

Iran's Diplomatic Behavior from the Revolution until the End of the War

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Abstract: The purpose of present study was to analyze Iran's diplomatic behavior from the revolution until the end of the war with emphasizing on the point that any country makes its foreign policy based on its time and place statuses which faces. Iran is similarly changed with regard to the changes and agreements. During the war for example, Iran's foreign policy was idealistic. In the other words, value-oriented discourse in its radical created opportunities to meet transnational purposes in the fields of political influence, ideological unity and the formation of spheres of influence in regional and international levels. The purposes led to meet national objectives and industrial-technological development, economic prosperity and in particular international reputation. After the revolution, the community-based discourse was turned in to an special discourse for maintaining Shiite Islamic heart dueto war and defend the country's territorial integrity and by this, the countries diplomacy behavior was shifted from one state to another. The behavior has been also investigated for other stages and periods.

Keywords: Foreign policy, diplomatic behavior, realism, idealism, Iran

INTRODUCTION

When a region is in a peace, predictable and secure position in the terms of political-economic-cultural situations, the countries of that region can make their policies for a long term and even can determine their own programs for next a few years and follow them. But when security changes such as war, economic sanctions and the dissemination of cultural deadly and are occurred, it is not possible to have a long term vision on the policies. Such stages are investigable for the case of Iran. While Ira's foreign policy was to create a unique Islamic nation, it had to change its behavior to keep its security due to the war and the alliance of neighboring countries (except Syria and Libya) with the Iraq which were supported by America and the Soviet Union. In that condition, Iran was to disrupt standards and norms in foreign policy and replace its desired order without considering the regime in the international arena. Of course, policies of the Islamic Republic after the revolution based on issuing the revolution sentence caused firstly political actors at the international level considered the Islamic Republic as a disruptive force against the world political order and secondly caused that many countries at the regional level considered it as a potential danger threatening their national security. That is why many countries, particularly Persian Gulf countries saw themselves vulnerable comparing to other countries.

Four dominating political discourses on Iran: During last thirty years, various ideas and discourses have been posed about Iran's foreign policy each of them have had

their own effect on its nature certain historical circumstances. Four of these discourses have been explained in this section. These four discourses are: interest-oriented discourse or realist, value-oriented discourse or idealist, benefit-oriented discourse or pragmatic and culturist discourse or policy-oriented.

Interest-oriented discourse or realist (1978-1979): This 9 month period in foreign policy of Iran was begun with the beginning of interim government ruling, when Mehdi Bazargan became prime minister and it was ended when United States of America embassy was captured by students following Imam and with Mehdi Bazargan's abdication. During this period, Iran's foreign policy was affected by the condition of the revolution and new demands of the people in one side and in the other side the interests of other countries were severely threatened because of revisionist nature of the revolution. It should be noted that since the decisions related to foreign policy are made according to the national interest, providing all the features and capabilities for national interest was superior to providing Islamic interests at that time. Meanwhile, the interim government was obliged to accept the supreme leader's addresses in its foreign policy. In other words, the interim government didn't have enough freedom neither in the internal affairs nor in the international arena. Decomposition of executive characters and decision-makers and the lack of complete dominance on the global situation and the rules governing international relations were among the other

restrictions which the interim government was faced. In general, the interim government's foreign policy in theory and practice and in a macro perspective was in a way that it tended to the west and was worried about the influence of east and was trying to attract foreign policies and improve relations with other states, especially with the United States of America, while anti-power nature of the revolution was aimed Shah and his main supporter i.e. the United States. This reason beside many other reasons and finally Bazargan's meeting with Brzezinski (Carter National Security Advisor) caused to his departure from the scene of politics.

