlı are nice to them, other neighbors turn their back on and insult them. In some neighborhoods and streets in Reyhanlı, personal insults and attacks against Syrians still continue.

"You were shaken and wretched by the two bombings. You were shocked and lost yourself. We were subjected to tens of bombing attacks everyday. Hundreds of people were killed. We were not shaken that much. Our own government dropped bombs on us. You, on the other hand, are bombed by an unknown organization. You are in a great pain and you are right, but some people exaggerate the situation for Syrians," said a Syrian refugee for the local people in Reyhanlı.

### **1.8. "Raise Your Voice for Reyhanlı" Rally Held in Reyhanlı on May 18th**

On Saturday, 18 May 2013 at 13:45, opposition parties marched in Reyhanlı saying "Raise your voice for Reyhanlı". Participants also took part in the march from various districts of Hatay and city center. The Syria policy of the government was criticized and they urged Syrian refugees to leave Reyhanlı.

### **1.9. Fates of Those Killed in Reyhanlı on May 11th**

Almost half of those who were killed on May 11th were shop owners. The rest of them were there either out of curiosity or with business purposes.

In the first bombing that took place next to the Reyhanlı city hall, barber Mustafa Kuday was severely injured, while his Syrian apprentice was killed and his customer Jamal Cunedioğlu was injured. There was also a photographer's shop on the same route. The computer exploded as a result of the blast while working on a photo design on his computer, and he lost his eye. A shop owner next to the barber and his customer were killed and the shop was devastated. There is a grocery store 10 meters away from the building. The owner of the grocery Ahmet Kazan was injured. Everything in grocery store was destroyed. A three-floor building was completely destroyed. There was a restaurant next to the grocery store, and it was operated by Syrians. The shrapnel pieces hit the restaurant, and two people were severely injured. And a hairdresser right next to the restaurant, and he was also injured and he became permanently disabled. His employee was killed. The salon, on the other hand, was devastated. The employees of the women's wear shop next to the hairdresser were injured. Patisserie and cell phone shop are located in the neighborhood. The casualties received ambulatory treatment after being slightly injured. But their shops were all destroyed. There were also peddler Syrians on the same route. Two of them were killed, and a Syrian peddler was injured. Those who were in the park were and those in their shops 50 meters away from the blast were injured.

The dentist Nihat Dağ in his clinic, and his patient Azize Yumuşak while getting out of the

clinic were killed from shrapnel pieces after the bombings. The brothers who owned a cell phone shop were killed in their work places. Owner of a transportation company Ceyhan and Uyan as well as his children were killed in their offices. A father Mehmet Ceyhan was severely injured. After the bombing, Tahir Yumuşak and Hüseyin Çolak came from the bazaar to the PTT building to see what happened in front of the municipality building on their motorcycles. While waiting on their motorcycles in front of the PTT building due to the traffic jam, the second bombing took place and both of them burned to death. A student left the tutoring center a few minutes before the blast, and when the first vehicle exploded, he walked towards the PTT building and waited in front of the tutoring center. While watching the traffic progressing through the street, he stopped and was killed after the second bombing.

On May 11th, parents looked for their children but mostly could not find them there. They found them found them either in a wreckage or in a morgue after hours of searching. The parents or friends of the victims go to identify them, but they cannot, they do not want to, they can't believe their eyes. Parents do not want to accept the fact that their children were killed. They know that death comes at the end, but they believe that their children's or friends' being killed is not fair.

### **1.10. Deep Impacts of the May 11th in Reyhanlı**

We see injured people in Reyhanlı everyday. Those who were permanently disabled are the witness of the bombing in Reyhanlı. Their pain has left mark on the Reyhanlı people to remind them everyday of the May 11 attack. In Reyhanlı, the cost of damage of shops and houses were assessed. Economic moral support was given to people. The cost of damages

have been paid. The restoration and maintenance started in the city. The marks of the bombings have been erased.

The bazaars were set up in neighborhoods, but the people had no courage to go there. Most of the people preferred not to go to crowded places. Right after meeting personal needs as soon as possible, people immediately go back to their homes or offices. Like every foreigner is regarded as a suspect, the local also started to look each other with suspicion. Because those events split the people into two or three. Because there was also considerable amount of abstainers.

Lake Yenişehir is located in Reyhanlı. It used to be full of people during summer. Syrians and local people in Reyhanlı used to live together before the attack. It used to be so crowded that you would think as if it was a touristic area. The bombing attack took place, and neither Syrians nor the local people are there now. The shops and tradesmen look one another, that's all. Life came to a standstill, there's neither joy nor income. It is also the same in city center. The people do not go to city center if they don't have to. Some people go to shop in the afternoon. Those who do not have a job, on the other hand, go to coffee houses. The city looks like a ghost town when compared to the scenes before the bombings.

## **2. THE REYHANLI BOMBINGS AND TURKEY'S SYRIA DILEMMA**

The terrorist attack that took place in Reyhanlı on May 11th, 2013 has been a tragic indicator of how easily the instability in neighboring countries could spread to Turkey. Another tragic scene that we are used to see after the 2011 uprising in Syria and in 2003 invasion of Iraq, was witnessed also in Reyhanlı district of Hatay. Official statements and general outlook in the Turkish public opinion point

out the Syrian regime as the offender of the attack. Accordingly, it is possible to read the attack as Assad regime's attempt to punish Turkey for its Syria policy and to draw Turkey in the conflict and thus widen the war field.

The attack deeply affected Turkey. However, the local people, residents of Reyhanlı, were directly subjected to violence. This situation further flamed polarizations in the region, which is directly affected by developments as it is the border town with Syria and where a tense environment prevails. Since the beginning of events in Syria, Reyhanlı has been hosting almost as many Syrians as its population. This situation has negative impacts on the social, economic and security situation in the region. The Reyhanlı bombing has further deepened the aforesaid impact. In this study, first of all the process leading to Reyhanlı bombing will be handled, and then the actors behind the attack and their goals will be analyzed. In the conclusion, the impact of Reyhanlı attack on Turkey's Syria policy will be focused on.

### **2.1. The Process Leading to Reyhanlı Attack**

The relations between Turkey and Syria gradually developed as from 1999, and lastly an important step was taken in terms of social and economic integration after abolishment of visas. However, the popular uprising which spread to Syria on 15 March 2011 reversed the process. It was mainly because of the fact Turkey had placed the concepts of "legitimacy and value-based foreign policy" on its agenda for a long time. This approach required Turkey to meet the "democracy" demands in the wave of change in the Middle East, namely to stand by the people of countries in the region. An opposite attitude could have created a legitimacy crisis in Turkish foreign policy by creating a contradiction between discourse

and action. However, the necessities of real politics had prevented Turkey from taking quicksteps in certain problems. Syria has been one of the most striking examples in this regard.

Throughout 2000s, Turkey argued for a change that is extended over a long period and to be provided through internal dynamics as opposed to the U.S.'s hard-line policies towards Syria. In this sense, results were yielded in certain fields. Syria relatively mended its fences with the West thanks to Turkey, and the reformist wing in Syria grew stronger. However, the "Arab Spring" brought along the demand for a rapid and radical change in the region. This situation also brought along the requirement to complete the transition period in Syria, which Turkey had been striving to achieve and had made great strides for years, as soon as possible. Turkey, torn between the dilemma of "value-based foreign policy and real politics", had to take a critical stance towards the Assad administration, with which it had established close relations for the last decade.

