

What the Hegemonic Stability Theory Tell us About: the Test of Covid-19

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Abstract

Covid-19 pandemic is a crisis differing from other crises in many ways since it involves a combination of a global health crisis and a socioeconomic crisis, affecting many individuals. The Covid-19 pandemic has been detrimental both in economic and political terms even changing the world's hegemonic order. Before the Covid-19 crises, the world order has already started changing but the pandemic has accelerated this transition process. The struggle with the pandemic has become a tool for power maximization. Hence the world witnessed a power struggle between the previous hegemon and emerging powers during the pandemic. In this paper, first of all hegemonic stability theory has been elaborated in details and than the expected post-pandemic hegemonic structure has been discussed.

Keywords: Covid-19, Hegemonic Stability Theory, Hegemonic Order, International Order.

Hegemonik İstikrar Teorisi Bize Ne Anlatıyor: Covid-19 Sınavı

Öz

Covid-19 pandemisi, küresel bir sađlık krizi ile bir sosyoekonomik krizin birleşimini içerdiği ve birçok kişiyi etkilediđi için diđer krizlerden birçok yönden ayrılan bir krizdir. Covid-19 pandemisi, dünyanın hegemonik düzenini bile deđiştirerek hem ekonomik hem de siyasi açıdan zararlı olmuştur. Covid-19 krizlerinden önce dünya düzeni deđişmeye başlamış ama pandemi bu geçiş sürecini hızlandırmıştır. Salgınla mücadele, güç maksimizasyonu için bir araç haline gelmiştir. Dolayısıyla dünya, salgın sırasında önceki hegemonya ile yükselen güçler arasında bir güç mücadelesine tanık olmuştur. Bu bildiri de öncelikle hegemonik istikrar teorisi ayrıntılarıyla ele alınmış ve ardından pandemi sonrası beklenen hegemonik yapı tartışılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Covid-19, Hegemonik İstikrar Teorisi, Hegemonik Düzen.

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Introduction

The Covid-19 is an infectious illness that is considered among the most pervasive health problems of recent decades maintaining its full effect and has continued longer than initially expected (Silahtaroglu, Baykal and Abid, 2020: 280). It has been a great problem for governments leading to great panic and anxiety (Baykal, 2020a: 68). It has also been the most significant test of the international system after the prominent financial crisis in 2008 (Busby, 2020:1). Preventive health measures that have been adopted to combat with Covid-19 have made it more difficult to continue with daily life (Baykal, 2020b:18). The pandemic has demaged the political, social and economic order of the world (Baykal, 2020c). According to various strategist the new geopolitical order is expected to give way to an important rise of China and decline of the US that will have far-reaching results for many countries (Hussain, 2021: 5).

Actually, up to now every major crisis has brought with it forces playing a very significant role in triggering the transformations in the current situation (Hussain, 2021: 5). In the Covid-19 example, the rapid disperison of the illness has led to great panic and anxiety causing many societal and psychological problems (Baykal, 2020a: 18). In fact, the pandemic has compelled myriad nations to reevaluate their actions in the international system. Before the pandemic, international order has already started changing due to to the interaction of many factors including the rise of protectionist trends, anti-globalization tendencies, erosion of faith in multilateralism, and ultra-nationalist and populist movements (Hussain, 2021: 5). The pandemic was a curse for many nations but can be considered as an opportunity for some countries like China that triggered its aggressive actions in its lneighbourhood to make them accept China's demands (Hussain, 2021: 7). For instance; taking advantage of the Covid-19, China made swift border incursions in Ladakh area of India which lead to deterioration of bilateral relations between the two neighbours (Hussain, 2021: 7). In this study, the changes in the world hegemonic system during the covid-19 pandemic period will be held in details and the new situation in the America-China binary relationship will be discussed in the light of the theory of hegemonic stability.