Value-oriented discourse or idealist (1981-1989):

In value-oriented discourse which itself divided into two sub-discourses of community-centered idealist discourse and center-oriented idealist discourse, the foreign policy should be relied on the Islamic teachings and principles and Islamic ideals and values. During these years, the understanding and recognition of foreign policy decision-makers and implementers has been completely ideological. Value-based approach is based on the principles of traditional, abstract and moral values and its scope is beyond national interests. Since, the mid 90's and the middle of the Iran-Iraq war, the community-centered discourse was gradually turned to the center-oriented discourse with emphasizing on the necessity of defending the territorial integrity and preserving the Shia's Islamic heart influenced by internal problems and international pressure. At the same time, the revisionist orientation of making foreign policy in a school form and defend the ideals of Islam as the most important strategic priority has maintained its position on the foreign policy. In the other words while all countries, especially Iraq's neighbors were united in the war against Iran, a center was considered as the Islamic heart (Islam center) which maintaining and strengthening its security was supplying the entire Islamic world. In fact during the eight-year Iran-Iraq war, the dominating discourse strongly influenced by personal interests, i.e., the supreme leader and an ideology with are visionist orientation in foreign relations. For this reason, the basic concepts in the field of domestic politics and foreign relations were reviewed and re-defined. According to this discourse, the idealism not only should be institutionalized in Iran and held in the hegemonic position but also efforts must be done to make its range be defined beyond the geographic boundaries by creating several resistance centers against global hegemony and the multiplier seeking global system should be challenged. Velayati (1997), the minister of foreign affairs of that time who is one of the main actors of this discourse has

emphasized that: "Islamic State, not only master the effort to transform the foundations of the oppressive powers and unjust global relations but also the real and critical security would be achieved by these changes". During the years of 1981-1989, the Islamic Republic tried to disrupt standards and norms in foreign policy and replace its desired norms without considering the rules of international relations. In this regard, the new foreign policy of Iran addressed nations and was hoped to achieve the Islamic Revolution's goals by making relationships with nations (Rahmani and Saeb, 1996; Ramezani, 2001). The purposes of foreign policy at those years were: the plan of exploring Islamic Revolution, expressing the assumption of jihad in two cultural and military dimensions, developing the issue of anti-arrogance, awareness of poor nations and awareness of Muslim nations of the world, especially the nations of the Persian Gulf whom were more emphasized due to the cultural and religious commonalities. Foreign policy officials had hoped to the formation of a revolution as like revolutionary Iran's Islamic Revolution with the awakening of the nations in the region and led to overthrow of the governments of these countries. Following the policy of interference in the affairs of others led that firstly, actors of the international relations had considered Islamic Republic as a force to disrupt the world order and secondly, many countries at regional level had considered Iran as a potential danger and threatening national security. As a result, many countries, particularly Persian Gulf countries saw themselves more vulnerable than other countries and treated with caution in their relations with Islamic Republic.

This negative aspect of the foreign policy can also be observed in the Islamic Republic's relations with international organizations and in particular with the United Nations. Islamic Republic of Iran had presence in the United Nations only for being familiar with other government. The Islamic Republic has evaluated the veto right which was the monopoly of great powers incompatible with the system of "not east not west". In addition, since the Islamic Republic of Iran has considered this organization as a tool for legitimizing the decisions of the nations with veto, it had a kind of political mistrust on this organization and the illogical and wrong approach of the organization about Iran-Iraq war had intensified the mistrust. Hence, Iran tried to have no commitment to the decisions of the UN.

Interest-oriented discourse-economic reform

(pragmatic): Acceptance of Resolution 598 and the end of the Iran-Iraq war, revision of the constitution and the election of Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani as president in

one side and the collapse of the Soviet Union and its impact on international relations on the other sides were the factor effect on policy makers and executive decision-making process and how the thinking and practices of the country's elite on the major issues in both domestic and international levels. Financial and moral devastation of war and the problems arising from the issue of immigrants and prisoners of war, destruction of production facilities, reducing the national capital, economic siege and general economic instability and domestic political constraint severely threatened the existence of the Islamic Republic. Moreover, following extreme policy about international arrangements during 8 years war period had not supplied Iran's international revisionist demands. Gradually, government with compulsion accepted the realities of the international system and internal crisis situation affected by these factors and tried to have economic reform in order to regulate and improve the internal situation of the country. The main factor of this discourse was pragmatism in the formulation and implementation of foreign policy in compliance with Islamic values (Bakhshayeshi, 1996).

