



CHAPTER 15

**HOW DOES THE CONCEPT OF
'HUMAN SECURITY' TRAVEL BEYOND THE
CORE? THE POLITICS OF THEORIZING
HUMAN SECURITY IN TÜRKİYE**

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Abstract

This paper examines how human security as an analytical concept has traveled beyond Western Europe and North America. Human security analysis is vital in other parts of the world, such as Asia. This article questions the political implications of the concept and theoretical construct of human security used in academic studies. While previous research has focused on the political-normative aspects of the theorization of human security, these studies have ignored the political implications of international understandings of the theorization. The study shows that a hierarchical understanding of the international shapes the political repercussions of theorizing human security beyond the core. It does so by using Edward Said's notion of traveling theory. The study analyses studies on human security published by scholars from Türkiye between 2017 and 2023, most of which focus on the refugee issue. Google Scholar and Türkiye's national academic databases (ULAKBİM and Dergipark) are used to collect data, and a detailed content analysis of the articles is conducted. This content analysis reveals how the subject, actor, and reference object of human security are defined in the analyzed studies while revealing international understandings. As a result, the study shows how introducing the concept of human security in Türkiye, due to the international understanding of these studies, often excludes the region's people and their security concerns, thus preventing change. This finding is crucial as it shows how a top-down perspective on human security is prominent among scholars outside the core.

Keywords

Human Security, Travelling Theory, Edward Said, Türkiye, Critical Human Security Studies

Introduction

Human security is one of the most debated concepts in the public and academic spheres. Although some argue that the concept is no longer practical, international actors and scholars have continued to use and expand the human security agenda, which addresses environmental, food, and health security issues in addition to armed conflicts (Kaldor, 2020). Criticisms of human security have been expressed in two main ways. One is related to the lack of a clear definition of the concept (Breslin & Christou, 2015). This criticism has developed from the debate on the narrow and broad definition of human security. The other criticism comes from the discussion created by critical security scholars on whether human security has an emancipatory potential to change the traditional understanding of security (Newman, 2016; Peoples, 2020).

The concept of human security emerged in United Nations forums during the Cold War. The concept was first used in disarmament arguments that argued for a shift in focus from state security to human security (Acharya, 2001). Later, in the United Nations Human Development Report, human security was proposed as a concept that prioritizes human security over the prevalent state-centered security approach (UNDP, 1994). As a continuation of this development, there have been debates in both academic and policy-making circles on whether the concept of human security should be narrow or broad (Paris, 2004; Owen, 2004). The broad definition of human security continues along the security-development line (CHS, 2003). According to this definition, human security should also encompass insecurity related to issues that constrain human life, such as housing and education ("freedom from want"). Those advocating a narrow definition of human security ("freedom from fear"), such as Canada and Norway (and their joint initiative, the Lysoen Declaration), emphasize that human security should target the insecurities experienced by individuals in conflict and post-conflict settings, and define human security as the protection of people from physical violence.

In addition to this debate on the narrow or broad definition of human security, another point of contention is whether it is a new security paradigm and how it differs from the traditional understanding of state security. Some studies emphasize the importance of the concept in understanding new transnational security threats (Thomas & Tow, 2002; Tadjbakhsh & Chenoy, 2007; Pettnam, 2005). According to Thomas and Tow (2002), human security can become significant in analyzing security problems that transcend state borders and have international significance, as it offers an alternative perspective to the traditional understanding of security. Despite the view that human security may provide a new paradigm, there are also studies among critical security scholars who argue that the concept of human security does not stray far from the basic assumptions of traditional security approaches (Bellamy & McDonald, 2002; Newman, 2010; Nuruzzaman, 2006; Chandler, 2008; Christie, 2010).

Both debates are based on certain assumptions about the relationship between theory and politics. Critical approaches to human security have often analyzed this relationship through limited or broad definitions of human security and its policy implications (Newman, 2016). How critical human security scholars understand the relationship between theory and politics, and how some studies have opened the gap between critical security studies and policy-oriented human security is also a matter of debate (Hynek & Chandler, 2011). The political implications of the human security concept, which is the focus of this study, have yet to be analyzed sufficiently. The study questions how the concept of human security is analytically used in non-core contexts and the political implications of its use. As Bilgin states, how a concept is used in other parts of the world is essential for understanding its political effects (Bilgin, 2011). There is a debate in the IR literature on how human security policies are used in different parts of the world (Acharya, 2001; de Simone, 2019; Hudson, 2005). However, this discussion needs to cover how the concept of human security is used by scholars in different parts of the world and the political implications of the use.