Facing with a problem of "regime survival", the Syrian administration felt discomfort because of Turkey's defining the problem as the "legal demands of the civilian population". On the other hand, Turkey clearly stated its "disappointment" because of the fact that the reform advices Turkey had given to the Assad administration, supported by Turkey for years, were not taken into consideration. Following the spread of the uprising to Syria, Turkey mentioned for a while that "it did not give up all hope yet and believed that Syria could still make a reform". Nevertheless, the military operations the Syrian army carried out in Homs, Deir ez Zor, and especially in Hama caused Turkey to give up almost all hopes. The fact that the Hama operation reminded the "Hama Massacre" in 1982, and

that the Prime Minister Erdoğan had stated, “we do not want new Hama’s” earlier, turned the operation into a milestone for Turkey. In the following statements, the Foreign Minister Davutoğlu indicated that “the events that broke out in Hama deeply affected them, and that it was impossible to accept the method and timing of the events in Hama.” As the Prime Minister Erdoğan stated following the operations, Turkey “reached the threshold of tolerance”. This strong foreign policy discourse brought along the question of “which new foreign policy tools Turkey would put into practice if Syria continued to suppress the uprising by force.”

The multidimensional and deep relations, established over a decade, rapidly regressed in a few months. In such an environment, the Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu paid a critical visit to Damascus on August 9th 2011 in order to express Turkey’s messages and expectations. The aforesaid talk is a milestone for the Turkish-Syrian relations. Despite Turkey’s critical approach towards the way Syria oppresses the popular uprising, Turkey served as a “shield” between the West and the Syrian administration since the beginning of the events. However, Turkey’s serving as a shield between the West and Syria ended due to the fact that the talk between Assad and Davutoğlu failed to meet Turkey’s expectations, and Turkey started to implement oppression and isolation policies for transition in Syria.

During this process, all kind of diplomatic, political and economic oppression tool started to be used. One of the most important factor was the support for Syrian opposition. The Syrian political opposition carried on its efforts to become organized in Turkey to a large extent, and Syrian National Council (SNC) which is the first umbrella opposition group declared its establishment in Istanbul.

Opening the Turkey-Syria borderline for Syrian opponents to support the opposition was of critical importance. Loosening the control of borderline was of critical importance in terms of the struggle of opposition against the regime. The Syrian regime, on the other hand, thought that the opposition was not likely to survive or grow that strong without the support of Turkey. As a result, Syria strived to “punish” Turkey for its Syria policy, and began to give way to PKK that it had stopped supporting since 1998 within its borders again. During this process, the biggest crisis between Turkey and Syria took place upon Syrian air defense force’s attack on Turkish aircraft over international waters in mediterranean on June 2012. With this attack, Syria showed how serious it was on maintaining the regime and what it was capable of. On the other hand, rather than forcing Turkey to step back on its Syria policy, this attack further led to a more rigid stance by Turkey. As stated by PM Erdoğan, “All kinds of support started to be provided to the Syrian opposition,” a military shelter was built on the Syrian borderline immediately after the attack, and Syria was declared to be enemy state. It was also stated that, “Each military element with security risk and threat approaching from Syria to Turkish border will be assessed as a threat and will be treated as a military target.” This situation made it difficult for the Syrian army to carry out operations in the areas located quite close to the border, and thus the influence of opposition in border towns gradually increased in the following period. The regime began to lose its control over a 40-50 km long line from the border. As a result of Turkey’s further loosening its control on the borderline, the border-crossing between northern Syria and southern Turkey under the control of opposition increased to a great extent.

During this period, the presence of Syrians in Turkish border towns with Syria started

to be increasingly felt. What took place in Reyhanlı district, which encompasses Cilvegözü border gate that is Turkey's most important highway opening to the Middle East through Syria, sets a very striking example in terms of reflecting the aforesaid process and the developments that occurred all along the Turkey-Syria borderline. ORSAM Director Hasan Kanbolat made following observations in two columns entitled, "An Outlook from Hatay-Reyhanlı on Syria" and "Calm Days in Reyhanlı-Idlib Border" that he wrote within July 2012 based on his impressions:

*"On July 19<sup>th</sup>, Bab al-Hawa border crossing was seized by Syrian mujahids. Meanwhile, it was heard that the Gaziantep-Karkamış border crossing in Turkey-Syria borderline, as well as Jarablus border crossing on Syrian side and Abu Kemal border crossing on Syria-Iraq borderline had also been seized by mujahids. The Streets of Reyhanlı are full of Syrian civilians and Syrian soldiers with uniforms. Turkey is a safe haven. Also, the residents of Reyhanlı are used to Syrian soldiers with uniforms. Some-*

*one from outside the region might think that Turkey and Syria merged together or Reyhanlı was seized by Syrian army. In Reyhanlı with some 70-thousand population, Syrian population suddenly increased in the last couple of months and it still continues to increase. There have been approximately 1500 Syrian families. There is no available house for rent in the district. While rents were 100-200 TL on average per month, it increased to 300 TL. Reyhanlı state hospital is full of Syrian patients. Each day, ambulances bring patients and injured from the border. In Reyhanlı, it is possible to clearly see the impacts of the jet crisis. It can be easily observed that Turkey crossed the barriers of timidity after the crisis. Military troops were reinforced with arms and ammunition, missile launchers were installed. Although Turkey did not take part in conflicts in Syria, it began to support mujahids without any hesitation. There has been an intense Syrian flow into Turkey's border towns and districts, including Reyhanlı, for a few months. People in Reyhanlı have been leading their daily lives together with Syrians."*



The evaporation of the borderline brought along new tensions after the jet crisis. The armed struggle between Syrian regime's army and Free Syrian Army (FSA) to seize the control of Tel Abayad spread to Turkey. The Syrian army which lost the control over Tel Abayad and the border crossing opening to Akçakale had begun to open fire on the region. During those attacks, the Syrian regime's army targeted Akçakale district of Şanlıurfa with 6 artilleries on 3 October 2012. 5 Turkish citizens were killed in the attack. Turkey counterattacked with 40 artilleries on 14 targets. The attack gave the message that the Syrian administration could do all kind of crazy things if needed, just like in jet crisis. The Syrian administration showed how further it could go with the car-bomb attack in the buffer zone located between the Cilvegözü border crossing and Bab-al Hawa border crossing on Syrian side on May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2013. This attack clearly indicated how the loss of authority and instability in Syria and on Turkey-Syria borderline, and the loose controls would have negative impacts on Turkey's security. Turkey was to witness the biggest terrorist attack of its history in such an environment on May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2013.

## 2.2. Who Might Have Been Behind the Reyhanlı Attack? What Might Have Been the Motives?

On 11 May 2013, two different terrorist attacks were carried out in Reyhanlı district of Hatay. In the bloodiest terrorist attack of the history of Republic of Turkey, 51 people were killed and 146 people were injured. The attack occurred as two blasts in a row in Atatürk Avenue where Reyhanlı City Hall is found. One of the bomb-laden vehicles exploded in front of the city hall, while the other blast occurred in front of the PTT building.

The Reyhanlı terrorist attack caused to extremely tragic scenes resembling horror

scenes in Iraq and Syria. The first thing that could be said as a result of the attack is that after getting directly involved in the problems of the Middle East, Turkey increased its influence, but also it became a target for being a party to the regional problems. Although Turkey argues that it pursues a foreign policy with a strong legitimacy by arguing that it is on the side of the "right", it is obvious that there would be "counter-challenges" if a "status-quo defying" foreign policy was pursued. Above all, it is necessary to regard the terrorist attack in Reyhanlı as a part of the aforesaid "counter-challenge" no matter whom the offenders and powers behind the attack are.