In fact, Iran's behavior at the scene of practical policy and foreign policy in the second decade of the revolution can be investigated based on national interests and regional arrangements and avoid incitement in the form of normalization policy (Rahmani and Saeb, 1996; Ramezani, 2001).

Although, political elites insisted on some aspects of idealism which their realization is only possible in certain condition but in a same time they tried for national interests and peaceful coexistence with accepting some elements of realism in foreign behavior. Apparently, the political elites accepted that the international community involves several civilizations with different heterogeneous cultures, ethos, races and nationalities and while all countries follow the principle of realism in their foreign policies, the best option is the policy of normalization, dialogue and communication. The necessity of turning the war economy to a free market economy and rebuilding the country needed to form a "construction" cabinet. In the other hand, transition from the ideological cabinet to the technocrat cabinet led to new understandings about explaining political concepts to elites. One of the concepts and the most important was discussion in the area of national interest. Among the results of Iran's new strategies for regional and international treats which has begun since 1989, one can refer to following the decisions and recommendations of the General Assembly and the Security Council of the United Nations, adopt a policy of supporting the sovereignty of Kuwait in its war against

Iraq, strive for unity with the moderate Arabs and identify Iraq as the aggressor in the war against Iran by the United Nations in December 1991. The most prominent objective of the policy of normalizing relations based on national security and understanding and recognizing the game rules was several meetings of President and Minister of Foreign Affairs with political figures and foreign countries. Hashemi Rafsanjani made 33 foreign trips during his two presidential terms which is approximately equal to a trip per season. The trips had significant effect on identifying the main actors in the international system and the introduction of Iran and its needs to other countries.

In short, the understanding of political elites about world politics was more geopolitical than ideological in the eight-year presidency of Hashemi Rafsanjani. For this, several efforts with flexible and pragmatic orientations were done to get Iran out of the political isolation which was imposed over the war with Iraq and to establish a strong Iran considered by international system.

Culturalist discourse or policy-oriented: After the seventh presidential elections in June 1997 and planning the programs of the new president Mohammad Khatami, expanding foreign relations and addressing the issues of foreign affairs in the context of relative realism approach should be continued with the difference that the manner of expression and ways of behaving and dealing with others was changed. Economic adjustment policies and giving way to the political development replaced with state-owned Industrial development and in foreign relations, the acceptance of pluralism with the means of rejecting the unipolar world and accepting the equality of cultures became the main axis of foreign policy.

In addition, an evolution was occurred in the discourse after June 1997, in a way that the proofed legitimacy was replaced with the negative legitimacy which meant avoid the enmity and aggressive and provocative slogans. According to the new political condition, new actors were needed to enter to political scene, at least in Executive Branch. Those who can provide the condition of more regulated community and the realization of civil society and also can make detente in the foreign policy relations by more relevant and more generalized factors in the national interest.

In fact, the new foreign policy tried to re-gain the lost international credibility. By following the policy, the Islamic Republic took essential steps towards dialogue with the outside world and detente with countries in the region and the world and increased its regional and international cooperation in the first four years of the presidency of Khatami.

The arrival of Khatami and even slight changes in the composition of the political box and Interior Ministry led to an evolution in the political behavior of the executive elites of the country. In previous discourses, enmity was a key element of foreign policy both in word and in behavior, foreign policy was a means for positioning characters and speaking about foreign relations was considered as a means to show courage and revolutionary people and to intimidate rivals and opposition parties but at this period, the discourse tried to avoid the rumors and provocative slogans and the main slogan was peaceful coexistence on foreign relations.

Other development in the political discourse is to critical examination of past values and norms. However, this development is also face with some limitations has not covered all areas and field but it is expected to have increasing development based on the behavior of a new generation in the process of social and political developments.