Hegemony

The concept of hegemony has its roots in the Greek word hēgemonía, that connotates leadership and rule (Schmidt, 2018). The Cambridge Dictionary explain the concept of hegemony as the being the strongest and most powerful thus, being competent of controlling others. In other words, the term refers to the twin propositions of dominant power and leadership (Schmidt, 2018). Hegemon powers are inclined tend to exert power over others (Nexon and Neumann, 2018). Actually, the hegemon is the most powerful and important actor regarding its assets. Others consider hegemonic power as something about social control, wherein the hegemon designates the rules of the game (Mastanduno, 2019:481). Hegemons mostly do not have the potential to completely redesign international order. They are inclined to emerge in pre-existing social domains, and rarely, have the potential to redesign these domains completely (Nexon and Neumann, 2018).

In fact, the debate regarding hegemony revolves around domination and leadership (Clark, 2011:18). According to Schmidt (2018) hegemony encompasses a relationship between a dominant group and other groups weaker than it. Those emphasizing domination mostly associate hegemony with material capabilities whereas those emphasizing leadership claim that

hegemony is about benevolent and paternalistic acts. Hegemons are effective powers exercising a dominant leadership role in international domain creating order in line with their own interests. Hegemons have highly asymmetric military and economic capabilities; enabling them to shape other fields like culture, diplomacy, economics, and sports (Nexon and Neumann, 2018). The hegemonic order mostly remains stable up to the point the system experiences a power transition. In those kind of transitions either dominant powers adjust to the new order or the order lives a power-transition strife.

Within the realistic literature regarding hegemony, we can witness an inclination to associate hegemony with unipolarity. In unipolar systems only one predominant state is prevalent whereas in multipolar systems there are counterbalancing powers (Schmidt, 2018). According to this view, the stronger the hegemon state, the more entrenched its dominance (Brooks and Wohlhorth, 2008: 48). On the one hand, according to institutionalists liberal approach to hegemonic powers, the hegemon should defend and expand its power in the multilateral order by integrating rising powers into international organizations (Viola, 2020: 28).

Hegemonic Stability Theory

Hegemonic stability theory assumes that the existence of a single dominant power in international domains lead to desirable outcomes for the whole World (Belic and Miklosi, 2020:2). Hegemonic-order theory emphasizes relationships of asymmetrical power and legitimate consent (Mastanduno, 2019:479). The hegemonic stability theory explains international political economy trends since 1945 (Webb and Krasner, 1989:183). The main assumption of the hegemonic stability theory is the fact that the distribution of power among different countries is the main factor determining the features of the international economic system (Webb and Krasner, 1989:183).

The theory is related to two distinct traditions that explains the inherent the stability of hegemonic systems. Kindleberger who is known as a liberal economist affected from the game theory, explains the world with a 'logic of collective goods'. He claims that international economic stability created collective, good, since all nations benefit from it. However, contribution of developing states to collective good is limited. Hence, in a world of small and medium-sized countries, stability is only possible if there is a hegemon providing the public good (Webb and Krasner, 1989:183). According to Li et al. (2020) countries with superior economic and political power can use this power as a reward or punishment technique to exert leverage over trade, finance, aids, grants, and impacts on less developed countries. Actually, ever increasing economic interdependence triggered the critical effect of hard power in the economy.

The theory advocates that international stability can occur most probably incase there is a single dominant state. It is the most famous approach among American political scientists regarding features of economic relations among the advanced capitalist states after 1940s. The basic assumption of the hegemonic stability theory is the belief that the distribution of power among different countries is the most important factor explaining the structure of the international system. The theory is based on the principle of 'balance of power' (Grundy, 2012). Hence, in order to create a stabile international order one unique dominant power is required. A hegemonic distribution of power is significant for establishing a stable, open international economic system that encompasses the whole world (Webb and Krasner, 1989). The theory suggest that ever lasting cycles of the rise and decline of dominant powers contributes to an order in the international politics (Nexon and Neumann, 2018). Moreover, according to this theory, emerging powers that are satisfied with the general rules of the world order builds the necessary atmosphere for sustaining the "status quo". The hegemon achieves this goal "either

through diplomacy, coercion or persuasion” (Goldstein, 2005: 83). Hegemonic stability includes also a security component because the hegemon ensures the public good of international stability as long as the distribution of gains does not damage its own interior security (Curran, Eckhardt and Lee, 2020: 257). Hegemonic stability theory, diverges with the deterministic views to global hegemony since it emphasizes the contingent features of the relationship between hegemon powers and their world order (Ikenberry and Nexon, 2019:416).