There might be different interrelated motives behind the attack. Some of them might be listed as follows: To punish Turkey for its Syria policy and force it to step back; to drive Turkish public opinion and the opposition to question the government's Syria policy; to attempt to create an environment of internal conflict by instigating sectarian tension in Turkey and thus to make Turkey follow a more inward-oriented policy; and to show Turkey that its "open-door policy" for refugees could backfire. Through such attacks, Turkey is put into a major dilemma. The civil war in Syria is increasingly turning into a problem that negatively affects the security of Turkey. However, on the other hand, the policy pursued to put an end to the problem directly makes Turkey a party to the conflict, and leads Turkey to face more security problems. If no solution was found to the Syria issue, Turkey would either be increasingly drawn into a violence spiral or it would have to make a radical change in its Syria policy. Both options would bring along major vulnerabilities for Turkey. In case of the first option, the international community should be persuaded somehow for certain measures such as "declaration of no-fly zone, arms aid for the opposition, direct military intervention" to be taken to topple the Assad

regime. If it is not possible, Turkey will have to directly take on responsibility to eliminate security risks stemming from borders. Given the status of countries which play active roles in Syria issue, it does not seem possible for the first option to be realized. The second option, on the other hand, requires a military intervention in the area including the border regions of Turkey with Syria. This situation would come to mean that the Turkish army will become open to attack in Syria and to the reprisals of the Syrian regime against Turkey. A radical change in Syria policy would result in Turkey's turning its back on the Middle East again for a long time and it would weaken its power of sanction which is the key element of the foreign policy. Thus, from that point forth, the Syria issue forces Turkey to make a choice among those alternatives with negative consequences in any case. Considering within the framework of this big picture, the Reyhanlı bombings will lead Turkey to be under more pressure in terms of its Syria policy.

Out of the big picture, consequences of the Reyhanlı bombing and possible offenders might be assessed as follows: Above all, the attack showed that the Syrian regime is capable of carrying out demonstrations at least in Hatay. According to the statements of Turkish authorities, the terrorist attack is linked to the Syrian intelligence agency, was planned in Turkey, and some Turkish citizens are believed to have been involved in the attack. This situation suggests that similar attempts like Cilvegözü and Reyhanlı bombings could take place in the forthcoming period. Hatay; where Turkish, Sunni, Arab, Arab Alawite, Kurdish, Christian and Armenian communities live together, sets an example as a city that achieved to live together in peace for centuries. However, the fact that sectarian dimension of the civil war in Syria is getting increasingly stronger has also affected the peace

environment between different communities in Hatay. Hence, such actions caused by the Syrian regime could worsen the current tense environment. One of the most important consequences of Turkey's Syria policy is that disputes based on ethnic and sectarian differences which are the main dynamics of politics in the Middle East have been carried to Turkey.

As the direct offender of the attack, THKP-C Acilciler group and its leader Mihrac Ural come to the forefront. Mihrac Ural is believed to be also responsible for the Baniyas massacre which took place not long ago. It can be suggested that in case of collapse of the Assad regime, he thinks of establishing an Alawite state including western parts of Homs and Hama provinces as well as Latakia, Tartous provinces where Arab Alawites are densely populated. The city of Baniyas in Tartous province, where Sunni Arabs live, poses an obstacle before putting the aforesaid plan into practice. The Baniyas massacre was regarded as an important pillar of the goal to force the Sunni people to migrate by spreading terror and the goal to create a homogenous Arab Alawite region. "In the Baniyas massacre, considering that it is not possible to control the whole country, the Assad regime has switched to a new strategy of ethnic cleansing in certain areas, and to reinstate influence on these areas," stated the Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu. In the footage, published on internet shortly before the Baniyas massacre, "Baniyas is the only pathway for these traitors to the sea. Sooner or later we must besiege Baniyas, and begin cleansing. As Syrian Resistance, we will engage in battle in Baniyas," said Commander of the Syrian Resistance. Following the Reyhanlı bombings, Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu's statement where he said "The footprints of those who perpetrated the Baniyas massacre are also to be found in the attack that took

place in Reyhanlı” puts forward the fact that Turkish decision-makers see the aforesaid group and its leader as the offender of both incidents. In the interview conducted with Ural after the Reyhanlı bombing, “the group which is currently in action in Syria is not the Acilciler, but a new resistance movement called the Syrian Resistance. And there are Turkish people among founders of the group,” he said. About the bomb attack in Reyhanlı, “The Syrian regime and its extensions in Turkey have a hand in the bombings,” stated Turkish Prime Minister Erdoğan, and he pointed out the aforesaid militia group and the Syrian intelligence behind it as the offender of the attack.

### Conclusion

The Reyhanlı bombing is important in terms of showing that the cost of getting directly involved in the Syria problem and failing to find a solution could reach a critical dimension for Turkey. Besides becoming open to foreign attacks, the Syria issue is also destroying the peace environment in the society. Unfortunately, violence in the Middle East is mostly used as a means of reaching political goals. The Reyhanlı bombing clearly shows the risk of becoming a target as a result of being a party to regional problems.

The timing of the attack might be important as it was carried out before Turkish PM Erdoğan’s critical visit to the U.S. The Turkish PM Erdoğan gave critical messages to NBC TV, an American television network, in the interview before his visit to the United States of America. To the question of the journalist asking “whether Turkey would support declaration of a no-fly zone in Syria”, Erdoğan answered “We would say yes to this”. Besides, he stated that the Syrian regime used chemical weapon against its own people, and urged Washington to take an action on this subject, and added that “the redline” had already

been crossed. Those statements of the PM Erdoğan led to an expectation during his visit to Washington that he would try to persuade President Obama to take a firmer stance on Syria. If the U.S. decided to support declaration of no-fly zone or to provide Syrian opposition with arms, including heavy weapons; this situation might change the balances in Syria. However, the Assad regime planned the Reyhanlı attack before the critical visit, and strived to weaken Turkey in its talks with the U.S. Indeed, after the visit, Turkey approached to the U.S.’ stance rather than persuading the U.S. Thus, in the first stage, the Reyhanlı bombing weakened Turkey’s Syria policy. Furthermore, this situation also indicated that Syrian regime has the ability and will to manipulate the developments in Hatay. Also, it might be suggested that the regime could carry out new terrorist attacks to damage social peace in Hatay, which is already in a fragile position. This situation shows how important it is to overcome the instability in Syria as soon as possible.

## 3. GENERAL INFORMATION ON REYHANLI

### 3.1. Location of Reyhanlı

Reyhanlı is 100 meters above sea level, the average annual precipitation is 531 mm., and the total area of the city is 592 km<sup>2</sup>. Except for the residential area of the district, the surface area of Reyhanlı is 401.146 decares and its 14.717 decares are mountainous. The bottom land is about 348.985 decares. The rest, which covers 37.444 decares around the mountain-side, is terra rosa.

Reyhanlı district is located in Mediterranean region and in the east of Hatay. Mediterranean climate prevails in the district. Reyhanlı is bordered by Syria in the east and south, Antakya central district in the west,

and Kumlu district in the north. Besides, Cilvegözü border crossing, which is an important source of income, is found in this district.