One of the most important developments can be seen on national security. Khatami could separate two issues of national security and foreign policy that had not previously been separated by following the policy of peaceful coexistence and recognition of global pluralism. Several trips of the President, Secretary and cabinet members to abroad and frequent meetings of presidents, prime ministers and important figures in European, Asian and African are examples of this situation of Iran. But some paradoxes and contradictions could be yet seen in the foreign policy of 4 first-year presidency of Mohammad Khatami despite of achieved advantages.

President claimed détente and dialogue between civilizations and nations while the conflict between the Arab-Israeli slogans and behaviors official circles were exactly contrary to the principles of détente. Yet, contrary to expectations Islamic Republic of Iran's relations with the United States of America could not be evaluated based on the criteria of national influence and the attitude of Iran's foreign policy toward America was still character-driven. Of course, Mohammad Khatami tried to solve the appeared contraries in foreign policies of Islamic Republic of Iran to benefit the Iran's community with greater realism in his second cabinet.

IRAN'S FOREIGN POLICY-MAKING PROCESS DURING THE WAR

The period of uncertainty and confusion (1980-1982): In this period, it was predictable that Iran's foreign policy has not had a coherent form due to the different tendencies within society and between the forces of conflict between the liberal led by Sadrand revolutionary

forces. In the other words, a kind of dichotomy was seen in the behavior of Iran's foreign policy which was caused by the mind dichotomy and conflict between the liberals and the revolutionary forces mind appeared in the form of supporting from the President (Bani-Sadr) and Prime Minister (martyr Rajai). It was while, the commander in chief was served by the president (Sadr) and solving problems caused by the Iraqi invasion of Iran such as refugees and the financing and arming of the armed forces was served by the government of martyr Rajai.

Finally, this period was ended by dismissal of Sadr from the commander in chief and presidency and the revolutionary thinking was dominated on foreign policy with his leaving the country and the marginalization of liberals and nationalists.

The fundamentalism period: The salvation of Khorramshar is a turning point during this period. Dominating of Imam Khomeini forces and the disappearance of dichotomy in Iranian domestic and foreign policy made it possible to prevent from Iraq's aggressions and a new phase in Iran's foreign policy was begun. In fact, the rudder of foreign policy which turned hand to hand previously was handled by Khomeini forever.

The changes in nature of war and stabilization of the internal situation in Iran and the subsequent military positions of Iran led to changes in Iran's foreign policy in this period, not only the foreign policy had more coherent form but also the actors of foreign policy gradually became more active in the international arena and the occurrence of two events caused more stimulation of Iran's foreign policy.

The first event was Israeli incursion into Southern Lebanon which intensified Iran's anti-Israel stance and led to practical steps in the fight against Israel and entering to Arabs and Israele quations. The second event was pushing back Iraq forces to the frontiers between the two countries and Iran's entry to Iraq's land. As a result, Iran began a new process of diplomatic moves using the new situation and seeks military presence in Lebanon and entry into Iraq. In particular, ties Syria and with Libya were strengthen and became doubly important in the context of modern diplomacy. These developments led to changes in the policies of regional and trans-regional actors in the Iran-Iraq. At the regional level, the countries that supported Iraq, backed Iraq more strongly and at the trans-regional level, United States which had pretend to neutrality until that time, openly began to support Iraq. In the meantime, the rotation position of the former Soviet Union was crucial. Until that time, The Soviet Union had suspended its military ties with Iraq, despite of Iran's

stance on developments in Afghanistan, changed its policy and resume arms sales to Iraq after Iran's entry into Iraq's land.

As it was mentioned, the above changes intensified anti-Iran measures of America and regional governments that supported Iraq. Americans did measures based on their understanding about the condition of the region and concerns about the consequences of Iran's victory in the war. Among the measures, one can refer to signing a contract with Turkey by which America could use Turkey's bases in the case of its intervention in the Persian Gulf. It can be also referred to France arms aid and financial support of Arab countries and the Soviet military cooperation.