Moreover, the hegemonic powers tend to set the rules of the game, namely they give way to higher status and prestige. They pursue these policies with the aim of maintaining an order that serves their interests and values (Ikenberry and Nexon, 2019:402). Kindleberger a famous liberal economist, explains the 'logic of collective goods' on insights from game theory and, particularly, he suggests that international stability is a collective good, because all countries get use of it regardless of their contribution. Actually, medium-sized countries are not likely to prefer participating to the production of this public good, because they are aware of the fact that their individual effort will have only a little effect (Webb and Krasner, 1989:184).

Cooperation during the Covid-19

In the last few years as USA's share of world GDP has declined from 23 % to under 15 %, China's share has increased from about 4 per cent to over 19 per cent. However, USA's GDP still remains well ahead of China (Viola, 2020: 28). As USA continue to exert important structural power that can not be undone by the success of alternative economies, in terms of military power, it is still an outspending power when compared with the other emerging powers (Viola, 2020: 28). In fact, during the pandemic the increasing number of states available for global cooperation has gained importance regarding their effect on the hegemon's strategies since it increases the diversity of interests and convictions that should be discussed.

Actually, since the World War Two, the development of a neo-liberal tendencies within a differentiating global field of elite consensus has shaped the hegemonic structure of the world order (Carroll and Carson, 2003:70). In fact, the rising powers have various and conflicting interests, preferences, and convictions in comparison to USA and its traditional G7 partners. Their particular interests regarding economic development, liberalization, human rights and external intervention diverge among themselves. Actually, the power shift creates a dilemma for the hegemon. On the one hand, the hegemon powers want rising powers achieve their interests when they are important for cooperation on a specific issue. On the one hand, involving in such diversified interests in decision-making tends to decrease the leverage of the hegemon in attaining its own preferences (Viola, 2020: 28). Moreover, poverty is falling in many economies, including China and India making things more complicated for the hegemon.

In theory, the hegemonic as in case with the USA has a tremendous power, making unilateralism the only option. Unilateralism assumes that the USA can give up cooperation altogether and focus on its own interests (Viola, 2020: 28). Actually, USA tends to defend American hegemony at any cost (Taşkinsoy, 2020:2). America's so-called liberal and egalitarian order predicted global weaknesses and contributed to universal values, but in practice it was only regional covering Western Europe and East Asia (Mastanduno, 2019:480). When we turn our lens to current situations the US is still considered as a very significant country economically and technologically. Actually, the US is the most powerful military power with around 6,000 nuclear warheads, 800 military bases, however it is no longer the sole dominant economic or technological power. The European Union and China are about the same size economically as America (Sachs, 2020:2)

The COVID-19 has started a geopolitical conflict regarding the hegemon of the world (Gauttam, Singh and Kaur, 2020: 319). In fact, health diplomacy is an important component of foreign policies of hegemons to expand their impact across the world (Gauttam, Singh and Kaur, 2020: 318). While China is accepted as responsible for the outbreak of the pandemic, on one hand, it has used the pandemic against the USA by using it as a soft power tool to expand its geopolitical power (Gauttam, Singh and Kaur, 2020: 318). In contrast, the USA and many European countries were imprisoned in the epidemic and had serious difficulties in dealing with the epidemic. They lived problems in dealing with the pandemic locally and globally (Gauttam, Singh and Kaur, 2020: 318).