### 3.2. History of Reyhanlı

The first known settlers of Reyhanlı is the Hurrian nation. The Hurrians are of Indo-European origin. Before settling in Reyhanlı, they resided around the Lake Van in Eastern Anatolia. They migrated to Southern Anatolia as a result of the Migration Period. They invaded and settled in Northern Syria, including upper Mesopotamia and Hatay. It is estimated that the Hurrians' migration took place in 1950 BCE. They founded the Kingdom of Mitanni in 1800 BCE. It was a confederation, namely a feudal organization of small Hurrian kingdoms. The capital Washukanni is estimated to be Ras al-Ayn of today. It is assumed that it is bordered from Bitlis to Mediterranean. However, the excavations of Çatalhöyük, Tell el Cüdeyde and Tell Atchana (Alalakh) mounds reveal a long occupation by earlier nations, of which we don't know names, in Reyhanlı before the arrival of Hurrians. A neolithic tablet was found in Tell el Cüdeyde. The excavations of Tell Atchana (Alalakh), on the other hand, shows that there were settlements way before 3200 BCE and that a brilliant civilization started in 2100 BCE. Various seals excavated from Çatalhöyük and Tell el Cüdeyde describing years between 4500-1780 BCE show that earlier tribes in this area developed political and trade relations with other states. Hence, in Tell el Cüdeyde, Çatalhöyük and Tell Tayinat seals of Mitanni, namely the Hurrians, as well as white-engraved stone-ware with stripes on dark surface were excavated. The Hurrians found out a civilized settled-society in 1950 BCE when they arrived in Reyhanlı, and formed small urban kingdoms under their hegemony.

The most developed area of the Hurrians in the region was Tell Atchana (Alalakh). Be-

cause there were more ruins in excavations of Tell Atchana. A city built out of adobe was revealed in excavations. The city was surrounded with walls. A palace, temples, streets with houses on both sides and ruins of military constructions were found in the area. Important tablets written in Hurrian language were revealed in excavations. As it is seen from the tablets, the name of the city is Alalakh, and it is a small Hurrian kingdom. It is also understood from those tablets that Idrimi, a king of Alalakh, reigned for thirty years and that he was a vassal of the Mitanni king Barattarna. Furthermore, it is understood that Niqmepa was the King of Alalakh in 15th century BCE, and that he was under the reign of the Mitanni king Saushtatar. Seals, gold and silver with artistic patterns of Hurrians were also revealed in excavations. In Alalakh, basalt altars, male and female statuettes, sacrifice tables, lion sculptures were excavated. Given the lack of basalt in the area, it must have been brought from Yayladağ. Agriculture and breeding had an important role in this period. In Tell Tayinat, various seals dating back to 1600 BCE were found. Those similar ruins prove the establishment of a small Hurrian confederate state, encompassing the capital Alalakh and Çatalhöyük, Tell el Cüdeyde, Tell Tayinat and other mounds in the Amuq valley. In terms of basalt, it is quite normal for the Hurrian state in the Amuq Valley with capital Tell Atchana, namely Alalakh, to have close political and trade relations with Syria, Egypt and Mesopotamia for being under the administration of Mitanni kingdom.

The Hurrians kingdom in Reyhanlı was destroyed by Hittites. The Hittites are of Indo-European origin and it is estimated that they migrated to Anatolia over Caucasus in early 2000 BCE. The Hittites settled in the area inside the arc of Kızılırmak. According to scripts written in Hittite and Akkadian language, the Hittites established a state in 1750

BCE. The Hittite King Hattusili reigned between the years 1680-1650 BCE. The King seized Aleppo from Mitannis, entered in the Amuq Valley and conquered Hurrian city-states in the area one by one. He also plundered Tell Atchana, namely capital of the Alalakh Kingdom. Suppiluliuma I was the Hittite King between 1380 and 1340 BCE. He made an agreement with the Hurrians and seized Aleppo and the Amuq Valley under his control again. However, the Hittites had a permanent influence in the Amuq Valley. During

his reign between 1275-1250 BCE, Hattusili III concluded the well-known Kadesh Peace Treaty with Ramses II, the king of the land of Egypt, against Assyrians. According to the treaty, Hittites would have the control over the area beginning from the Euphrates River until Mediterranean, including Northern Syria. Thus, the sovereignty of Hittites over the Hurrians in the Amuq Valley became definite as from the midst of 13<sup>th</sup> century BCE. After the destruction of the Hittite empire in 1180 BCE, Hittite city-states emerged in Northern



Syria and Amuq valley. Since Alalakh in Tell Atchana was plundered a lot, it lost its significance. Therefore, the Hittites founded a confederate state called Hatina in the Amuq Valley, and the capital was Çatalhöyük. After that period, we see a Hittite civilization in Reyhanlı. Ancient seals, cuneiform tablets of Hittite civilization were excavated in Çatalhöyük, Tell el Cüdeyde and Tell Tayinat. In Tell Atchana, murals on the palace walls con-

structed in the 13<sup>th</sup> century BCE, and temple entrance decorated with lion sculptures on both sides dating back to the Hittite civilization were found in excavations. In addition, in the excavations of Tell Tayinat was also found a Hittite palace and temple built in the 13<sup>th</sup> century BCE, as well as two lion sculptures lying side by side with mouths open wide, and reliefs describing a chariot.

The Assyrian King Sargon II conquered the Hittites in the Amuq Valley in 717 BCE. Then, Assyrian city-states emerged in Reyhanlı. We see the seals of Assyrians in Çatalhöyük, Tell el Cüdeyde and Tell Tayinat as from the midst of 8<sup>th</sup> century BCE.

In 538 BCE, Persians conquered Assyrians in the Amuq Valley. And in 333 BCE, Alexander the Great has a great victory over the King Darius of Persia in Hatay-Erzin, and Macedonians seized the Amuq Valley.

Although Reyhanlı is a very old settlement, there is a long interruption in historical records after the Hurrians, Hittites and Assyrians. As far as is known, there is no historical ruin from Persian, Macedonian and Roman empires. A few cavities around Tell Cüdeyde are estimated to be Roman tombs. But there are antiques from the Byzantine period. The ruins of military construction and various money in Yenişehir neighborhood of Reyhanlı prove that Yenişehir and Harran Village (Kavalcık) were significant settlements in Byzantine period. Huge potteries prove that olive, vine cultivation and winemaking were common. While cleaning the drinking water well in Harran village, various coins were found from Byzantine and Ottoman period. Also, ruins, cisterns, and large cut stones in Cilvegözü and its neighborhood prove that it was a military district during the Ottoman period.

Reyhanlı was a land of watermills in the past. Mushir Dervish Ibrahim Pasha served as the Governor of Syria and the 4<sup>th</sup> Army Commander between the years 1865-1880. There was a great spring in Yenişehir. Back then, Hadji Bekri Kubbeni from Aleppo built a barrier in front of the spring and had the watermill built which is today a coffee house. Dervish Ibrahim Pasha allocated the land in the

backyard for the watermill. Back then, people came with hundreds of camels from the Euphrates to grind their grains. They waited in line for about three months. On their way back, they loaded flour sacks on one side and salt sacks on the other side of camels both to bring back home for their needs and to equilibrate weights on camels. Mills were important factories of that period.

Turkmen tribes were settled in the Amuq Valley in 1865 by Mushir Dervish Ibrahim Pasha. In 1880, Mushir Dervish Ibrahim Pasha was assigned to somewhere else. Hussein Cemil Pasha substituted him and became the Governor of Aleppo and Army Commander. He served as Governor between the years 1880-1886. Because Mushir Osman Nuri Pasha substituted him in 1886 and became Governor of Aleppo and Army Commander.

