TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY IN MIDDLE EAST IN THE ASPECT OF HUMANITARIANISM: WHERE TURKEY POSITIONING HERSELF IN POST CONFLICT SYRIA

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Abstract

Starting from 1991 Iraq refugee crises from northern Iraq to late 1990's Kosovo intervention, and continuing in 2000's with air sanction and involvement in Libya are the examples of humanitarian interventions which states start to be the part of humanitarianism policies in a coercive manner. Humanitarianism also turns to limit sovereignty of other states in humanitarian crises not only in militarily aspects but also politically and economically. Humanitarianism has created a kind of actor problem in the literature. Nation states have lost its monopoly over the use of arm power. The financing of the war has been moved to private sectors and nongovernmental structures. Guerrilla based conflicts of this period like the defence to USA army in Somalia and after Iraq intervention 2003 dissolving armies of Iraq military created new militias violence based on sectarian or ethnic cases.

Turkey's increasing power in regional aspects has made her involve on humanitarian issues in her Foreign Policy from 1990's. From Iraqi no fly zone to Hasimi crises between Iraq and Mavi Marmara crises with Israel in Gaza situation,

also changed Turkey's status qua in Middle East. Syria would be the ultimate example of Turkey's involving humanitarian crises in Middle East that will shape also its position in the region. In this paper, I want to analyse Turkish Foreign Policies humanitarianism discourse in decision making level especially in Syria relations after February 2011 parallel to starting of the civil war in the country. Foreign Ministry reports, Turkish Prime Minister's and Turkish Foreign Minister's speeches and also Turkish Foreign Ministry budget discusses in the parliament will be analysed methodologically in our study.

A General Review on New Humanitarianism-Vehicles and Critiques

From 19th Century Humanitarian policies have affected states polices in spite and despite their political interest, and have manipulated the environment for the states in aspect of their sovereignty. Although as a political and economical phenomenon, humanitarianism became an important framework for constructing foreign policies and security policies in the contemporary world politics.

During Cold War, humanitarian aid, humanitarian act developed by the regional crises like civil wars with examples of Nigeria during 1960's and Ethiopia during 80's. UN's important elements UNICEF and UNHCR became important organizations for humanitarian act. States implemented humanitarianism by indirect implementation with UN agents. Organizations like Red Cross and Save the Children are first example of NGO's beyond IGO's.

After Cold War these organizations have continued UN's agents missions. With the formation of 'new wars' with in 1990's, NGO's also established themselves widely around the world involving on the regional crises. This meant also the new phase of humanitarianism. We can state three steps of the concept, it is evolving beyond state based implementations, professionalizing and separating from militarism.

By the collapse of the borders between civil wars and interstate wars this situation also blurs the scene between war and peace. Hence military intervention affects civilian lives in masses, not only by coercive force, deaths, but also with, poverty, famine, infrastructure problems, lack of sanity and medical attention. "The Strategic goal of these wars is to mobilize extremist politics base on fear and hatred"

as Kaldor states the disparity of new wars (1999-2010:9). While Thomas Weiss emphasizes the Third World is forming the main environment for the new wars that has influencing new environment for new humanitarianism. (2012:68-70)

This environment has formed new kind of sovereignty idea especially in liberal theories of international politics. The main non intervention to domestic policies of states have been constructed with Westphalian system and assured several times in international law in UN Charter, 1969 Vienne Convention, and at 1975 Helsinki Final act. Although with the new concepts of globalization, these assurances have been limited by the human rights approach for the Third World countries- quasi-states. UN Charter, Chapter 7 has been re-implemented by the UN Security Council Resolution 688. With 1990 North Iraq refugee crises under Saddam regime, has shown us the involvement of states, NGO's and different kind of humanitarianism. " As the deinstitutionalization of sovereign central authorities means, at minimum a vastly diminished role of international law." Hence with the change of crises 1980's to 1990's and as humanitarian intervention became widespread with the regional crises the humanitarian acts have abandoned short term and apolitical approaches and has created a political shift from emergency relief to post conflict peace building. (Weiss 2012: 73-82)

Responsibility to Protect is the major consequence of the new humanitarianism in 2000 world politics. As humanitarian intervention became controversial for some scholars in moral and legal terms (Chesterman 2001, Chandler 2001, Hehir 2008), liberal and critical supporters (Welsh: 2002 and 2006, Wheeler 2000-2006) have constructed political and legal frameworks which has established the main document of ICISS 2011 Report. Since document have determined the main principles of *just cause* and *right authority* which coercive measures may include political, economical and judicial steps – only extreme cases military action (Evans and Sahnoun 2002), that is the right or proper authority – which incase not implemented in Kosovo or extremely in Iraq (Evans 2006).

