

A Geopolitical Analysis of Iran and Armenia Relationship Based on the Thomas Anderson Theoretical Framework and a Plan for a Regional Integration after the Process of Normalization of Turkey- Armenia Relationship

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Extended Abstract

Introduction

Foreign policy takes root from complicated matters. However, this issue may be more truth about Armenia. Although the new government of Armenia is less than 20 Years, people of this territory are the first ones who officially accepted Christianity. In very past times, these people were a part of great Emperors like Iran, Rome and Byzantium. Armenia regarded as a nation with a privileged history and a unique identity. Being as a state, it regarded as a small government that is not even able to provide its own security. They have some distinctive characters that it could be truly said, "They are neither an eastern nation nor western.

Although the mechanism of foreign policy of Iran emphasized on the identity and religion but Iran has never regarded Christian country of Armenia as, enemy, which from Armenian's point of view holds high significance. Whereas, from Turks and Azeri's point of view the Armenians always been regarded as, enemy. Armenian strategic approach toward Iran is less about history but more of practical necessity. Armenia's relations with Iran have driven by the need for an outlet from the East-West blockade of Armenia.

Specially, this article talks about political and environmental compulsions of Armenia, religious isolation among Muslims and its entanglement in geographical region. The main subject in this research is to find out which of these foundations influenced on foreign policy of Armenia.

Methodology

This article investigates the relationship between Iran and Armenia, by using Thomas Anderson's geopolitical analysis method. Anderson's model is a geopolitical method for investigating small countries foreign policy by taking in to consideration the role of their

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big neighbors.

Anderson's model consists of three stages which provide the possibility of an accurate analysis of the geopolitical situation of Armenia as well as a good understanding of the country's foreign policy towards Iran and Turkey. Using Anderson's model Iran and Armenia's foreign policies were examined with regard to the three main frameworks of historical references, geographical conflict and current geopolitical situations.

Results and Discussion

The historical memory of the Armenian's Massacre and its pursuance for formation of relations of this Republic and Turkey was an important hindrance, such that during the period of Kocharian the relations of the two states comedown, discussion regarding to Massacre of Armenian and its impact over the diminished relations of Armenia and Turkey is one of the reasons of Armenia's tendency towards Iran, because Armenia has always been trying to escape from Isolation. Contrary to Armenian's bitter memory from Turkey in 1915, during the history, Iranians has always been maintained as a good relation with Armenia (Historical references in Thomas Anderson's geopolitical analysis method).

Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is another issue having impression over the foreign policy of Armenia. Iran had always supported self-determination of karabakh (geographical conflict in Thomas Anderson's geopolitical analysis method).

Another reason is Geographical limitation. Armenia is a poor country in the field of Energy Resources. By contrast, Iran has massive energy reserves. For providing energy the Foreign policy of Armenia orientated towards Iran. Also Armenia is a small country, having tendency towards Iran due to three reasons:

- Reliable route to have access to global markets;
- Small countries' restricted security and attempts to solve them by maintaining relations with bigger powers;
- Escape from the isolation environment (current geopolitical situations in Thomas Anderson's geopolitical analysis method).

Conclusion

The conclusions are discussed in several parts.

1. Historical references;
2. Geographical conflict;
3. Current geopolitical situations;
4. Regional integration.

Iranian historical behavior towards Armenians has always been fair and this fair behavior has had significant effects on the establishment of a close relationship between the two countries. On the other hand, Iran had always supported self-determination of karabakh and Armenia has always been appreciative of Iran's mediation. Regarding the lack of energy resource in Armenia, Iran has always been a main Provider of energy for Armenia.

By taking into consideration the necessity of regional integration, the other result of this study indicates that the normalization of the relationship among Turkey and Armenia can bring positive effects for Iran.

Normalizing relations as for the needs of regional integration could be considered as a positive point for Iran. In the past which the relations of Iran and Turkey was not positive in terms of politic and publicity, The trilateral cooperation of Iran, Armenia, and Greece could

cut the pressure imposed by Turkey over Iran, but in recent months, turkey has remarkably expanded its economical, political and cultural relations with Iran. Therefore, it seems necessary that the reconciliation policy could proceed towards multilateral integration in the region, so that this country is trying to get Azerbaijan along in this procedure besides supporting the process of reconciling. It would be a type of convergence, in which besides four countries of Iran, Turkey, Armenia, and Azerbaijan, countries such as Iraq, and Lebanon to be concluded. All the mentioned countries are having some commonalities with each other. On one hand, Iran and Turkey are benefiting from good a relation, which was unprecedented after the success of Islamic Revolution till yet. On the other hand, turkey has modified its relation with Israel, which is necessary for this kind of integration.

Generally, it could be said that because of the relatively strong position of the current government of Turkey, not only the outset of Turkey and Armenia's relations is not harmful for the Islamic Republic of Iran, but also it is beneficial and helpful if it is used to achieve regional integration.

Keywords: Geopolitics, Anderson Model, Regional Integration, Armenia, Iran, Turkey, Azerbaijan, Karabakh.

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