Circassian immigrants were settled in Reyhanlı in 1882. When Hussein Cemil Pasha was the Governor, Tatar and Circassian immigrants arrived in Aleppo and were hosted in mosques. First of all ten Tatar families were settled in Sifef and Aptalhöyük in Reyhanlı. Then 110 Circassian families were settled in Efnir (Bayır neighborhood of today), Yenişehir and Harran and each family was provided with 71 decares of land.

According to the Ottoman archive, Reyhanlı was called "Amuq Abad". When the Turkmen Reyhanlı tribe was settled in the Amuq Valley, its official name became "Reyhaniye" subdistrict. Reyhanlı had different colloquial names. For instance, it was called "Değirmenkaşı" as there were lots of mills in the district. Mushir Dervish Ibrahim Pasha had 14 villages in Reyhanlı district. As he had palace built for himself next to the Oğuzhan Primary School of today and on the westside, Reyhanlı was also called "Saray" (palace).

### 3.2.1. Brief History of Hatay and Reyhanlı in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century

After the Armistice of Moudros was concluded on 30 October 1918, invasion of the Ottoman empire including Hatay started. On September 1919, the Countrywide Resistance Organization was formed in Hatay on September 1919. The organization gathered under the leadership of Tayfur Sökmen, Dedebeyzade Hakkı, Türkmenzade Ahmet and Lieutenant Asım Bey, and they divided tasks against French occupying forces. Tayfur Sökmen continued to struggle as the leader of local insurgents in the Amuq Valley. On 20 October 1921, an agreement was signed on Hatay between Turkey and France. Accordingly, a special provincial administration was to be established in Hatay. When the Lausanne Peace Treaty was signed on 24 July 1923, the League of Nations granted France mandates over Syria and Lebanon. On 9 September 1936, France recognized the sovereignty of Syria under occupation. At the same time Hatay was fighting with arms against the French invasion. The United Nations granted international status to Hatay on 20 May 1937. Hatay was mentioned the Sanjak of Alexandretta. In accordance with the agreement between Turkish and French troops in 1938, 2500-member military troops entered in Hatay to maintain the order in Hatay. The Turkish military troop at the command of Colonel Şükrü Kanatlı entered in Reyhanlı on 8 July 1938. The Hatay National Assembly held its first meeting on 2 September 1938, and the name of state was decided to be Hatay, while Tayfur Sökmen became the president of the Republic of Hatay. Reyhaniye, a sub-district of Kırıkhan, became a district on 25 October 1938. Hatay joined Turkey as a result of the Hatay agreement signed between Turkey and France on 23 June 1939. According to the law dated on 7th June, 1939, and numbered 3711 Hatay became province, and Reyhaniye became a district under the name of Reyhanlı.

### 3.3. Economy of Reyhanlı

#### 3.3.1. Agricultural History of Reyhanlı

The Amuq Valley has been undergoing a rapid economic and social change especially since 1947. Earlier, large and middle properties prevailed in Reyhanlı district. There were 239 families with more than 500 decares, and they controlled 51 percent of farmlands. And there were 54 families owning property of more than two thousand decares. During the French mandate period, Reyhanlı district was poor, lands were abundant but people were scarce. Even in 1940, 5050 people lived in Reyhanlı, while 12.950 people lived in its villages. Wooden plow and ox plow prevailed in agriculture. Each pair of ox annually worked in 30-35 decares of land, and a farmer plowed 3-4 decares a day. Only affluent families owned horse as mount. A part of their lands were cultivated, and the rest of them were rented out for sheepmen coming from Aleppo.

Local people did not know how to cultivate cotton. Instead, wheat, barley, vetch, oat, white millet, broad bean, lentil and chickpea were cultivated in the valley. Bean and onion was abundant in Reyhanlı, and apricot was common as well. Cattle, buffalo, goat and donkey breeding prevailed. Horse breeding was very rare. People didn't prefer products of cattle, 1-2 kg. milk provided from a cow a day, and every family in the village couldn't afford to buy cow. Animal manure was not put on soil. Animal manures were accumulated around the village.

There was no big business in the Amuq Valley, but instead three types of sharecropping:

a) Landlord provides the property and seeds. If other expenses such as ox, plow, drove, shear, thresher and transportation are cov-

ered by sharecropper, the crop is shared equally between the landlord and the sharecropper.

b) If landlord provides the land, seed, ox, plow and sharecropper assumes other tasks, farmer takes one third of the crop.

c) If the sharecropper takes grain and some money in advance under the name of "power" from the landlord to provide money for food through winter, farmer takes one fourth of the crop. The landlord received what he gave as "power" from the sharecropper at the end of harvest.

Lazy labor and weak capital prevailed in agriculture. In an agricultural system, where tractor and combine harvester are not operated, artificial fertilizer and pesticide are not known, irrigation is not made, quality seed is not used and where even animal manure is not put in the field, the crop harvested per decare would by all means be low. Those who harvest 150 sacks, namely some 18 tons, of wheat were considered rich. Besides, the price of agricultural products were low. 3,25 kg wheat was 2,5-3 kurus. Due to primitive agriculture, production was scarce, prices were low but the goods purchased were expensive. Hence, sharecropper farmer worked for peanuts and the landlord couldn't make money either.

In agricultural enterprises, there was a "shihne" (security officer) management. Shihne represented the landlord in the village. Each village had a threshing field. Mature crop was harvested with sickle. Harvesters came from Kuseyr and Aleppo. They received half of the amount of seeds in the field as wage. Crops in bundles in the field were carried to threshing field with an oxcart. Then the harvest was ground with a threshing sled, which had iron tyres and generally pulled by ox. Then, they waited for suitable weather conditions to winnow. After chaff is separated from grain, it was piled up and sealed with wooden stamp. This

process lasted some three months. When the landlord came, the crop was shared.

Sharecropper farmer used to build his home and barn out of straws. Those houses were called "huğ". Marshes were common in the area. Bulghur and millet were used in various types of food. Buttermilk was rare, and generally olive oil was used. Oil lamp was commonly used in Reyhanlı. But farmers mostly used "fiske", which is a small pointed can. It was filled with olive oil and candlewick was put inside through the pointed end. Then the candlewick was lit. Tailings, turd etc. was used as fuel in the village.

Peddlers came to villages. They exchanged their goods with eggs, wheat, barley and millet etc. And farmer exchanged their crops with soap, thread, socks, salt, match, sugar, handkerchief etc. Kerchief, *mintan* (shirt) and *shalwar* (baggy trousers) were the clothes of villager. They did not wear jacket. Coarse woolen clothes (aba), a winter cloth, were woven in Aleppo and Idlib. The relations with Reyhanlı were poor. They went to Reyhanlı twice or three times a year. Malaria was common. Healers served as doctors. Bonesetter, midwives helped people, but other did not know much. They used to take blood, branded and gave molasses to those who had stomachache. They tied the wrists of malarial people with ropes. Amulets was used in the treatment of all kind of diseases. There were two primary schools; for girls and boys in Reyhanlı. There was also a general practitioner.

The destiny of Reyhanlı district started to change as from 1947. Within the scope of Marshall Plan, agricultural activities were funded. Farmers were backed in terms of both price and credit. While there were 12 tractors in Reyhanlı in 1946, the number of tractors increased to 402 in 1955. A modern business

administration equal with European standards was adopted. In 1985, there were 7006 tractors in Hatay, and some 2000 of those tractors were in Reyhanlı. In due course, ownership structure of Reyhanlı was amended to a great extent. Many villagers who did not have property were provided with lands

after the Amuq marshland was drained, and hundreds of small-scaled enterprises were set up there. Furthermore, big property was liquidated on its own. It was ended in the Amuq valley as a result of the split by inheritance caused by death of old generations and the land sales caused by consumption patterns



that some landlords cannot give up. According to a research conducted in 1987, the largest property in Reyhanlı is 1300 decares, and only three people owned those properties. Financial income provided in the valley started to be saved in Reyhanlı. As a result, more than fifteen ginneries, flour and oil factories were established. A modern neighborhood was set up towards the Lake Yenişehir.