The COVID-19 pandemic crisis created a strategic advantage for China to increase its hegemonic power through its health diplomacy as a soft power tool. Its health politics created an image for China making itself easily project as a benevolent leader in many countries (Gauttam, Singh and Kaur, 2020: 319). On the other side of the madalion, things have been much more difficult in the USA. The pandemic has created a mass fear regarding the cost of healthcare in USA. Many people have lost their job, and as a result, their health insurance (Hellman 2020). Unfortunately, healthcare in the USA is a privilege for those that can afford private health insurance (Haiphong, 2020:203).

In fact, things could have been much more easier and comfortable for the world if the two important powers, namely, China and the USA could have cooperated during the struggle with the pandemic. World Health Organization tried to encourage the world to finance the struggle with the pandemic and to agree upon a common initiative to develop Covid-19 vaccine. As Toosi and Bertrand (2020) explains, although European countries agreed to contribute, neither the U.S. nor China agreed to take part at this struggle. Most of the world powers preferred to develop their own vaccine with fears of a vaccine war. As states raced to develop a vaccine for themselves that the would not share with others

According to Busby (2020) as structural theories suggest, the international system is anarchic, In other words there is no overarching state protecting other states from threats. Actually, the states should take care of themselves, they should take action to protect their own people i from harms such as diseases and crises. What China and the USA embraces as an international health policy during the pandemic exactly overlaps with Busby's approach.

Actually, the potential losses from the Covid-19 pandemics revealed that these kind of crises creates a relatively benign space for international cooperation. According to game theory, global health diplomacy historically encompassed "harmony" wherein different states are incentivized to help each other, when the joint gains of cooperation and the risks of non-cooperation are considered. This creates the baseline for the absence of cooperation on COVID-19 struggle. Key powers in this struggle view the health crisis more as a source of conflict and contestation, where they care more about their own relative position to others, more akin to a "deadlock" or "prisoner's dilemma" where cooperation is impossible or severely constrained. While that may true, it is less clear that the international system is sending strong signals for states to interpret the crisis this way.

Global health, as game theory puts it, has historically been a game of "harmony" in which countries are more encouraged to cooperate with each other, given the common gains of cooperation and the devastating risks of non-cooperation. This makes it even more interesting that there is no strong cooperation on COVID-19. Key players may see this health crisis more

as a source of conflict and contention, wherein they can focus on their relative position in the World hegemonic order (Busby, 2020: 4).

Hegemonic Stability Theory: Covid-19 Example

As Allan, Vucetic and Hopf (2018) posits, currently, international hegemonic structure is designed not only according to material power but also according to the distribution of identity across the dominant powers. Actually, the distribution of identity explains a system-level barrier to a Chinese hegemonic succession. However their data revealed that there is mass-level dissatisfaction regarding neoliberal capitalist markets which may be harnessed to social democratic and populist counter hegemonic coalitions.

On the one hand, according to Ranasinghe and Li (2017), geopolitics and manipulative attempts regarding cultural matters give way to transition of cultural hegemony. It moves from former colonial hegemons to newly emerging Asian Powers making hegemonic stability more fragile. Gramsci (1985) posits that the dominant powers maintain their power through the use of cultural institutions establishing the approval of the subaltern classes and countries. In other words, instead of using coercion, hegemons develop a hegemonic culture through the use of ideology for manipulating others into accepting their superior power. Hegemonic orders reveal the interests and values of the powerful countries and reflects an asymmetrical power (Mastanduno, 2019:480). In fact, culture is an efficient tool of control when compared to the the use of physical force and coercion (El Aidi, and Yechouti, 2017). As to El Aidi and Yechouti (2017) in order to control a group, controlling their culture is a useful tools of self-definition in relationship to other groups or cultures and it is a good mechanism for building hegemonic power on them. In this point Jackson (2018) also claims that hegemon exert its power on other cultures through a self-presentation as universal. It creates an impression of being very inclusive. That is why, since the aftermath of the cold war, US policymakers posited that if they make the other cultures “more like us,” these alternative powers on all over the world would not have the tendency to mount revisionist challenges (Mastanduno, 2019:479). Actually, America's so-called liberal and egalitarian aproach gave way to universal values, but in ~~reality~~ **reality it** was limited and regional (Mastanduno, 2019:480).

