ORTA DOĞU’NUN KAOS VE KOMPLEKS ORTAMINDA POLİTİKA OLUŞTURMA

Özet


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INTEREST-BASED POLICY MAKING IN CHAOS AND COMPLEX ENVIRONMENT OF MIDDLE EAST

Abstract

How policy making in Middle East is complex and how different countries like Iran, Turkey and Israel shape their foreign policy toward a common crisis of region. How interest-based policymaking can be helpful in survival in chaos and complex regions like Middle East. In the first section, Characteristics of chaos and complex situations will be analyzed and in the second section how policy making in these environments can be different from other environments and in the third section comparison is done among three foreign policies of three different
countries toward Syrian crisis and at last how interest based based foreign policy in chaos complex situation provides survival in chaos and complex regions.

**Key Words:** Public Policy Analysis, Public Policy Making Procedures, Interest-based Policy Making, Chaos and Complex Environments, Butterfly Effect

I. Chaos Complexity and Public Policy Making

Chaos complexity theory opened a new way of thinking and analysis for public policy making. Decision making and public policy making in chaos systems is made based on present, past, and future rather than logical definable rules. In chaos contexts searching for the right answer would be pointless because no linear relationship exists among elements. The events of 11 September fall in to this category.\(^2\) Also European Union uses complexity science methods in order to recognize regions which are prone for social and political instability.\(^3\)

Public policy making in a complex environment includes multiple facets and multiple actors and agents, which requires different tools and methods. Moreover, policymaking is a complex attempt that consisted of different methods strategies and actors. Furthermore, mathematical models are not satisfactory for solving unpredictable problems in complex and chaotic environments.\(^4\)

Can bureaucratic organizations act properly in chaotic situations? Bureaucratic systems in which hierarchy, structure, formality, and stability exists cannot be a proper organizational system to deal with flexible and fluctuating situations. Real world is not limited just with fact-based and cause and effect relations. Modern world or postmodern world cannot be considered as a clear, stable with a cause and effect relationships that are discernable for everyone.

The job of the public policy maker in chaos situation is to stanch bleeding and a rapid response can be desirable. To survive in chaotic and complex situations, stability, order, and structure are not sufficient. Linear and hierarchic organizations cannot survive in chaotic situations. Moreover, those who avoid transformation in chaos and complex situations will not be able to survive. Self-adjusting, self-regulating and self-corrective systems have chance to survive.

II. Public Policy Making in Chaos and complex environment like Middle East

How chaos complexity theory can be helpful in Middle East policy making process? Rene Descart, who first articulated the fundamentals of modern scientific method of inquiry, claimed that complex systems cannot be understood by analyzing its components and their relationships with each other.\(^5\)

Traditionally, research was done on closed, linear, predictable environments. But in a global world everything is connected to each other and finding independent variables may be impossible. In a global world which nonlinearity, disorder, unpredictability and turbulence are

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\(^5\) Massimo, Pigliucci, “Chaos and Complexity, Should we be skeptical?”, *Skeptic*, volume.8, No:3, 2000,s.62-70.
important characteristics, cause and effect solutions are not satisfactory. In chaotic contexts, causes are interrelated and consequently the whole problem is greater than sum of its parts.\(^6\)

Public policy making in a chaos world in which turbulence, disorder, randomness, unpredictability is dominant, traditional methods of analysis in which whole is aggregation of its parts cannot be satisfactory. For policy analysis and policy making in chaotic world, traditional methods are not responsive. Chaotic environment needs accelerated resolution, which accompanied with innovative and creative methods.\(^7\)

Public policy making in a chaotic region like Middle East, in which relationships are nonlinear, unpredictable, random, and irregular is difficult. There are different definitions of Middle East region. According to traditional definition Middle East is a region that roughly encompasses Western Asia. Middle East region encompasses countries like Bahrain, Cyprus, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Turkey, Gaza Strip, Iraqi Kurdistan, Northern Cyprus, State of Palestine, United Arab Emirates, Yemen are the countries which are located in the Middle East region. State of Palestine, Northern Cyprus, Iraqi Kurdistan and Gaza Strip are not recognized but they are located in the Middle East.\(^8\)

Other greater definitions for Middle East have included regions like Afghanistan, Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Comoros, Djibouti, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kirgizstan, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Pakistan, Somalia, Sudan, Tajikistan, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Saharawi Arab Republic (not recognized).