The population of Reyhanlı was 5.050 in 1940. Today, it is an increasingly developing

district with more than 70.000 population, high schools, hospital and doctors in various fields.

The Barisha Mountain in south of Reyhanlı was covered with dwarf oaks in 1932-33. Villagers did not only cut down the trees, but also uprooted and brought the roots to Reyhanlı to sell them as firewood. The forestation of Lake Yenişehir took place when Rifat Bahadırlı, known as Old Chief, was Mayor. Göl Gazinosu was constructed with the initi-

ative of Governor Muammer Ülgener during the period when Reshid Ihsan Bahadırılı was Mayor. West and north of Reyhanlı was full of marshes until the outskirts. Malaria was a major problem for the people. There were two general practitioners in Reyhanlı in 1943. Patients who were carried in oxcarts waited in line to be treated.

Today, Lake Amuq does not exist in the valley anymore. It was estimated that the Lake covered an area of 92-100 km<sup>2</sup>. The longest side of the Lake was 16 kilometers, and the widest side was 12 kilometers. Its peripheral length was some 43-50 kilometers. During summer months, the Lake Amuq seemed like an independent inner lake. The Lake was divided in two by a sand bank from north to south with full of crustaceans, and the main part of the lake remained in the west side. In the east, on the other hand, two small lakes emerged. The lake in southeast was called Karagöl. The waters of those two lakes were yellow. However, the two lakes were linked with the main lake and in winter those three lakes merged. But in winter, marshlands rose up to 100-120 kilometers independently from the lake. The Lake Amuq dried after beds of Afrin, Muratpaşa, Karasu, Küçük Asi and Asi rivers were deepened. Catfish, also called bullhead, was quite abundant in Lake Amuq, Reyhanlı. After the Lake dried up, fishing came to an end as well. Humid wind, which used to blow over the lake in summer months and was good for plants, nor blows dry. The Lake Amuq, which was located in an area where Mediterranean climate prevailed and thus which did not see snow or frost and where grass and reeds prevailed, was the unique lake of our country and the Middle East. As it was on the route of migratory birds, it was a stopover for them; and also it was a shelter for the water birds who fled from harsh weather conditions of northern countries. The Lake Amuq was a "Bird Sanctuary". There were various kind of birds such

as: Those with white, dark grey, black feathers and long and bent beaks; flamingoes; ducks; marsh snipes; purple gallinules; pelicans etc in Lake Amuq. Also snakebirds, cormorants and wild goose lived in the Lake. Starlings and wild goose lived in the Lake. Starlings slept in the marsh. There were also gaggles.

In 1939, farmers from Maraş introduced modern agriculture to the Amuq Valley. They worked as farmer in the Valley for years by giving 15% lease-share for rice and 25% lease-share for cotton to the landlord. Some of the 12 tractors we detected in Reyhanlı district in 1946 belonged to State Hatchery, and some others belonged farmers from Maraş. According to the information obtained from the District Directorate of Agriculture, there were 1536 tractors in Reyhanlı district in 1987. Approximately 22% of the tractors in Hatay was in Reyhanlı. Ox plow is not used anymore. In rough terrains in the east, and sometimes while harvesting cotton, horse pull is used. Besides, all kind of artificial fertilizers is commonly used in fields as needed. Pesticides are also commonly used. Therefore, animals such as snake and quails became scarce, and bee-keeping became almost impossible.

### 3.3.2. Present Agriculture in Reyhanlı

According to the Ministry of Development (State Planning Organization), Reyhanlı is the richest district of Turkey. Reyhanlı is an agricultural district today as well. Agricultural production is higher than the average in Turkey. Agricultural implements are used in the district. 200.000 decares of the 310.000 decares of cultivated land can be irrigated. Agricultural spraying, some liquid fertilization is implemented through agricultural spray aircrafts. Some agricultural products are purchased by private sector. Various types of vegetable is produced in the district. The majority of products are exported to abroad (Middle East, Russia, Central Asia). There are

official and private agricultural institutions in district. Agricultural production is frequently controlled to ameliorate production.

### 3.3.3. Trade

Cilvegözü border crossing, which is the door of Europe opening to Middle East, is located within the borders of Reyhanlı district. E-5 highway (Europe-5) is found here. Land transport vehicles heading to the Middle East and Africa from European countries have to pass through the Cilvegözü border crossing. The Cilvegözü border crossing contributes to economy of Reyhanlı to a great extent.

### 3.3.4. Industry

In Reyhanlı, industrial activities are carried out based on agriculture. Ginneries and pressed factories were established for cotton produced in Reyhanlı. The majority of those factories are owned by private sector and some of them are state-owned. Cotton ginned in those factories is separated from their cottonseeds. Fibre is sold in bundles to spinning factories in other cities. Some of the cottonseeds are sold to forage factories, and some others are sold to oil factories. A certain amount is reserved as seed.

### 3.3.5. Transportation

Hatay was connected to the world through the airport. Service is provided for transportation between the airport and Reyhanlı.

Reyhanlı is well connected through highways to neighboring districts and provinces. There are woodlands on both sides of some highways. Most of the rural roads are asphalted. All villages can be accessed through those roads. They are open in summer and winter.

One can go to metropolitan cities such as Ankara, İstanbul, İskenderun, Adana, Mersin from Reyhanlı by bus. Frequent taxi and minibus services between districts are also available. One can go to Gaziantep by minibus everyday. Shuttles operate. There are both through services available from Antakya to all across Turkey by bus, and also connecting services to Middle Eastern countries such as Syria, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, and to all across Europe; especially to Russia, Romania and Bulgaria through İstanbul. The nearest airport from Reyhanlı is the Hatay airport (57 km) The nearest sea route is İskenderun Port (80 km), and the Cilvegözü Customs Gate is at a 8 km distance. Syria-Aleppo is located within 55 km from Reyhanlı, İstanbul is located within 1200 km from the district, and Çevlik beach is located within 67 km from Reyhanlı.

## 3.4. Cultural and Historical Heritage of Reyhanlı

### *Reyhanlı Hammamats (Thermal)*

It is located on Reyhanlı-Kırıkhan route, Kumlu district. It is the biggest thermal (hot spring) in the neighborhood, and it is asserted that it has a healing effect.

### *Reyhanlı Bath*

It is located within 20 km from Reyhanlı district. There are some 5 hot springs in the thermal located very close to the Turkey-Syria border-crossing. The thermal water is both used as a drinking water and also it heals various rheumatic diseases.

### *İmma*

It is an ancient settlement located on Antakya-Cilvegözü route near Reyhanlı, and today it is used as a recreation area.

### *Tell el Cüdeyde*

In the excavations of Tell el Cüdeyde, 17 layers encompassing 4500 BCE-600 CE were found.

***Yenişehir***

The settlement called "İmma" in Roman period is located around Lake Yenişehir.

Today, it is popular with recreation areas and tea gardens.

***Kasr-el Benet***

It is a buffer zone in Cilvegözü.