The period of moderating the positions: At this period, Iraq supporters tried to prevent from ending of the war in favor of Iran and to end it without any victory. In this regard, the decisions of America and the Soviet Union were significantly important. Reagan administration tried to regain its credibility after his past failures and weaknesses such as the scandal of McFarlane and prevent from ending of the war in favor of Iran. Russians were also coordinated with the West with their opposition to the removal of Saddam Hussein and explicit stance against Iran and insisted on the necessity of ending the war.

According to the mentioned notes, a new period of pressure and offensive of regional and trans-regional countries began against Iran which was more regular and targeted compare to the past. In this step, economic pressures were peaked. The oil price reduction and lack of buying it from Iran were the major measures in this framework. European countries and Japan, the main buyers of Iranian oil has openly declared that were not willing to buy oil from the country until solving the problems with America (accepting the peace). Politically, in one side America and the Soviet tried to individually increase pressure on Iran within the framework of bilateral and multilateral meetings and in the other side, began their efforts to coordinate at the United Nations which the result was the Resolution 598. In the military sphere unlike the past, America directly got into a war with Iran in addition to the increase in military aid to Iraq. The peak of the invasion was to topple the Iranian Airbus. Finally, the pressures forced Iran to accept the Resolution 598.

IMAM KHOMEINI'S VIEWPOINTS

Thinking about the measures and foreign policy behaviors of Iran during the war shows that thoughts of Imam Khomeini have had a significant role in shaping the behaviors. His ideas on issues such as the nature and

objectives of the Islamic Revolution, the nature and structure of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the structure of Islamic state, the Islamic world and Islamic states, the structure of the international system and the major powers and the United States and his views about the nature of the Baathist regime and the Iraqi government have been considered as the most important intellectual and theoretical foundations of Iran's foreign policy during the war. The importance of these ideas in shaping the behavior is clearer in his strong influence among the people.

The leadership of Imam Khomeini proposed a new form of crisis management which can be named the charismatic political crises management. While in the systemic crisis management (common pattern in the world), acute problems and crises of internal and external political system are solved through actions and interactions of components and decision-making institutions especially the key elites-military and decision-making hierarchy, in so called management method, the internal and external crises are solved through the power and influence of a charismatic leader in the structure and decision-making process and also through successful mobilization of the masses.

Although, the pattern of systemic management was also used in management process of the 8 year war, management of Imam Khomeini had a major role in the development and administration of the war's affairs. Beside the administrative role of Imam Khomeini during the war, it is no doubt that his idea had the major role in forming Iran's foreign policy pattern during this period. In this period, the form of Iran's behavior and interaction with Iraq, as well as with regional and trans-regional powers, especially the United States was affected by the thoughts and ideas of Imam Khomeini.

RELATIONS BETWEEN IRAQ AND THE SOVIET UNION DURING THE EIGHT-YEAR WAR

Relations between Iraq and the Soviet Union during the war of Iran and Iraq included series of diplomatic and military support of the Soviet Union to the Iraqi Baath regime. The aids have been derived from common interests of Iraq and the Soviet Union in the Middle East and at a later stage, the international community. About 85% of the equipment used in Iraq during the Iran-Iraq war was made in the Soviet Union. The Soviet had been the largest exporter of equipment and military equipment to Iraq. In general, Soviet goals in helping Iraq deal with Iran can be summed up in a few overall achievements:

- Arms sales to Iraq and earn huge revenue through this way

- Before the Islamic Revolution, Iraq was belonged to the East Bloc (Soviet) and Iran belonged to the West Bloc (America). The Soviet Union imaged that Iran would be among the countries of the East Bloc with Iraq's overcoming
- Soviet rule intended to undermine the power and spirit of the 60 million Muslims in Russia and stop their power by overthrowing the Iranian Revolution (1978)
- Undermine Afghan militant groups and depriving them from the assistance of the Islamic Republic of Iran and divert public opinion from the crimes of the Soviet Union in Afghanistan
- Showing modern Soviet weapons in the Iran-Iraq war to gain more share of the global market for weapons