Human security scholars play essential roles in the politics of human security. Critical human security studies focus on how the theorization of human security enables specific political and security understandings that are inclusive or exclusive. Moreover, scholars as securitizing actors can securitize everyday issues of insecurity through normative concerns (Newman, 2016). Previous research has mainly focused on these political-normative implications of theorizing human security.

A relatively understudied aspect is the need for a systematic analysis of the understandings of international that shape scholars' human security analyses. 'International' understandings include historical meanings of the place of states and other subjects in the world and how scholars assess that place. International understandings also include assumptions about security (Bilgin, 2016). Analyzing how 'international' understandings shape theorizing human security is essential to address these assumptions about security and its political implications. In this context, the article contributes to the critical human security literature by analyzing the case of Türkiye.

Using Said's traveling theory approach, this article analyses studies on human security published by scholars from Türkiye between 2017 and 2023, focusing on the refugee issue. Google Scholar and Türkiye's national academic databases (ULAKBİM and Dergipark) are used to collect data, and a detailed content analysis of research articles and internationally published book chapters is conducted. This content analysis reveals how the subject, actor, and reference object of human security are defined in the analyzed studies while revealing their international understandings. The study shows that a hierarchical understanding of international shapes the political implications of theorizing human security beyond the core.

The study consists of three parts. The first part focuses on the debate on the political implications of human security theorizing. This section reveals that the political implications of theorizing human security are often discussed in political-normative terms, but the international dimension needs to be added to this discussion. The second section explains Edward Said's notion of traveling theory and why this method is vital for the analysis of the study. This part also outlines how the content analysis used to analyze the studies will be conducted. The third section shows how the international understandings of human security scholars from Türkiye shape their conceptualization of human security (defining the subject, actor, and referent object of human security) and its political implications.

Three Ways of Addressing the Political Effects of Theorizing Human Security

Ole Wæver (2011) presented three ways of discussing the political effects of theorizing security and analyzed the securitization theory. These are the emancipatory position of the theory, the philosophical underpinnings of the theory, and the political reflections of the theory's structure. The emancipatory position of a theory emphasizes that a theory must have a specific politico-normative stance and that this stance provides strategies that allow for political judgment by scholars. The philosophical reflections of a theory, on the other hand, show that a theory has philosophical premises and argue that the political effects of a theory depend on how these premises are inferior to more 'progressive' philosophical positions (Wæver, 2011, p. 467). On the other hand, the political reflections of a theory's structure focus on the political effects of the features of the theory (Wæver, 2011, p. 468). The article will use these three insights to show how the political effects of theorizing human security have been discussed. This analysis reveals that while political effects are often considered in political-normative terms, scholars' international understandings need to be captured in analyzing the political implications of theorizing human security.

Critical human security scholars mainly analyzed the political effects of theorizing human security based on the emancipatory position of the concept. Scholars have specific political-normative standards for making political evaluations to understand their emancipatory positions. In critical human security studies, emancipatory and feminist approaches discuss the political effects of theorizing human security in specific political-normative standards and how specific human security strategies can be developed in real life (Richmond, 2007; Richmond, 2011; Gilmore, 2011; Hoogensen & Stuvoy, 2004; Wibben, 2008). In this sense, these studies mainly focus on revealing the transformative and liberating elements of human security discourse, as they presume that the concept of human security contains normative and positive elements. As Wæver also raised, a theory's political effect is evaluated according to a predetermined political and normative position rather than what it does as a theory/concept (Wæver, 2011, p. 467).

For instance, Gilmore (2011) discusses how the US counter-insurgency-movement in Afghanistan and Iraq is inappropriate for human security. Gilmore's assessment of the political effects of theorizing human security is based on how much the emancipatory normative-political position is reflected in the policies implemented. According to Gilmore, while the rhetoric used by the US says that it is based on people and is concerned with the priorities and cultural sensitivities of local people, these human security principles have not, in practice, meant empowering local people to have a say in their own future. While human security should be a tool for liberation, the counter-guerrilla movement discourse of the US has used the human security approach to provide an illegitimate political system that will defend its interests. This approach often causes the local people to be weakened.

Just as in Gilmore's study, the political effects of human security are again primarily evaluated by a political-normative position in feminist approaches (Wibben, 2008) and how much the concept reflects feminist political practice. According to Hoogensen and Stuvoy (2004), non-state spaces enable us to see the security understandings of non-state local actors and people in a particular social context. At this point, resistance is an essential example of human political practice. In this context, human security diagnoses human insecurities and creates safe spaces where these insecurities can be expressed. Therefore, for the authors, what needs to be focused on is capacity-building practices and the creation of different social contexts. Thus, those excluded from structural power relations can find discursive space to express their insecurity, and non-hegemonic views of human security can be reached.