***Tell Atchana (Alalakh)***

It is a ruin located on Reyhanlı-Antakya route. In the area, there are ruins of Yarim-Lim pal-

ace dating back to the 18<sup>th</sup> century BCE, and Nigme-Pa palace dating back to the 15<sup>th</sup> century BCE, as well as the ruins of a temple. The artifacts are displayed in Hatay Archeology Museum and the artifacts smuggled are displayed in British Museum.

***Tell Tayinat***

Artifacts excavated from a Hittite palace and a temple in Tell Tayinat are displayed in Hatay Archeology Museum.

## 4. STATISTICS OF REYHANLI

### 4.1. 2012 Census Results

2012 NÜFUS SAYIM SONUÇLARI									
	Toplam			Province			Village		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Reyhanlı	89.093	44.430	44.663	63.563	31.739	31.824	25.530	12.691	12.839
Hatay Total	1.483.674	743.385	740.289	742.590	370.946	371.644	741.084	372.439	368.645

### 4.2. 2012 ABPRS (Address-based Population Registration System) Population

2012 ADDRESS-BASED POPULATION			
DISTRICT NAME	PROVINCE	VILLAGE	TOTAL
Reyhanlı	63.563	25.530	89.093
Hatay Total	742.590	741.084	1.483.674

### 4.3. 2012 Population Density

2012 POPULATION DENSITY			
DISTRICT NAME	POPULATION	SURFACE AREA (km <sup>2</sup> )	POPULATION DENSITY
Reyhanlı	89.093	410	217
Hatay Toplam	1.483.674	5.827(Km <sup>2</sup> )	255

### 4.4. Registered Province of Residents of Reyhanlı District, 2011

Registered Province of Residents of Reyhanlı District, 2011					
Hatay	87.691	Adana	213	Adıyaman	118
Afyonkarahisar	42	Ağrı	163	Amasya	12
Ankara	52	Antalya	10	Artvin	19
Aydın	17	Balıkesir	19	Bilecik	7
Bingöl	22	Bitlis	27	Bolu	16
Burdur	5	Bursa	6	Çanakkale	4
Çankırı	14	Çorum	24	Denizli	30
Diyarbakır	72	Edirne	3	Elazığ	87
Erzincan	19	Erzurum	79	Eskişehir	11
Gaziantep	313	Giresun	31	Gümüşhane	26
Hakkari	4	Hatay	81.618	Isparta	9
Mersin	218	İstanbul	41	İzmir	22
Kars	147	Kastamonu	6	Kayseri	53
Kırklareli	5	Kırşehir	8	Kocaeli	6
Konya	50	Kütahya	22	Malatya	74
Manisa	45	Kahramanmaraş	370	Mardin	29
Muğla	4	Muş	79	Nevşehir	29
Niğde	39	Ordu	20	Rize	9

Sakarya	15	Samsun	66	Siirt	19
Sinop	185	Sivas	91	Tekirdağ	1
Tokat	15	Trabzon	17	Tunceli	8
Şanlıurfa	2.242	Uşak	10	Van	22
Yozgat	35	Zonguldak	1	Aksaray	39
Bayburt	13	Karaman	14	Kırıkkale	43
Batman	15	Şırnak	19	Bartın	1
Ardahan	5	Iğdır	6	Yalova	1
Karabük	6	Kilis	211	Osmaniye	222
Düzce	1				

#### 4.5. Population By Age Group and Gender, 2011

Population By Age Group and Gender, 2011			
Age Group	Male	Female	Total
0-4	5.692	5.429	11.121
5-9	5.651	5.437	11.088
10-14	5.448	5.262	10.710
15-19	4.277	4.158	8.435
20-24	3.053	3.263	6.316
25-29	3.566	3.453	7019
30-34	3.108	3.303	6.411
35-39	2.651	2.879	5.530
40-44	2.337	2.291	4.628
45-49	2.283	2.233	4.516
50-54	1.708	1.693	3.401
55-59	1.366	1.429	2.795
60-64	971	1.131	2.102
65-69	511	678	1.189
70-74	478	616	1.094
75-79	386	517	903
80-84	177	249	426
85-89	37	76	113
90+	24	56	80
Total	43.724	44.153	87.877
Hatay Total	741.695	732.528	1.474.223

#### 4.6. Population By Literacy Rate and Gender (6+ Age Group), 2011

Population By Literacy Rate and Gender (6+ Age Group), 2011			
Literacy	Total	Male	Female
Illiterate	3.772	892	2.880
Literate	67.557	34.239	33.318
Unknown	2.855	1.609	1.246
Total	74.184	36.740	37.444

**4.7. Population By Education Level and Gender (15+ Age Group), 2011**

Population By Education Level and Gender (15+ Age Group), 2011			
Education Level	Total	Male	Female
Illiterate	2.501	5.741	927
Okuma yazma bilen fakat bir okul bitirmeyen	6.043	1.566	4.477
Primary School Graduate	10.182	5.106	5.076
Middle School Graduate	8.815	5.012	3.803
Secondary School Graduate	1.728	1.122	606
High School Graduate	6.414	3.780	2.634
Bachelor and College Graduate	2.039	1.269	770
Master's Degree	72	49	23
PhD	25	12	13
Unknown	1.645	964	681
<b>Total</b>	<b>39.464</b>	<b>19.454</b>	<b>20.010</b>

**4.8. Population By Legal Marital Status and Gender, 2011**

Population By Legal Marital Status and Gender (15+ Age Group) in Reyhanlı District, 2011			
Marital Status	Total	Female	Male
Hiç evlenmedi	12.100	6.634	5.466
Evli	24.522	12.202	12.320
Boşandı	1.116	417	699
Eşi öldü	1.726	201	1.525
<b>Toplam</b>	<b>39.464</b>	<b>19.454</b>	<b>20.010</b>

**4.9. Marriage By Gender and Age Group**

Marriage By Gender and Age Group , 2011 (A. Groom B. Bride)								
		Total	16-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44
Hatay	A	13.212	165	3.180	5.346	2.553	779	305
Reyhanlı	A	932	14	256	374	145	47	19
Hatay	B	13.212	3.908	4.261	2.508	1.013	494	297
Reyhanlı	B	932	321	291	143	59	25	17

Marriage By Gender and Age Group in Reyhanlı District, 2011 (cont.) (A. Groom B. Bride)							
		45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65+	Unknown
Hatay	A	244	175	144	104	139	78
Reyhanlı	A	17	18	12	9	14	7
Hatay	B	179	65	38	14	15	420
Reyhanlı	B	9	8	3	5	1	50

#### 4.10. Births By Gender

Births By Gender, as from 31/08/2011			
Total	Boy	Gril	
Hatay	29.549	15.080	14.469
Reyhanlı	2.258	1.169	1.089

#### 4.11. Deaths By Gender

Deaths By Gender, as from 31/03/2012			
	Total	Male	Female
Hatay	6.122	3.355	2.767
Reyhanlı	339	192	147

#### 4.12. Deaths By Gender and Age Group

Deaths By Gender and Age Group, as from 31/03/2012 A. Total B. Male C. Female												
	Total	0	1-4	5-14	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+	Unknown
Hatay A	6.122	362	97	68	122	168	301	534	809	1.161	2.499	1
Hatay B	3.355	182	53	38	92	115	180	362	495	655	1.282	1
Hatay C	2.767	180	44	30	30	53	121	172	314	506	1.317	-
Reyhanlı A	339	39	12	2	10	13	17	36	30	74	106	-
Reyhanlı B	192	16	3	1	8	9	10	29	18	46	52	-
Reyhanlı C	147	23	9	1	2	4	7	7	12	28	54	-