The pandemic has changed the nature of hegemonic struggle among main players and their ways of conduct with the other nations. In fact, the pandemic forces governments to actively evaluate risks that may interfere with their potential to protect their people (Strange, 2020). COVID-19 should be considered as both a demand and a supply shock. In order to ensure sustainability in their interior processes, after the outbreak of the Covid-19, compulsorily, governments began to change their strategies from near-zero inventories to increasing resilience but also costs (Javorcik, 2020). As to many experts, the pandemic can create spillover effects throughout supply chains, and trade-dependent countries are more likely to be negatively affected (Curran, Eckhardt and Lee, 2020:254). The pandemic increases the fragility of the world trading system (Bown and Keynes, 2020). On the one hand, the intensifying USA-China trade conflicts and rivalry further weakenes the confidence in the world trading system.

Furthermore, the pandemic has some specific effects on US hegemony. According to Norrlöf (2020), COVID-19 triggered the decline of of US hegemony. The pandemic threatened USA’s hegemony about USA’s capabilities and leadership, that are deeply shaken. Actually before the Covid-19 crises, effects of 2007 financial crisis; the rise of new hegemons in other geographies; decline of western capitalist values; failures of liberal economy has contributed to a new multipolar hegemonic order (Norrlöf, 2020: 1281) making China and many other emerging powers become effective on the World political balance.

While the US has spent enormous resources on keeping American citizens safe, it has avoided spending far less on health care services and social safety needs. This failure has given way to long-term problems and dissatisfactions between winners and losers of globalization, creating risk for the hegemony (Norrlöf, 2020: 1290). During the pandemic we can talk about retreat from embedded liberalism which encompasses an agreement between two desirable but conflicting goals. Actually, the retreat from 'embedded liberalism' did not originate with the Trump administration. However, Trump administration increased these inclinations in many areas including health by lowering the amounts of funds for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Norrlöf, 2020: 1290). Actually during the President Trump's administration his selfish "America First" policies and their spinoff actions have impoverished the economies of Iran, China, Russia, Turkey and many other countries (Taskinsoy, 2020:2).

Historically, American exceptionalism was the guiding ideology of the USA's imperialist hegemonic strategy since the nation's inception (Haiphong, 2020: 200). American exceptionalism assumes that human history reveals a linear progression towards civilization's higher stages. According to this view, USA is on the best and most advanced stage of Western civilization (Haiphong, 2020: 200). Democracy and freedom are considered as basic elements make USA an exceptional country. However these values also have rendered in service of the dominant economic policy of America, namely; capitalism and imperialism (Haiphong, 2020: 200). Unfortunately USA have wielded American exceptionalism for promoting expansionism in the name of dispersing democracy (Haiphong, 2020: 202). American exceptionalism universalizes capitalist ideals, through which it erases and mystifies the relations of power creating US capitalism and imperialism.

American hegemony is parallel with dollar's hegemony. In other words, dollar's hegemony is the sign of American hegemony. The dollar's hegemony was officially recognized for the first time at the 1944 Bretton Woods Conference; In the post-WWII era, the hegemon used currency as an anchor to provide global liquidity, essentially to trigger a hegemonic stability that promotes unlimited access to capital markets and free cross-border exchange of goods and capital. But this delightful prolonged 'exorbitant privilege' transformed the United States into an 'anarchic Hobbesian' whose hegemonic status has always been reinforced by the abuse of military power and sanctionary power (Taskinsoy, 2020:2).