Humanitarian relief and aid by the involvement of international NGO's numerous times analyzed by the scholars deeply with its pro's and con's. Especially Barnett and Weiss criticized aid-based humanitarianism during Cold War (2011: 56-

59) relied on new opportunities and normative evaluation of R2P concept. It is also creating a considerable bar for foreign policies of the states (2011:83-87). Though Chandler have indicated fully on NGO's part in the new term of humanitarianism which needs to be reconsidered because of their attrition in political neutrality and universalism. (2001)

Syria uprising to civil war: How humanitarianism evolved for Turkish Foreign Policy

Syrian Civil war after February 2011 have influenced new dynamic for the new humanitarianism which all-Western countries stayed relatively calm-not intervene by military forces- till 2013 summer. Since from the beginning of the uprising to Asad regime humanitarian vehicles have been demonstrated around the World to Syria. Turkey became an important actor in aspects of humanitarian relief with the refugee crises as a neighbor country on its borders. Turkey, especially southeast region, became a common harbor for for UNHCR, peace activist and International and local NGO's.

After 2000's while Turkey and new Justice and Development Party government built close relations with Asad government, 2011 Daara uprising has transformed Turkish relations with Syria step by step to enmity. Turkey's attempt to persuade Bashir Asad to make reforms in domestic policies was perceived as an involvement of internal politics of Syria. Turkey started to implement pressure and isolation policies after the visit of Ahmet Davutoğlu at 9 August 2011. During 6.5 hours of meeting with Asad, Davutoğlu stated the importance of ending the violence to civilians and listening to people's demands. Though Asad's reply to continue fight against terrorism has been became the turning point in the two countries relations. On this process Reuters announced the Syrian troops closing on Turkish borders, which escalates the tensions between two countries. (Cumhuriyet, 10 August 2011: 9)

Turkey began to emphasize humanitarian part of the civil war in 2012 with rising number of refugees in the border cities and also accepted political asylums

which has also been criticized in internal Turkish policies. Especially Republicans Peoples party and Nationalist Movement Party have opposed to the new asylums which are acting as a part of El Nusra front, and blamed the government for supporting radical Islamist terror.

The reason for this critics are basing on the similar conflict where general classical humanitarian relief policies contain in its structure, were also Kuperman has stated as moral hazard in third party interventions in humanitarian cases. (2008: 55-58) Un monitored asylum policies and aid can create conflicted debate in internal policies especially creating a high risk of shifting disputed area to neighbor countries and also aid policies can create the problem of corruption which we can be seen in the examples during Cold War in Africa. In Turkey two important cases have raised this disputed opposition on the parliament. First crash of Turkish military airplane in Syrian airspace and second is the explosion in Reyhanlı-Hatay are the important events that changed the outcomes of Turkish foreign policy. Ministries of Foreign Affairs Budget talks under annual Budget discourses are important examples to see these debatable areas methodologically. When we analyze 2012 Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs Budget talks, we can see this clear opposition, which is emphasizing Asad's authoritarian regime and Turkey's choice for choosing resistance against status quo. He clearly mentions that for the sake of not intervening to the internal policies of Syria we cant protect the status quo and support and authoritarian regime. (TBMM, 10 December 2011: 79) Though in 2013 budget talks opposition continued to relate terrorism with Turkish foreign policy on Syria. RPP spokesman Osman Taney Korutürk have mentioned the relation between refuges and terrorist in his talks, while Tuğrul Türkeş-NMP spokesman mentions the fall of military airplane by the fault of government incase not warning Syrian authorities (TBMM, 16 Aralık 2012: 25, 29)

Turkey has lost its control over its humanitarian aims while also USA foreign policy have confronted the comparable challenge for the call on a local no fly zone near Jordan border. The thin line between humanitarian relief and welcoming asylums and refugees has challenged Turkey's supports to Asad opposition have ended with unpremeditated maintenance like Al-Nusra and Muslim brotherhood militias. (Doster 2013: 35) Obama missed the same nuance while the use of sarin gas

to civilians near Damascus that chemical weapons not only could be used by Asad power but also could be used by Al Nusra Front. (Hersh 2013)(Han 2013: 37)