A more recent discussion of the emancipatory potential of human security is provided by Peoples (2020). Considering previous debates on the critical and emancipatory potential of human security and citing feminist approaches as examples, Peoples argues that "more contextualized emancipatory critiques of human security" would be helpful to demonstrate the concept's potential. The emphasis here is on the need to reflect on the mechanisms of a negative emancipatory approach rather than a positive one, such as recognizing that a liberal or postcolonial understanding of human security is possible or desirable. According to Peoples: "The negativity of such an approach requires a sustained and comprehensive effort to think critically about the aims of emancipation: what forms of emancipatory practice can be envisaged, whether they are worth pursuing, and what they can benefit" (Peoples, 2020, p. 68). Thus, according to Peoples, it is important to reflect on the fact that "our understanding of human security and insecurity is subject to articulation, negotiation and even contestation" (p. 67), and how it is transformed in which political-historical conditions so that we can more realistically discuss emancipatory conditions.

In this respect, the author's negative emancipatory approach to human security challenges my criticisms of critical human security studies' evaluation of the concept based on a predetermined political and normative position. What this approach brings new to the analysis of the political effects of theorizing is that reflecting not only on the individuals' but also scholars' understanding of human security and insecurity is vital for the prospect of more contextually emancipatory critiques of human security. I will return to this point when discussing the rationale for using traveling theory as the method of my study.

When the political effects of theorizing human security are discussed, another way of evaluating these effects is by pointing to the concept's 'limited' philosophical underpinnings, which were initially drawn in terms of the Capabilities Approach. The Capabilities Approach in human security is an ideal type developed by Amartya Sen (1999) and Martha Nussbaum (2000), who determined the definition of human security and the typology of the United Nations Development Program (1994). Nussbaum (2000) defines the model as depending on liberal humanitarian philosophical principles. According to these principles, creating conditions that will ensure human life is the main aim of human security, and extensive cultural studies have determined these conditions. In other words, the capabilities model is ideal for identifying common points among the different human security conditions in various geographies.

In discussing the political effects of theorizing human security, critical human security scholars highlight the limitations of 'liberal' philosophical underpinnings of the capabilities approach compared to alternative ones and point to the insufficiency of the formers to consider other

cultural-normative concerns. For instance, Marhia (2013) notes that the concept of human security accepts 'human' as abstract, independent of social, cultural, and political influences. According to Marhia, the Capabilities Approach understands the rational, masculine, Western, white, and liberal individual as 'human' as the referent object of human security. When using the concept of human security, 'human' is already defined as those who will possess these competencies, which are assumed to be autonomous and rationally selective, producing morally relevant differences.

In response to the liberal philosophical underpinnings of human security, which defines human insecurities through a liberal-rational human narrative, some critical human security scholars have suggested alternative philosophical approaches. For instance, Shani (2011) argues that the liberal philosophy used in human security discourse reduces the individual to life only and that different cultural and religious values are not recognized as the source of human insecurity. According to Shani, humans as cultural and social beings should not be reduced from self-actualizing beings to just living creatures. The dignity of a human comes from the fact that their life is immanent in cultural and religious values. In this discussion, the political effect of human security has been discussed, whether it includes alternative philosophical positions considering the dignity of 'human.' Shani's philosophical problem (provision of human dignity) has been solved by his proposal and normative commitment to desecuritization. The author suggests the desecuritization of human security discourse used by states and international organizations since the discourse has limited humans as the referent object for international security.

The last way of analyzing the political effects of theorizing human security I touch upon in this section is about focusing on its theoretical structure. For example, Floyd (2007) discusses the differences between the political effects of the concept of human security and the securitization theory. According to Floyd, while the concept of human security contains normative elements, the concept of securitization is analytically useful. Using the concept of human security, analysts and researchers can identify dangers to individuals or social groups. In other words, analysts act as securitizing actors. Thus, the securitization movements of human security analysts and researchers can be analyzed (Floyd, 2007, p. 43). While securitization can have both negative and positive effects, according to Floyd, when it comes to human security, it is a positive securitization because human security has normative benefits (Floyd, 2007, p. 44). From the perspective of human security, the concept of human security can provide securitization on behalf of people who are not included in the decision-making mechanism and can affect the process in a planned way, as in the example of the establishment of the International Criminal Court (Floyd, 2007, p. 44). With the concept of human security, scholars can also emphasize cases such as everyday insecurities (Newman, 2016) that need attention and positively affect the process.

Comparing human security with securitization approaches provides meaningful insight; however, its political effects are also discussed and analyzed in mostly favorable political-normative terms compared to the securitization theory. Put differently, there is a presumption of human security's normative stance. Thus, the political effects of human security have been evaluated, and whether/how it securitizes specific issues is taken for granted as a positive move (Newman, 2016).