Middle East during history was an important region for many countries and many religious groups. Most spiritual religions come out in this region. Examples can be Islam, Judaism, and Christianity. On the other hand, Middle East is a center for oil production. Most of the OPEC members are located in this region. Moreover, this region is a strategic region which had a significant effect in the world policies.

Middle East’s three non-Arabic countries are Turkey, Israel, and Iran. During 2012, this region evidenced significant conflicts like Egypt’s revolution, Syria’s unrest, Iran’s nuclear problems, and Israel’s attack to Gaza strip.

The world’s important conflicts born in this region and they distribute to the rest of the world. As mentioned before, Middle East as oil producer region, affects the rest of the world. The crisis in this region causes oil price to increase.

According to butterfly effect \(^9\) in chaos theory, flapping of butterfly wings in one region can cause natural disaster in other parts of the world. Middle East region as a strategic region has effect on the rest of the world. Middle East can be supposed as a region with many butterflies, which many movements happen. The movements and conflicts in this region affect the rest of

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the world. Conflicts and unrests in this region cause increase in oil prices and affects the economy of the world.

The conflicts which emerged in Middle East affected the rest of the world. According to Darwin’s Evolution theory, if a system wants to survive in a chaos and complex environments, it should change and adapt to the changing environment. If there is resistance to the change, the resistant particle may not survive. Chaos and Complex systems consist large number of elements that have nonlinear interactions adopt and change can survive. Change and reform are obligatory components for survival in modern world and postmodern world.

In policy making strategic region of Middle East and policies related to this region have power to affect the rest of the world. In public administration of countries like Iran, Turkey and Israel, policy making without considering changing environment can cause distortion of the whole system. The countries and administrations which consider the changing and complex systems while making a policy are more successful than those countries which resist to the change.

III. COMPARING INTEREST-BASED POLICY MAKING

In a changing world different actors and different factors plays role in policymaking and achieving the most interest from the policies. In policy making most of the countries try to provide interests of their countries. However, interests change as actors behave differently in the changing environments. Countries who consider their own interests in the changing world and give priority to their interests in a chaotic world can survive in a chaotic and complex environments.

In order to clarify how interest-based policy making we would compare how different countries reacted toward a crisis and whether their attitude or reaction was interest-based or not and interest-based policy making guarantied their long term interests.

In 2012 in Middle East region, Syrian crisis emerged. Different countries interpreted this crisis in a different manner. Iran called this crisis as rebellious against central government and considered this as in internal issue that other countries are not allowed to interfere in it. However, Syrian-Iranian ties were not like others and Iranian-Syrian governments had long cooperation with its ally in the region. This cooperation and friendship goes back to old days of Iran-Iraq that Iran was under global sanctions and pressures and Hafez Asad helped Iran in the days that Iran was alone in its obligatory fight with Iraq. In addition, Iran wanted to extend its Shia belt through Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon. This Shia belt has strategic importance for Iran. Moreover, Iran has family ties, religious ties and common interests with Shia groups in these countries and attempts not to lose these old strategic ties with its neighbors.

Iran has Kurdish and Turkish minorities like Syria and Iraq and protecting these minorities in Syria and Iraq cannot provide advantages for Iran. Because if Iraq and Syria motivate and stimulate these minorities in Iran to rebel. Iran may lose its security and stability. Therefore, to sum up strategic interest of Iran is to have stability neighbors in its surrounding region.

Iran doesn’t have neutral attitude toward Syrian crisis and defended the interests of central government moreover helped the central government to repress the rest of the society. Issues like democracy, human rights, and rights of minority are not important matters for Iran. If a
dictatorship be in the region and this dictatorship provide stability in the region and neighboring countries is more preferable for Iran than instable but democratic Syria.

Turkey had completely different attitude and reaction toward Syrian crisis and considered this as a humanitarian crisis that violated human rights. Turkey doesn’t consider Syrian crisis as in internal crisis which is not related to Turkey.

Turkey and Syria before this crisis ignite had friendly relationship and AK party leaders had visited capitals of each other and before Syrian crisis start this relationship was at the best situation but As Bashar Asad violated human rights and killed its own people this attitude changed. At first Turkey was surprised but when it saw violation of human rights is moving to intolerable situation changed its attitude.

Turkey as an open country, which had wide borders with Syria, did not remain silent and neutral toward this humanitarian crisis. Turkey helped these wounded, helpless people who have escaped from despotism and repression. Turkey along with Europe and United state condemned central government of Bashar Asad for violation of human rights and bombardment of its own nation. As humanitarian crisis increased in Syria, Turkey did not close its eyes and its borders toward these people who had fled from violent situation and sometimes supported military groups who were fighting for liberty.