On the one hand, the Resolution 598 was a privilege for Iran that previously it was not raised before and on the other hand, it would provide the opportunities to military confrontation with Iran. Islamic Republic with such an understanding of the objectives of the Security Council, conditionally accepted Resolution 598 with emphasis on the will of America to direct military intervention in the war. Iran's Foreign Ministry called for the replacement of paragraphs 1 and 6 together. Paragraph 1 of resolution demanded the immediate cease-fire from both sides and paragraph 6 wanted the Secretary-General to investigate the question of entrusting an impartial body with inquiring into responsibility for the conflict by consulting with Iran and Iraq and then, report it to the Security Council. In the front, was superior and the country wished a resolution that consider this superiority. Resolution 598 was not fully approved the Islamic Republic's comments. To achieve this goal, Iran's foreign policy negotiated on Resolution 598 more active than in the past. The audience of Iran for this target was Europe that had extended the relations with Iran after the open-door policy. In the meantime, West Germany and Italy had better position. Moreover, the first priority of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was to have close relations with China and gaining support from the Soviet Union to influence the decisions of the Security Council. By this way, Iran also sought to thwart the pressures of war and the political pressures caused by the acceptance of Resolution 598 and America arms embargo.

CONCLUSION

Although, the constitution has defined the framework of foreign policy, it has not ever been reached a

consensus about the nature and determinants of foreign policy among experts and political analysts. Anyone offers different and sometimes contradictory assessments based on different attitudes and approaches and the behavior of Islamic Republic with the outside world has been investigated with the help of theories in international relations and finally different results obtained. Many idealistic researchers consider an ideological nature to the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran and finally have no believe in changing of foreign behavior of the Islamic Republic during last three decades. In this way, four steps can be distinguished, each of them with different strategies which have coexistence with each other. In the first period, domestic and international revolutionary situation made the interim government to turned pragmatism in order to provide internal stability. Iranian diplomacy adopted defense-response policy with the start of the war Iraq and bottlenecks caused by it and the centrality of religion. Following the absolute idealism didn't seek realities rather than it tried to form them. Thus, it faced with fundamental problems both in theory and in practice. Gradually, the theory of establishing an Islamic center and maintaining the honor of Islam became the basis of foreign policy behavior affected by changes in international and the social conditions and domestic economic crises. In general, the foreign policy of Islamic Republic has an exclusive mode in the terms of structurally, geographical, socio-political and policy makers and implementers attitude in the international system and the role of the main actors in the the decision-making process and implementation of foreign policy. For this reason, the purpose of present study was to provide a scientific multi-causative analysis which able to explain the foreign policy's successes and failures with evaluating the principles, policies, structure, process and characteristics of the perpetrators of diplomacy. In the other words, its purpose was to answer to the following question: what is the nature and objectives of the foreign policy? And which is the failure of diplomacy in the realization of national interests? This general question includes answering to the other secondary questions: what type of discourses and approaches Islamic Republic of Iran's foreign policy is following? Given the globalization of culture and the economy, how and to what extent the international system, especially in the economic dimension of foreign policy impacts? What is the orientation of corporate and organizational changes in Iran's diplomatic apparatus? And what are the characteristics of high-ranking officers of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs? Seeking the factors influence the decision-making process and implementation of foreign

policy is one of the most important issues has been long considered by analysts of international issues. In the other words, several variables have effect on the procedure of foreign policy including beliefs, geopolitical conditions, structure and nature of the international system, population and its composition, the requirements of society, culture and characterization of the main executor of foreign policy. The study beside acceptance of all the variables in the decision-making process and implementation of foreign policy emphasizes on the nature and role of the international system and organizations and the main author and senior Foreign Ministry.

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