In the literature I have discussed so far, the political effects of theorizing human security are considered in political-normative terms in either negative (Shani, 2011) or positive ways (Gillmore, 2011; Floyd, 2007; Newman, 2016). Besides, their normative-political commitments and standards may change as we see in the identification of different subjects of security, such as White/man/rational individual, different referent objects of security, such as women, displaced people, and other agents of security, such as non-state local as well as international actors. The scholars look at the political effects of theorizing human security without considering how the international understandings of scholars facilitate the use of the concept and the identification of different referent objects, subjects, and agents of security. The following section explores how and why the study uses Edward Said's traveling theory to investigate international understandings.

Edward Said's Traveling Theory as a Method

Edward Said first defined traveling theory in his 1983 article. According to Said, like people, “theories and concepts travel from person to person, from situation to situation, and from one period to another” (Said, 1983, p. 226). During circulation, ideas take different forms to respond to specific social and cultural situations. Said stresses that analyzing the circulation of ideas is essential since knowledge about which ideas are circulating, how they have changed from their original forms, and how ideas have weakened or strengthened through this change tells us much about social and cultural structure. This notion explains traveling theory in terms of which elements of a theory resist translation and how this resistance transforms the theory. In other words, traveling theory does not only show how a theory adapts to different social and cultural conditions, but it also signifies the (potential) transformation of the theory by investigating which elements of the theory resist the translation.

Traveling theory has also been used in the discipline of International Relations alongside other methods of Edward Said (Nair, 2007; Bilgin, 2016), and more publications are being made on how various concepts and categories of the discipline travel around the world, mainly from North America and Western Europe (Mabera & Spies, 2016; Ilgit & Klotz, 2014). Traveling theory has been developing (Bilgin, 2011; Çapan & Zarakol, 2018) due to the Eurocentrism criticism brought to the discipline, especially in the last ten years (Çapan & Zarakol, 2018).

This study uses the traveling theory for three reasons. First, as in the case of securitization theory (Bilgin, 2011), there have been an increasing number of studies on human security in Türkiye since the 2010s.¹ The concept of human security and its use in studies on Türkiye and its circulation highlight significant points regarding the changing understanding of security (from state security to human security), resistance to this change, or/and translation of the change in particular ways. Second, as a reflection of Eurocentric criticism of the discipline, I use the method for addressing the Eurocentric limitations of critical human security studies. In this study, it is not argued that the structure of the theory is Eurocentric, as discussed by some researchers (Pasha, 2014), but that how its political effects have been discussed is Eurocentric. In other words, as Eurocentrism addressed here, the problem is not about questioning whether the (universal) definition of ‘human’ is determined by Europe. Still, when considering the political effects of the theoretical structure of human security, the ‘international’ understanding has been assumed. Its impact has not been questioned (see Bilgin, 2016). It is not about ignorance but a lack of awareness that international understanding has contributed to the political effects of the concept. This method helps us show the political effects of human security when we consider others’ understandings of the ‘international.’ Third, traveling theory is important because it allows us to reflect on how scholars’ understandings, articulations, and contestations of human security and insecurity depend on their understandings of the international. Hence, instead of taking a positive or negative political-normative stance towards human security as a given, this method also helps pave the way for a more contextualized (emancipatory) critique of human security, as Peoples (2020) suggested.

Data collection and method of analysis

For the study, I collected data from Google Scholar and the national database of Türkiye (ULAKBİM and Dergipark). I initially looked at the peer-reviewed journal articles and internationally published book chapters by scholars from Türkiye during the period between 2017-2023 and searched in keywords and abstracts of these works the words ‘human security’ (*insan güvenliği* or *insani güvenlik*), written either in English or in Turkish. The scholars who published these works may be in Türkiye/or abroad. The concept of human security used in the reports prepared by/for non-governmental organizations and other studies that appeared on Google Scholars is not part of the study.

¹ In addition to the theoretical studies on the historical development of the concept of human security and its practical application (Ovalı, 2006; Tangör, 2012; Torun, 2017), there are also published edited books on human security in Türkiye (Özerdem & Özerdem, 2013; Jacoby & Özerdem, 2013).