Turkey stopped its relationship with Syrian government and cooperated with EU, US and UN in Syrian crisis and didn’t remain indifferent toward murder of different ethnic groups and Sunnis and condemned central government of inhuman and violent behavior toward their own people who had just democratic requests for improvement of quality of their life.

Turkey didn’t interpret crisis according to its own interests. It didn’t call the groups who were against central government of Bashar Asad as rebellion. Turkey considered them as innocent people who fought for democratic rights against a cruel central regime of Bashar Asad, which had lost its legitimacy in the eyes of international system and its own nation.

Israel unlike Turkey and Iran had a different attitude toward Syrian Crisis. Israel and Syria had quarreling about Jolan mounts and there were disagreement about these mountains. There were not fight between Syria and Israel at the time that Syrian crisis started also there were not that much hot relationship between two countries.

Israel remained neutral toward Syria and continued its neutral and indifferent attitude toward Syrian crisis. Indifferent and silent toward this crisis. It didn’t protect overthrown of central government. Also It didn’t protect central government in repressing the rest of the society. Comparing these three different countries and their different interests in the region and their positive, negative and neutral attitude toward central government in Syria and taking different policies toward to the same phenomena shows us how policy making in chaos and complex regions like middle east can be so complicated.

Policy making in chaos and complex situations like Middle East cannot be done just with a linear analysis of environment. Static and linear methods do not seem to be satisfactory for complex and uncertain situations. As environments and conditions change, behaviors and policies need to be changed. Interest based policy analysis can be helpful in survival in complex situations.
To clarify we can consider Middle East as wings of butterfly which crisis in this region cause change in the rest of the world. In other words; policies which are made in this region have the capacity to affect the whole world. Middle East wars and conflicts in this region can affect the world. Strategic region of Middle East was the birthplace for many religions. This region was the birthplace of many revolutions, terrorist groups and wars. In the global world everything is affected. For example, the soldiers who return to their homes they take mental problems of this war with themselves to their hometown.

As mentioned before, Middle East is place where different ethnic and religious people live. For example nothing is independent in the global world is Arab spring. During Arab spring, revolutions like contagious illnesses spread in the world.

Many terrorist groups like Al-kaide are born in this region. In a global village, multi-lateral relationships can be viewed among elements. According to Matthew Mingues as cited in Jeffery Weber, policy issues network have jumped out of national borders in other words, policy issues have caused complex interrelationships. The researchers on the chaos complexity area like Kiel, Göktüg Marşal, Jack Meek and William Newell have agreed upon three integrative research techniques for this area.

The first one is extension, in which narrow concepts are broadened. The second one is to replace static, the third one is to recognize independent variables may transform to dependent variables. In the complex and uncertain world solving multiple paradigm problems using linear methods doesn't seem to be satisfactory. As Turkey’s analysis of policies toward syrian crisis clarified that linear or one to one analysis are not satisfactory in policy making in complex and chaos environment like middle east.

Supporting minitory groups who were kurdish minorities and sunni arabs. Moreover, open borders when there is fight in neighboring country cant garanty interests of Turkey. The same can happen in Turkey and that can cause over thrown of the central system in Turkey too.

Violence and instability are like wings of butterfly in the middle east and they can spread pervasively in a short period of time. As a result, nonlinear and complex features play roles in the global world and administering these changing features need flexible and dynamic policies. To sum up, making an interest based adaptive policy making in chaotic situations, where no linear and predictable conditions are dominant, can be helpful for survival of systems.

It shouldn’t be ignored that violence and instability are like contagious illnesses which are pervasive and spread like the movements of the wings of the butterfly and they can cause storm in our region. Movements of wings of butterfly in Syria can cause stormy weather in Ankara in Turkey.

In other words it should be mentioned that multi-faceted analysis of crisis based on long term interest in chaotic complex situations where crisis spread so fast like movements of the wings of butterfly can be more beneficial.

CONCLUSION

At the end, we should mention that decision and public policy making in a chaos situation where no linear and predictable situation exists, adaptive policies that consider changing conditions and situations are more competent for survival. In addition, countries which consider multi-faceted interests of their countries in policymaking can be more successful in crisis management and avoid distribution of these contagious instabilities and violent environments to their region.

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