The end of the Cold War, 1989, had given way to the emergence of the United States as the predominant hegemon in the international system (Fayyaz and Malik, 2020: 72). Soon after the collapse of the USSR and the arrival of a unipolar hegemony, the world came across a series of crises that western countries struggled to handle and China emerged as challenging power (Dunford and Qi, 2020:1). The rise of China economically has transformed the world economy and directed a threat to the US hegemony (Fayyaz and Malik, 2020: 72). Actually, China's rise is closely related to latecomer advantage in a wave of globalization after 1970s (Dunford and Qi, 2020:1). Drezner (2019) also claims that in response to the historically, we can see an avoidance in the US regarding global cooperation. The US increasingly refused to sign UN treaties and protocols. For example; The US Senate refused to sign the treaty regarding Climate Change in 1992. The US refused to sign countless other international treaties, including the International Criminal Court, the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the UN Law of the Sea (Sachs, 2020:1). Moreover, Trump has also refused to collaborate almost every multilateral initiative of recent years. For example; The US is the only country pulling out of the Paris Climate Agreement and the Iran nuclear agreement. (Sachs, 2020:2).

Covid-19 and Hegemony

When we turn back to current crises we can see that, as Dunford and Qi (2020) suggest, the COVID-19 pandemic has made us witness many examples of liberal capitalist failure. Despite the tendency to protect western hegemony and capitalist world order, the COVID-19 outbreak, a shift in the center of economic success to Asia, has contributed to the development of a multipolar world and will accelerate and intensify current trends towards a new world order. The pandemic has caused intensification of geopolitical and geo-economic competition between the United States of America (USA), China and the Russian Federation (RF).

During the Covid-19 pandemic a decline in US hegemony a degree of de-Americanization has been witnessed owing to the relative decline in US economy. On the other hand, US has failed to contain the pandemic at home, with more than 500,000 loses (Sachs, 2020:1). On the one hand, there seems to be a general problem about the hegemonies including both US and China. Rather than cooperating with each other in order to contain and respond to the common threat, to the Covid-19, the world's leading powers, the United States and China, blamed each other about the origins of the illness (Busby, 2020:1). For instance; actually, in the initial period of the pandemic the World Health Organization (WHO) struggled to get permission to enter China to examine the problem (Busby, 2020:1). When the past cooperation between major powers to mobilize and eradicate smallpox and HIV/AIDS are considered, the limited cooperation and lack of US leadership during the Covid-19 are really puzzling (Busby, 2020:1).

On the one hand, it is difficult to expect a clear effect of the ongoing pandemic owing to uncertainty. A widely expected response to the pandemic is the upsurge of nationalism that can be reinforced by the crisis (Gülseven, 2021:41). In that point, supporting this view, Goode et al. (2020) examined societal responses to the perceived threats to ontological security in the US, UK, China and Russia and revealed how anxieties and everyday actions during the pandemic can become related with nationalist tropes about unity and sovereignty.

According to Dunford and Qi (2020) outcomes of Covid-19 crises has the potential to include a shift in the centre of the global system towards Asia and the establishment of a multi-polar system. The pandemic increased the geopolitical and economic competition among the US, China and the Russia. Choi (2020) suggest that, The BRICS summit has been an important designator of changing hegemonic balance. In this summit emerging powers have cooperated on COVID-19 vaccines. Russia called for an alliance in the mass production and the use of its vaccine, Sputnik V, while China has promised to provide its own. These developments showed Russia and China are attempting to expand their power through vaccine diplomacy.

As Choi (2020) suggest COVID-19 vaccine race has become a tool for power maximization. Actually, Covid-19 has undermined the USA's military capabilities and showed that from than on vaccine development is the most significant way of achieving hegemony. During the Trump Administration attacks on the global system have been doubled. The US has withdrawn from the World Health Organization. It was some kind of a kind of punishment for WHO relations with China (Sachs, 2020:1). Actually, Trump has done the seemingly unimaginable: cutting o American funding to the WHO in the middle of the pandemic whicjh is accepted as too pro-Chinese by American authorities (Sachs, 2020:4) which was a factor lowering USA'a prestige on the eyes of the World.