After the initial identification of the studies of human security in Türkiye, I found that during the last seven-year period, the concept of human security is mainly used by works including book chapters, and research articles whose subject matter of study is either/both about migration crisis in Europe or/and refugees and migrants living in Türkiye (Arman, 2017; Sönmez & Kırık, 2017; Çıkrıkçı & Okur, 2021; Mavi, 2023; Baysoy, 2018; Özdemir & Özdemir, 2018; Dönmez, 2023; Kutlu, 2020; Kaya & Aras, 2021; Dora, 2020; Çıtak, 2020; Özerdem, 2017; Çınar, 2018; Köprülü, 2018; Ulusoy & Uzelakçıl, 2022; Özdemir, 2018; Sirkeci, 2017; Duman & Çelik, 2019; Tank, 2021; Tangör & Alpaydın, 2023; Akgül, Güner & Aydın, 2021; Şimşek, 2017; Şahin, 2021).² This use may be interpreted in line with the human security literature in Europe since the link between human security and migration has been increasingly addressed by scholars worldwide since the 2015 “refugee crisis” in Europe (Ferreira, 2019; de Simone, 2019; Panebianco, 2022). Besides, there is an increasing use of the concept of environmental security by scholars from Türkiye during this period of analysis (see Yılmaz, 2022; Kutlu, 2024). There are also published works on humanitarian interventions and their implications for human security in cases such as Iraq and Lebanon and international actors’ involvement, such as the EU. Thus, it is particularly noteworthy to take into account the works using the concept in Türkiye on the issue of migration/refugee in the detailed investigation since 1) these works are significant in examining the analytical use of the concept of human security in Türkiye in the seven years (2017-2023) term, and 2) these works provide a comparative analysis of the categories used for the investigation.

The next step is to identify the basic categories of the research, such as reference object of security, agent or actor of security, and subject of security. The analyzed studies may not have explicitly used these categories. Drawing on their definitions and discussions in critical security studies, I will demonstrate how these categories are identified in the analyzed studies. In critical security studies, discussions of the widening and deepening of the concept of security have brought new objects of analysis: Whose security? Security of what? Security by whom?

The reference object of security refers to what is under threat or what needs to be protected against a threat. This reference may be an ideal such as ‘national identity.’ The reference object of human security is the individual. “Human security is concerned with how people experience security and insecurity” (Gjorv, 2018, p. 224). The actor/agent of security refers to the actor who provides security. The critical point here is operationalizing the provision of human security: How and by whom are people secured? (Gjorv, 2018, p. 228). In other words, it is crucial who ensures human security and decides on human security issues and practices. For example, who defines the threat to human security makes them a human security actor. While some scholars argue that the state is the primary provider of human security, others criticize that “the human security agenda has become another tool for the state” (Gjorv, 2018, p. 229). Indeed, state actors continue to dominate human security discourse and practice, reproducing the mainstream understanding of security through the human security agenda.

This discussion on human security actors is essential as it is also linked to the debate on the subject of security. The actor and the subject of security are not the same. The subject of security is the fulcrum of the modern sovereign who claims to have/can have the capacity to define human security. Walker (1997) argues that the modern state claims to be able to explain what and where security is based on the modern notion of the sovereign, which provides certainty to the modern subject. To question this, he focuses on the importance of analyzing the subject of security. According to Walker, in the modern notion of sovereignty, there is no subject whose security is subsequently defined. Instead, insecurity/uncertainty defines the modern subject (Man/white/liberal individual) and its search for security. In other words, the subject of security is determined within the modern concept of sovereignty and the boundaries drawn by it.

Critical human security scholars have raised the subject of human security (Hynek & Chandler, 2011). I consider this category a component of this analysis. In human security policy circles and academia, the international community and modern states claim to be able to define what and where human security is to do so on behalf of ‘humans’ while simultaneously demarcating the boundaries of what it means to be ‘human.’ Today, this capacity of the international community, in particular, stems from ‘crises’ in the late-modern liberal international order, such as climate change or failed states. The international community

² Some of these works have only focused on the EU migration policies in general and their implications for human security (see Dora, 2020; Mavi, 2023; Baysoy, 2018; Şahin, 2021). These works are not included in the analysis.

(mostly UN agencies) can define human security as those whose conditions for being ‘human’ cannot be met by a modern sovereign state, such as those living in conflict-oriented states, those facing ecological disasters, or refugees. That is, the subject of human security is mainly determined by the definition of ‘human’ in terms of White/male/liberal individuals by the international community.

Human security traveling to Türkiye

In the studies analyzed here, human security has been used within the historical and political context in which Türkiye is located between 2017-2023. On the one hand, there is a conflict and post-conflict situation in Türkiye’s neighbor as the Syrian war that started in 2011 and the conflicts on the Syrian-Turkish border continued. On the other hand, the “refugee crises” have mainly shaped the political context of Türkiye’s relations with the international community, international NGOs, and the EU. Türkiye’s relations with the EU deteriorated in 2011, and they entered a convergence process with the readmission agreement signed with the EU in 2013 (Teke Llyod, 2019, p. 519). There is an update of Türkiye’s human security status with the agreement, which entered into force three years later and makes Türkiye responsible for the readmission of third-country nationals and stateless persons who directly enter or stay in the territory of the EU (Sirkeci, 2017). The following table shares the analysis findings: first, how scholars identify referent objects, agents/actors, and subjects of human security; second, what international understandings are revealed in these studies on human security in Türkiye. The next part discusses the political effects of these understandings on theorizing human security.