Therefore contemporary analysis determined conflicted bilateral relations also affecting their contribution to humanitarian level that in some cases can be stay under the shadow of state interest. A constructivist analyze of Turkey-Syria relations in seeking for identity based ethno- religious effects clears our mind about the political decision construction in Turkish foreign affairs: "This pattern is duplicated between Turkey and Syria. There is a connection between Syria's crackdown on the Sunni opposition and its deteriorating relations with Turkey, while the Turkish government's support for the Free Syrian Army may be connected to Turkey's religious affinity with the Sunnis in Syria." (Akbaba, Özdamar 2013:127)

Hence in the parliament Republican people's Party opposition also resolute same kind analysis on Foreign policy issues that criticized the government for sectarianism in the region in sake of Sunni policies exampling Iraq and Syria policies in the region.(TBMM, 16 December 2012: 31) Hence Davutoğlu replied to these critics by emphasizing their difference of methodology with the opposition.

> "Today human history is passing rapidly, we are experiencing big historical changes: Our point of view is this: Turkey wants to be the subject of this changes, wants to determinant actor, and this country, this state, this nation, can't watch this changes like a usual subject…. Hence opposition criticized our position for refugees, we look to this issue under humanitarian values. You criticized our policy for opening our borders to Syrian brothers, that's why you look orientalist to the region.". (TBMM, 16 December 2012: 31)

As globalization became motivator for new wars (Kaldor 2010) that confronts with new humanitarianism (Weiss 2012) for the Syria issue, globalization became an important motivator and reflected a political economy part on Turkey-Syria relations. While Turkey's political relations turn negatively with Syria it is also reflected economically. Despite Turkey-Iran relations also been affected from Syria crises Turkey abandoned the sanction to Iran and continue energy trade with this country (Tür 2013: 174-175) Davutoğlu has separated this two issues for resisting against external pressures in the parliament. (TBMM, 10 December 2011: 80) In additionally opposition Peace and Democracy Party-Nazmi Gür have opened the topic of massive life lost in border cities and economical losses and also state the importance of being

an important actor in the region, in sake of several risks and concessions. Hence PDP have criticized the government for constructing hegemony in the region. (TBMM, 15 December 2013: 19) Also RPP spokesman Korutürk has asked how many people killed by the weapons that are sent to Syria. (TBMM, 15 December 2013: 45) In his replies Davutoğlu states their governments loyalty to democracy and their hostility against Asad regimes slaughters and blame the opposition for supporting Asad regime in the region.

Since these examples are only showing some part of the challenging issues in aspect of humanitarianism of Turkish foreign policy with Syria. By 2013 Turkey have declared his disengagement with Al Nusra and ISIS. JDP government have experienced Syria issue in her third term in power hence the multidimensional feature of the conflict have stimulated the critics much more on Turkey intends in humanitarianism. Generally cloudiness process for the humanitarian act by the states also affected Turkey's plans in the region that faced criticism. UN's involvement in the region and Turkey's problems in controlling the refugee camps are understandable problems that generally neighbor states can confront, though JDP government confront also challenges in this issue in her domestic policy especially with the new events on border cities. For example internal intervention of military to aid trucks going to Syria opposition, and the involvement of the government intelligence in the region, and intervention to judicial process are obscuring the transparency in the issue. In humanitarian level the weapon import can be highly problematic in the aid trucks that can be manipulated politically in foreign policy too.

Conclusion

Turkish Syria relations in aspects of humanitarianism have been building itself on its foreign policy heritage. The bumpy trend of Turkey Syria relations historically and the affect of Kurdish identities from Iraq to Syria are also adding new dimensions to these policies. Hitherto with the chemical weapon attack at 2013 summer have carried the tension for other Western countries too, which has passionately backed up by Turkish foreign policy for military intervention. Classical isolation and coercive policies in this sense were paused again by the UN Security Councils veto power Russia. In this case ICISS principles on R2P can be mentioned again for maintaining

more constructive and peace building policies as the new vehicles for new humanitarianism for Syrian civil war.

In this case Turkey's foreign policy is also a crucial example that is facing with new humanitarianism and new war challenge, which her implementations are directly politicized with short and long term expectations. Our suggestions for this policies is that Turkey must strictly follow international norms and ICISS principles about the main R2P principles before upgrading the tension in the region. We have to state that, Turkey's position is difficult for controlling the kind of new war in the region, though Turkey must also increase the transparency of the humanitarian act by increasing its neutrality with the fronts of the conflict, and empowering its monitoring mechanisms with IGO's and NGO's that will also make Turkey's aid policies more efficiently auditable.

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