#### 4.13. Population per Family Health Center

Population per Family Health Center (FHC)			
DISTRICT NAME	POPULATION	NUMBER OF FHC	POPULATION PER FHC
Reyhanlı	89.093	7	12.554
Hatay Total	1.483.674	169	8.723

#### 4. 14. Number of State Hospitals

State Hospitals and Number of Beds	
HOSPITAL NAME	NUMBER OF BEDS
Reyhanlı	103
Hatay Total	1.575

#### 4.15. Average Size of Household in Provinces, Districts and Villages, 2011

Average Size of Household in Provinces, Districts and Villages, 2011			
	Province and Districts	Town and Villages	Total
Hatay	4,25	4,03	4,50
Reyhanlı	5,25	5,03	5,84

**4.16. Agricultural Land Use, 2011**

Agricultural Land Use, 2011*										
Cultivated Agricultural Area					Perennials					
	Total cultivated agricultural area and perennial area	Total cultivated agricultural area	Grain and other crop areas		Vegetable Garden areas	Total	Other fruit, beverage and medicinal plants	Orchard area	Olive tree area	Forage crop area
			Cultivated	Fallow						
Hatay	258.742	178.023	136.757	4.626	36.641	80.719	25.082	6.326	49.311	6.273
Reyhanlı	28.831	26.941	23.414	-	3.527	1.890	368	-	1.522	120

**4.17. Production of Selected Crops and Other Plants, 2011**

Production of Selected Crops and Other Plants (ton), 2011					
	Wheat	Barley	Corn (silage)	Potato	Cotton
Hatay	331.136	2.586	127.024	2.353	247.256
Reyhanlı	54.849	159	1.934	35	65.132

**4.18. Production of Selected Vegetable Crops, 2011**

Production of Selected Vegetable Crops in Reyhanlı, 2011 (ton)					
	Eggplant	Lettuce	Onion (Spring)	Carrot	Parsley
Hatay	86.665	30.950	12.610	34.031	19.986
Reyhanlı	2.760	750	-	-	400

**4.19. Production of Selected Fruit Crops, 2011**

Production of Selected Fruit Crops in Reyhanlı, 2011 (ton)					
	Olive	Tangerine	Orange	Grape	Pomegranate
Hatay	181.552	242.335	275.257	56.786	13.548
Reyhanlı	4.628	-	-	-	1.300

**4.20. Greenhouse Cultivation Areas by Quality, 2011**

Greenhouse Cultivation Areas by Quality, 2011 (decare)					
	Total	Glasshouse	Plastic greenhouse	High tunnel	Low tunnel
Hatay	11.158	3	787	1.767	8.601
Reyhanlı	7	-	7	-	-

**4.21. Production of Selected Greenhouse Products, 2011**

Production of Selected Greenhouse Products, 2011 (ton)						
	Pepper	Watermelon	Tomato	Beans (Green)	Cucumber	Zucchini
Hatay	3.546	3.551	18.080	120	4.605	1.213
Reyhanlı	-	-	-	-	105	-

#### 4.22. Selected Agricultural Implements and Machines, 2011

Selected Agricultural Implements and Machines for Districts, 2011 (number)					
	Tractor	Combine Harvester	Cultivator	PLow	Drill
Hatay	16.944	28	9.777	17.175	5.590
Reyhanlı	1.275	-	1.800	450	985

#### 4.23. Animal Production, 2011

Animal Production in Reyhanlı, 2011						
	Cattle (per head)	Sheep (per head)	Goat (per head)	Dairy products (ton)	Honey production (ton)	Poultry animals (number)
Hatay	128.874	126.717	113.475	133.842	1.239	867.514
Reyhanlı	9.569	14.812	2.748	7.838	16	8.010

#### 4.24. The Results of General (MP) Elections, 2011

The Results of General (MP) Elections, 2011										
	Number of ballot boxes	Number of registered voters	Number of Voters	Number of valid votes	Ak Party	DP	CHP	EMEP	Nation Party	LDP
Hatay	3.490	943.254	810.847	795.632	353.616	4.341	306.498	1.429	365	-
Reyhanlı	192	49.076	40.139	38.963	26.309	135	5.652	59	30	-
	Felicity Party	HEPAR	Has Party	MHP	DYP	TKP	MMP	BBP	DSP	Independent
Hatay	5.941	1.724	2.960	100.499	1.085	690	571	3.230	875	11.808
Reyhanlı	751	198	269	4.947	101	25	23	133	33	298

#### 4.25. The Results of Provincial Council Elections held on March 29th, 2009

The Results of Provincial Council Elections held on March 29th, 2009												
	Number of ballot boxes	Number of registered voters	Number of Voters	Number of valid votes	ANAP	MHP	LDP	DSP	DTP	İP	CHP	Hakpar
Hatay	3.013	896.230	769.602	751.199	3.894	147.495	67	33.351	11.077	2.957	204.588	16
Reyhanlı	164	47.555	38.585	37.365	-	10.786	-	-	-	63	3169	-
	BBP	BDP	Nation Party	ÖDP	TKP	DP	Felicity Party	Ak Party	BTP	Emep	HYP	Bağımsız
Hatay	14.344	1	835	8.749	2.031	49.643	21.939	243.175	2.664	1.439	2.934	-
Reyhanlı	1.177	-	50	-	61	315	5.227	16.255	212	50	-	-

#### 4.26. 29 The Results of Municipal Elections held on March 29th, 2009

The Results of Municipal Elections held on March 29th, 2009												
	Number of ballot boxes	Number of Registered Voters	Number of Voters	Number of valid votes	ANAP	MHP	LDP	DSP	DTP	İP	CHP	Hakpar
Hatay	2.338	701.208	598.138	574.757	4.029	111.176	114	35.429	8.541	-	153.543	-
Reyhanlı	113	34.181	27.582	26.445	-	9.608	-	-	-	-	1.708	-
	BBP	BDP	Nation Party	ÖDP	TKP	DP	Felicity Party	Ak Party	BTP	Emep	HYP	Bağımsız
Hatay	5.220	-	-	9.802	199	56.599	13.023	169.442	914	-	4.234	2.492
Reyhanlı	-	-	-	-	-	-	3.814	11.219	96	-	-	-

#### 4.27. The Results of Local Elections held on March 29th, 2009

The Results of Local Elections held on March 29th, 2009												
	Number of ballot boxes	Number of registered voters	Number of voters	Number of valid votes	ANAP	MHP	LDP	DSP	DTP	İP	CHP	Hakpar
Hatay	2.338	701.208	595.486	570.010	4.249	112.171	4	36.115	9.121	34	153.767	59
Reyhanlı	113	34.181	27.537	26.205	-	9.249	-	-	-	-	1.836	-
	BBP	BDP	Nation Party	ÖDP	TKP	DP	Felicity Party	Ak Party	BTP	Emep	HYP	Bağımsız
Hatay	5.699	-	-	9.525	-	51.853	15.000	166.226	1.629	-	4.005	513
Reyhanlı	-	-	-	-	-	-	3.887	11.071	162	-	-	-

#### 4.28. Referendum Results, 2010

Referendum Results in Reyhanlı, 2010								
							Valid votes	
	Number of ballot boxes	Number of registered electors	Number of voters	Turnout rate (%)	Invalid vote	Valid vote	Yes	No
Hatay	2.580	922.012	767.398	83.2	10.644 (%1.4)	756.754 (%98.6)	362.040 (%47.8)	394.714 (%52.2)
Reyhanlı	146	48.956	39.505	80.7	803 (%2.0)	38.703 (%98.0)	27.367 (%70.7)	11.335 (29.3)

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