Table 1.
Analysis of the Refereed Scholarly Studies Published Between 2017-2024

Definition of human security	The referent object of human security	The actor/agent of human security	The subject of human security
<i>Narrow definition: (Akgül et al., 2021)</i>	<i>Regional people and people in receiving countries: (Kaya & Aras, 2021; Çıtak, 2020; Sirkeci, 2017)</i>	<i>International community/ actors such as the United Nations and I/NGOs: (Özdemir & Özdemir, 2018; Dönmez, 2023; Çıtak, 2020; Özerdem, 2017; Köprülü, 2018; Özdemir, 2018; Duman & Çelik, 2019; Tangör & Alpaydın, 2023)</i>	<i>Gendered ‘human’: (Kutlu, 2020; Özdemir, 2018)</i>
<i>Broad definition: (Özerdem, 2017; Arman, 2017; Sönmez & Kırık, 2017; Çıkrıkçı & Okur, 2021; Özdemir & Özdemir, 2018; Dönmez, 2023; Kutlu, 2020; Kaya & Aras, 2021; Çıtak, 2020; Çınar, 2018; Köprülü, 2018; Tank, 2021; Özdemir, 2018; Ulusoy & Uzelakçıl, 2022; Sirkeci, 2017; Duman & Çelik, 2019; Tangör & Alpaydın, 2023; Şimşek, 2017)</i>	<i>Women: (Özdemir & Özdemir, 2018; Kutlu, 2020; Özdemir, 2018)</i>	<i>Extra-regional actors such as the European Union: (Çıkrıkçı & Okur, 2021; Arman, 2017; Sönmez & Kırık, 2017; Özerdem, 2017; Çınar, 2018; Ulusoy & Uzelakçıl, 2022; Tangör & Alpaydın, 2023)</i>	
	<i>Syrian displaced people, migrants and refugees: (Arman, 2017; Sönmez & Kırık, 2017; Çıtak, 2020; Çıkrıkçı & Okur, 2021; Dönmez, 2023; Çınar, 2018; Köprülü, 2018; Duman & Çelik, 2019; Tangör & Alpaydın, 2023; Akgül et al., 2021; Sirkeci, 2017; Özerdem, 2017; Tank, 2021; Ulusoy & Uzelakçıl, 2022; Şimşek, 2017)</i>	<i>Türkiye as a regional human security actor: (Kaya & Aras, 2021; Sirkeci, 2017; Tank, 2021; Tangör & Alpaydın, 2023; Akgül et al., 2021; Sönmez & Kırık, 2017; Özerdem, 2017; Çınar, 2018; Ulusoy & Uzelakçıl, 2022)</i> <i>Regional people and Syrian refugees: (Kutlu, 2020; Şimşek, 2017; Özdemir, 2018; Duman & Çelik, 2019)</i>	

In the studies I analyzed, the reference object of security is the individual. Still, the definition of those threatened or in need of protection from physical or non-physical threats varies. Many studies define the reference object of human security as Syrian displaced people, refugees, or migrants (Arman, 2017; Sönmez & Kırık, 2017; Çıkrıkçı & Okur, 2021; Dönmez, 2023; Çınar, 2018; Köprülü, 2018; Duman & Çelik, 2019; Tangör & Alpaydın, 2023; Akgül et al., 2021; Özerdem, 2017; Tank, 2021; Şimşek, 2017). In these studies, scholars mostly use a broader definition of human security, which refers to physical and non-physical security concerns of people occurring during a conflict and post-conflict period (for exception, see Akgül et al., 2021). These scholars emphasize that the insecurity of different social groups and Syrian people living in the region often stems from the threats they face in their home countries.

Thus, some studies that use the broad definition of human security also note that threats to human security do not only stem from refugees' own countries and conflicts but also from the problems such as nutrition, housing, unemployment they face in the host countries to which they try to migrate and the policies implemented by these states (Özdemir & Özdemir, 2018; Özdemir, 2018; Kutlu, 2020; Duman & Çelik, 2019; Şimşek, 2017). In some of these studies, especially Syrian refugee women have been emphasized as the reference object of human security (Özdemir & Özdemir, 2018; Özdemir, 2018; Kutlu, 2020). Moreover, in other studies using the broad definition of human security, the reference object of human security is not limited to Syrian displaced people but also includes the people of the region living on Türkiye and especially in the Türkiye-Syria border (Kaya & Aras, 2021; Çıtak, 2020; Ulusoy & Uzelakçil, 2022; Sirkeci, 2017). In some studies, which consider Türkiye as the source of human (in)security, the dilemma between national and human security policies (Kaya & Aras, 2021), the inadequacy of Türkiye's foreign policy towards Syria (Tank, 2021), and the limits of state capacity for implementation of migration policies (Ulusoy & Uzelakçil, 2022; Duman & Çelik, 2019) are mentioned.