Discussion

Crisis times are important owing to the challenge they create for the hegemon to behave responsibly and organize states to solve collective problems. Actually, the pandemic has

increased the need to increase insight on how to lead effectively in times of crises (Contreras, Baykal and Abid, 2020:8). Hence, hegemonic stability theory makes us expect the hegemon to mitigate the dangerous long-term impacts of COVID-19 on other countries and lead the process effectively (Norrlöf, 2020: 1290). Achieving global coordination is difficult enough at the best of times and during a crisis it may be considered even impossible (Akhvlediani et al., 2020). During the pandemic China has seemed to make the best use of its health diplomacy in order to expand its geopolitical influence on all over the world, whereas the USA' and European countries' roles and reciprocity was delayed and inert (Gauttam, Singh and Kaur, 2020: 318).

The outbreak of the pandemic has affected both the world healthcare system and also the post-COVID geopolitical world order (Gauttam et al., 2020:319). In that point, Salvati (2021) suggests that the low capacity of European Union's international bodies to exercise the function of resource extraction is significant for creating an autonomous, supranational response regarding the pandemic crisis. This lack of power and intention deprives the EU of the advantage to have a political act enabling deployment of quick and effective instruments that are necessary to absorb internal and external shocks. The fierce competition between the Commission and the governments about the instruments to use to manage the pandemic crisis, have revealed the unrealistic feature of the state-like approach pursued by supranational actors (Fabbrini 2019: 489). This reveals that when the EU requires focusing more on core state powers for resolving significant matters, members often prefer to behave keener to develop international bodies and tools rather than accepting the greater effect and authority of supranational actors. This diminished ability of the supranational institutions in playing leadership role in the political arena while combatting with crisis, leaves the significant decisions to be taken by means of intergovernmental agreements which are not widely accepted enough (Salvati, 2021:16).

The tendency to disintegrate on the side of European Union and the relative decline of US and occurrence of emerging Powers will continue to alter hegemonic order of the World after the pandemic. In time the center of global economic gravity is accepted to change and move to Asia, and a new strategic global order will occur (Mahbubani, 2020). Actually, Mahbubani is not the only one predicting this global reordering. In *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*, Kennedy (1987) had also anticipated the relative decline of US due to uneven rates of growth and technological and organizational innovation.

Conclusion

The American exceptionalism is unmasked during the COVID-19. The USA's COVID-19 response showed that freedom and democracy are narrowly applied within the framework of a class society. The principles of American hegemony and benefits of US hegemony are largely exist exclusively for the rich and more accurately pertain to capital's ability to accumulate private profit regardless of the international consequences. The freedom and democracy that the rich enjoys in the US comes at the direct expense of a large portion of the human population (Haiphong, 2020: 207). Actually after 1980s, the US hegemony has been exposed to challengers to the American-led order, such as Russia and China owing to the declining share of the US in the world economy (Sachs, 2020:3).

It is advocated that the countries of the world would be in a better position financially to fight against the coronavirus if the United States had not strained many economies with its political and economic policies that have been causing instability since 2016 (Taskinsoy, 2020:2). In

fact, the avoidance of hegemon power to lead the struggle against the pandemic has created an atmosphere that give greater strategic power to emerging powers including the China although it was considered as the main responsible of the birth of the pandemic at the initial stage of the illness.

Undoubtedly, this process will give birth to considerable transitions in the world hegemonic structure. Unfortunately, this process has turned into their own regional crisis management instead of the hegemonic powers uniting and fighting the pandemic in favor of the whole world, which has made the hegemon power before the pandemic questionable. In this process, countries that act equitably in the fight against the pandemic and that can continue their economic development by turning the crisis into an opportunity, are disrupting the hegemonic balance in favor of emerging forces and weakening the US.

Further Research

In further studies the economic effects of the pandemic between countries in different economic zones can be examined. The social, political and economic effects of the change in the hegemonic structure due to the pandemic on countries with different economic power can be examined. In addition, the social, psychological and economic effects of the changing hegemonic structure on the citizens of the hegemonic powers can be examined.

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