

A Theoretical Model for Evolution of Geopolitical Region

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(Chief Editor's Note)

Region as a geographical concept is a part of the earth surface with homogeneous particulars, which is distinct from the other regions according to the structural and functional particulars. All regions may be water based, land based or combination from both of them, and can be on various scales, from lake or peninsula to ocean or continent (Hafeznia, 2004: 65-71).

Geographical regions are under the influence of political factors, so the nature of region can change to geopolitics with a dynamic process (Hafeznia, 2006:111).

Political dynamism of the geographical region, push it to follow five phases as under:

- **First phase:** The existence of a pure homogeneous geographical region as the spatial framework for political processes.
- **Second phase:** Coming into existence of a geopolitical region. In This phase some or all geographical elements or values of the region attract the attention of political players such as states or governments. In other words, geographical elements and the values of the regions find a special position in the goals, interests and strategy of political players.
- **Third phase:** Appearance and development of a geopolitical structure in the region. In this phase, the political players according to their

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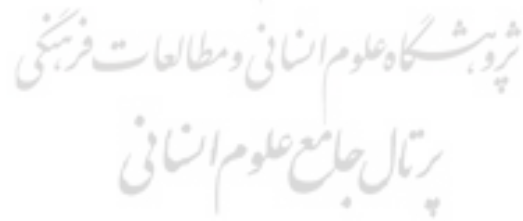
perception from the importance of the values and elements and also their ability, comparing with the other players, start their actions and struggles for the control of values in the region, direct or indirect. They try to keep away their rivals or competitors from access to the region and its values as well.

In the light of such process, all players from inside and outside the region becomes very active for competition, struggle, control and influence. So a various patterns of competition, convergence, divergence, cooperation and conflict among the local, regional and global players come into existence on the region. This situation reflects a set of networks of the relations or connections among players in the region, that here is named geopolitical structure. This is too dynamic and changeable from convergence to divergence and vice versa. The third phase can be continued for a long time, and to some extent related to the function of diplomacy.

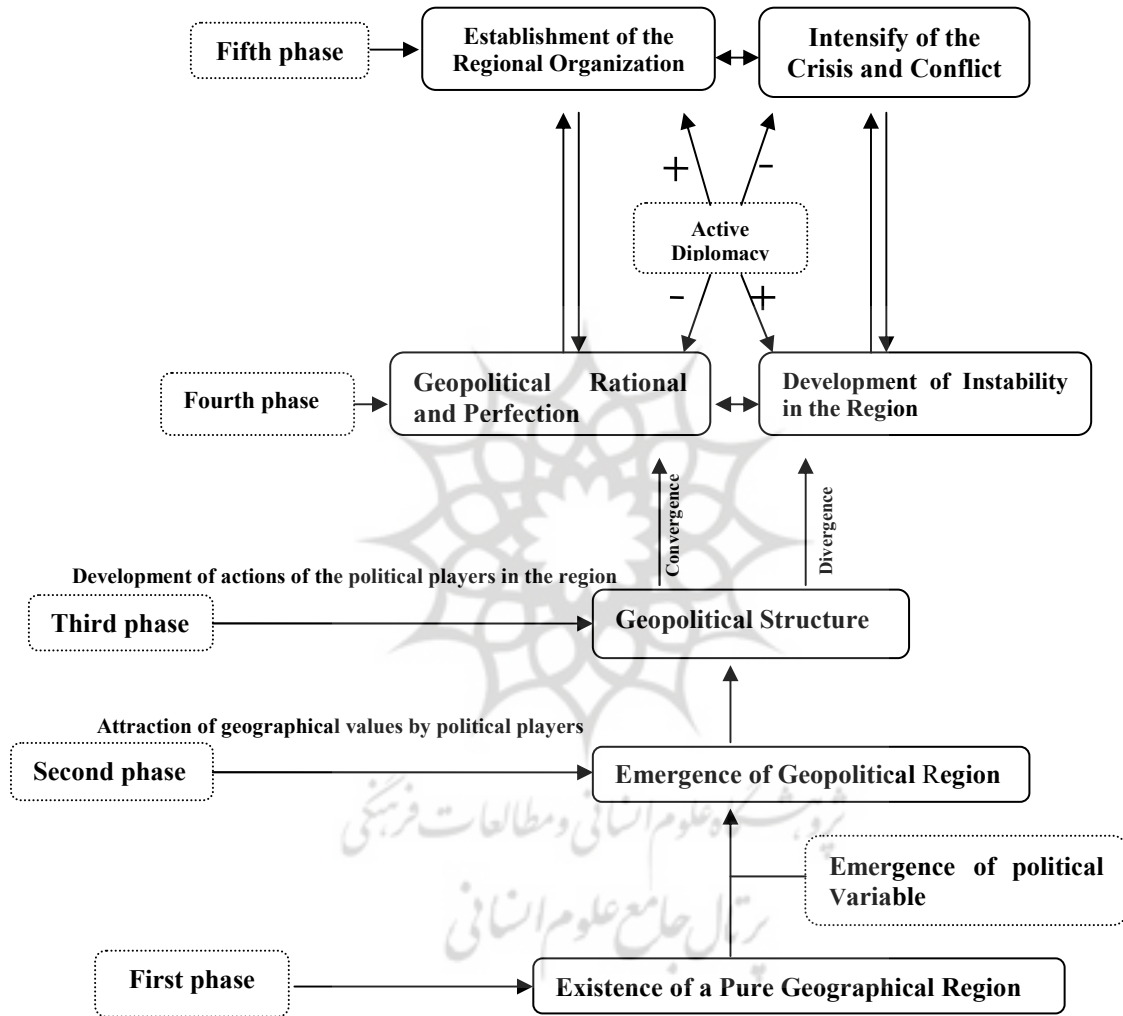
- **Fourth phase:** In this phase region is situated on two ways. 1- Domination of the convergence forces and development of cooperation among the players in the region. 2-Domination of divergence forces and development of instability and competition in the region. It is obvious that the role of diplomacy is very important. If the diplomacy play a positive role, the region will move to convergence and cooperation, and the political players reach to common understanding that attain to their goals and interests is possible in the light of stability and cooperation. So the region comes into the situation of geopolitical rational and perfection. On the contrary, if the diplomacy plays a negative role, the region will move to divergence and competition, so instability and dispute will develop in the region.
- **Fifth phase:** This phase is the output of double situation of fourth phase. On the basis of domination of convergence forces, the political

players (states) decide to formulate their cooperation in the form of legal and political mechanism. So regional and international organization come to establish, and integration and cooperation develop officially. The output of such situation would be stability, security, peace, development and so on in the region (for example EU). On the contrary, if instability and dispute develop, the crisis and conflict will intensify, and may culminate in the war throughout the region (for example Persian Gulf).

Anyhow the situation of the region to some extent related to the mind and role of political players and diplomacy as well. So, the situation of the region may change and return to the previous phases. For example from stability to instability and vice versa. The following model, presents the process of evolution of a geopolitical region.



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Model from: Hafeznia Mohammad Reza(Ph D), Tarbiat Modares University, Tehran, 2011.