Most analysed studies identify the international community as the provider of human security. However, the responsibility of regional actors such as Türkiye to ensure human security is also mentioned (Kaya & Aras, 2021; Sirkeci, 2017; Tank, 2021; Tangör & Alpaydın, 2023; Akgül et al., 2021; Sönmez & Kırık, 2017; Özerdem, 2017; Çınar, 2018; Ulusoy & Uzelakçil, 2022). Many studies share the understanding that the international community, especially the United Nations and its agencies, are the primary actors responsible for providing human security to the displaced Syrian people, given the Syrian regime's inability to maintain internal order and stability (Köprülü, 2018; Duman & Çelik, 2019; Tangör & Alpaydın, 2023). Although some studies do not specify who these international actors are and how international interventions should be conducted, the agency and responsibility of the international community in both identifying threats to the Syrian people and providing human security practices have been emphasized (Özdemir & Özdemir, 2018; Dönmez, 2023; Çıtak, 2020).

While some studies use a 'vague' definition of the international community, some studies focus on "extra-regional" actors specifically the EU (Çıkrıkçı & Okur, 2021; Arman, 2017; Sönmez & Kırık, 2017; Özerdem, 2017; Çınar, 2018; Ulusoy & Uzelakçil, 2022; Tangör & Alpaydın, 2023)

In some studies, the UN or the EU are identified as the main human security actors defining human security issues and practices, while Türkiye is often seen as the regional liaison for these actors to deliver human security policies (Arman, 2017; Sönmez & Kırık, 2017; Ulusoy & Uzelakçil, 2022). Moreover, the recent use of the human security agenda by certain extra-regional actors, such as the EU, for policy interests, such as the externalization of migration, has changed how Türkiye's role should be understood in some studies. Accordingly, some authors discuss Türkiye's position through the dichotomy between the conception of human security put forward by UN agencies and state/border security advocated by the EU and its partners (Çınar, 2018; Tangör & Alpaydın, 2023). The point is that these studies still have a top-down understanding of who can define human security issues and practices.

Recent debates on burden and responsibility sharing for displaced Syrians point to different levels of responsibility attributed to international, extra-regional and regional actors (Tangör & Alpaydın, 2023; Akgül et al., 2021; Ulusoy & Uzelakçil, 2022). I found that in some studies, Türkiye is seen as an actor responsible and accountable to the international community due to its place in the international community and common norms such as the Protection of Refugees. In other words, when discussing Türkiye's role in ensuring the human security of Syrians living in the region, Türkiye's responsibility towards the international community is emphasized (Tangör & Alpaydın, 2023; Akgül et al., 2021).

The most important finding of the research is that the few studies with a bottom-up understanding of human security also question (albeit not explicitly) a hierarchical understanding of the international. For example, in Şimşek's (2017) study, it is pointed out that the EU and the international community focus on Syrian refugees only through the security priorities of states, and it emphasizes how this situation determines the refugee and asylum seeker policy in Türkiye. On the one hand, while the European Union or the international community defines the status and rights of refugees based on their own security priorities, Türkiye is the undertaker of Europe's migration policies in the region with the definition of temporary status. As Şimşek argues, "With the EU-Türkiye agreement, in which Türkiye is recognized as a safe third country, it is seen that state security is prioritized over human security, and this leads to human rights violations" (Şimşek, 2017, p. 23). A striking point in this study is the author's emphasis on Türkiye's responsibility toward the region's people and the policies that Türkiye should develop to ensure human security in the region (Şimşek, 2017, p. 24). However, studies focusing on Türkiye's accountability towards Syrian displaced people are minimal. This issue is also related to the empowerment of these people socially, economically, and politically. Some argue that this is impossible under Türkiye's current refugee regime and policies (Duman & Çelik, 2019). In this sense, scholars emphasize the importance of exposing the constraints to empowering Syrian refugees and creating opportunities for especially Syrian migrant women them to define their own security (Özdemir, 2018; Kutlu, 2020).

Another finding of the research is that in the analyzed studies, those who claim to be able to define what and where human security is (e.g., the international community, modern states, or the EU) rely on the notion of modern sovereignty and liberal definition of an individual. Only a few studies do not only take Syrian refugee women as the referent object of security but also question how gendered human security is based on a particular definition of 'human' (Özdemir, 2018; Kutlu, 2020). There are no other critiques of the liberal definition of the individual, such as pointing to its racialized notion.

The research revealed two ways in which the concept of human security adapted to Türkiye's different historical and political circumstances while traveling to Türkiye and in which scholars' understandings of international were decisive. First, while some studies argued that international and "extra-regional" actors have a leading role in ensuring human security, Türkiye's position in the international community determined its role and responsibilities in ensuring human security in the region. Second, while studies emphasize Türkiye's responsibilities towards the international community, Türkiye's human security status is defined through a top-down understanding of human security issues and practices. Only a limited number of studies have focussed on Türkiye's responsibility and accountability to the people of the region and how Syrian refugees can be empowered through bottom-up human security policies (Şimşek, 2017; Duman & Çelik, 2019; Özdemir, 2018; Kutlu, 2020).

The essential element for the discussion here is to show, especially in these studies, how the hierarchical international understanding and Türkiye's commitment to the EU's border security policies shape human security policies from top to bottom. This study has revealed that the hierarchical international understanding of scholars outside the core also brings a top-down perspective of human security. This understanding keeps the human security debate trapped in the dilemma between Türkiye's national security and the EU's border security.

Political Effects of Theorizing Human Security Beyond the Core

The analysis has shown that the theorization of human security has three political effects. First, contrary to Floyd's (2007) discussion in the first part, this research shows that the political impact of human security is due to more than just the normative features of the concept. Even if scholars' use of the concept of human security takes the peoples of the region as the reference object of security, it may only sometimes point to their security priorities. In other words, it may not always lead to positive securitization by scholars academics as security agents. The broadening of human security has yet to bring with it a deepening of the understanding of it. As the above examples show, there is a contradiction between the normative elements of the concept and its politics. The most obvious manifestation of this contradiction is that there is a broader definition of human security in many studies.

Yet, this definition does not come from the priorities and concerns of the people of the region. In other words, even if scholars take the people living in the region as the reference object of security, it is the international community and modern states, not the people of the region, who claim to be able to define their security. In this respect, human security has often met with resistance.

Second, the main actors involved in the securitization process, those who claim to define human security issues and practices, are mainly positioned at the international or extra-regional level, such as the EU. In most analyses, the actors who can claim what and where human security is not seen at the regional level. Moreover, as indicated in some studies, Türkiye is considered responsible toward the international community, but its responsibility towards the region's people is not mostly mentioned. The political effect of this understanding is that hierarchical power relations in the international order securitize the notion with a top-down understanding of human security.

Third, this research shows that the critique of the top-down understanding of human security should not be limited to the criticism of the understanding of human security implemented by the international community and states. The study reveals that introducing the concept of human security into Türkiye, concerning the international understanding of these studies, often excludes the region's people and their security concerns and, therefore, prevents change. The study is vital in showing how a top-down perspective on human security comes to the fore among scholars outside the core. The exceptions to this are studies that both use a broader definition of human security and criticize the hierarchical international understanding, thus emphasizing the need to understand human security from the bottom up.

Conclusion

This study examined the political effects of theorizing human security while traveling to Türkiye and pointed to four main findings of the investigation. First, scholars mainly use human security to address human insecurities resulting from physical and non-physical violence, especially in post-conflict settlements after the Syrian war. Post-conflict migration is also seen as a reason for human insecurity in the region stemming from policies of Western countries, the international community, or host countries such as Türkiye. Second, responsibility for providing human security is given chiefly to international actors rather than regional actors. The roles/responsibilities of regional actors such as Türkiye are defined concerning their position in the international community. Third, in most analyses, the international community or the EU is considered the main actor/agent of security who defines human security issues and practices. At the same time, Türkiye is seen as a regional agent responsible to the international community or the EU rather than to regional people. Fourth, in theorizing human security in Türkiye, there is a hierarchical relationship between the agents/actors of human security regarding their responsibilities and accountabilities. Türkiye's human security status and role have been identified in a derivative way depending on its position set by the international community or the EU.

In this study, while focusing on the political-normative effects of theorizing human security, the emphasis was given to the international understandings that reflect the political and historical dynamics of the country to which the concept of human security travels. As this investigation has shown, there is a co-constitutive relationship between the top-down perspective of human security and the hierarchical understanding of the international. It is not just because of the position of Türkiye within the international order that it is considered a regional agent of human security. Suppose the securitizing actor is always seen at the international level as in the top-down human security perspective. In that case, this usage has ensured the continuity of a hierarchical international understanding. Thus, although it is possible to say that there is a broadening move in studying human security in Türkiye, its deepening move is still missing to a certain extent as there is still a top-down understanding of human security. Most of the works analyzed exclude the regional people from claiming to be able to decide on human security issues and practices, thus providing the continuation of the hierarchical relationship between the international community and regional/local people, not just among different state-level actors.

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