

Uluslararası Politik Ekonomi Teorileri Perspektifinden Hegemonya Kavramının Evrimi^a

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Özet

Uluslararası politik ekonomi, son birkaç on yıldır uluslararası ilişkilerin bir alt dalı olmaktan koparak ayrı bir disiplin olma yolunda ilerlemiştir. 1970'li yılların başlarından itibaren dünya ekonomisinde meydana gelen radikal değişimlerin belirleyicilerini saptamaya yönelik çabalar, uluslararası politik ekonomiyle doğrudan bağlantısı olan birçok özel teorik kavramı ilgi odağı haline getirmiştir. Hegemonya, bu kavramlardan biridir. Hegemonya, günümüzde de en çok tartışılan konuların başında gelmektedir. Antonio Gramsci-İtalyan Marksist entelektüel, teorisyen ve politikacı-Hapishane Defterleri adlı eserinde hegemonya kavramını geliştirmiştir. Gramsci'nin kaleme aldığı yazılar, hegemonya anlayışına Marksist düşünce ve felsefe bağlamında yadsınamayacak katkılar sunmuştur. Ancak tarihsel süreç içerisinde hegemonya kavramına ilişkin birçok görüş ve teori ortaya atılmıştır. Bu nedenle, kavramın uluslararası politik ekonomiye uyarlanması geniş çapta tartışmalıdır ve konuyla ilgili belirsizliğin giderilmesini gerektirir. Buradan hareketle, kavramın uluslararası politik ekonomi literatüründe farklı düşünce ekollerine mensup teorisyenler tarafından nasıl ele alındığı incelenmiştir. Tüm bu bağlamlarda, makale hareket noktasını hegemonya kavramının farklı tanımlamalarından almıştır. Kavrama ilişkin yapılan farklı tanımlamaların belirli bir kolunu aydınlatmayı hedeflemiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler

Hegemonya
Uluslararası Politik Ekonomi
Antonio Gramsci
Realizm

Makale Hakkında

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Evolutional Analysis of the Concept of Hegemony within the Perspective of International Political Economy Theories

Abstract

Over the past few decades, the international political economy has attained itself particular independence within the wider discipline of international relations step by step. The endeavors to figure out the determiners of the radical changes taking place in the world economy since the early 1970s have placed several special theoretical concepts in the focus of interest which directly associates with the international political economy. The concept of hegemony is one of them. Today, hegemony is one of the most discussed subject matters. Antonio Gramsci was an Italian Marxist intellectual, theoretician and politician who developed the concept of hegemony in the Prison Notebooks. Gramsci's writings made incontrovertible contributions to the understanding of hegemony within the context of Marxist thought and philosophy. However, in the historical process, lots of views and theories have been put forward regarding the concept of hegemony. Thus, the application of the concept in international political economy is widely contested and necessitates disambiguation. From this point of view, we have tried to analyze how the concept was handled by theorists belonging to different schools of thought in the international political economy literature. In all these respects, this article takes its point of departure in the multiplicity of characterizations of the concept of hegemony and fastens on elucidating a certain strand of conceptualising hegemony more closely.

Keywords

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About Article

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Introduction

The basis of initiating a scientific study is firstly to designate the areas that can lay open subjected concept in a best way and then, to carry out a research on relevant areas. Otherwise, many details may be overlooked, if the overall outline of the research is not well-drawn. It is the theory, the core of a study for a firm initiation and it steers the researcher for an idea of what subjects are to act on. In addition, it should be determined where the focus of research efforts should be given regarding the concept under consideration. In other words, it is necessary to specify the foundations on which the analysis of the concept would be based at the beginning of a study. Since each research topics may be different from others in terms of the research tools and they probably use different methods of analysis to clarify various topics. Therefore, they reach different conclusions by asking different questions or appointing different features of the research topics.

The central concept of this study is hegemony. In order to identify the definition of hegemony and the foundations of its basic determinants, it is essential to investigate theoretical studies conducted on it. Since the hegemony has been acquired different senses thanks to the various studies and theorists in the international literature. Each generation of scholars deal with the complexities of such a notion as it associates with our every altering range of historical, social, economic, political, ideological, institutional conditions.

The concept of hegemony is used quite widely in the studies of the international political economy. The interest in hegemony as a descriptor concept has been evident in studies within international political economy in last few decades. From the 1970s, the concept was to rise distinctly in the sub-discipline of the international political economy¹. It is an important concept for comprehending how international systems operate and the practices happened upon the global society. It is also a concept used across the social sciences and the political perspective, and by several traditions from within the discipline of the international political economy. However, it is often used in international political economy in a sense that disregards its contested meaning, and in consequence of tends to be underdeveloped as a definite concept. In order to eliminate this deficiency and confusion, the concept of hegemony will be evaluated in terms of the meanings it has gained since its emergence. For this purpose, the views of different international political economy schools and important theorists belonging to these schools will be given, and the similarities and differences between them will be shed light related with the concept. This study goes around some of the differences within the various schools of thought, and emphasizes some of the distinctions between their analytical frameworks. The objective is not to provide a detailed account of theories so much as to differentiate general confronting styles to figure out world hegemony.

In these contexts firstly the philosophical and etymological roots of the hegemony will be clarified and the Gramscian theory of hegemony will be investigated. The chapter extends the Gramscian concepts of the state, civil society, historic bloc, organic link. After that we will focus on the realist, neo-realist and liberal theories and their views about the term of hegemony which together render service to effectuate the hegemonic perspective of the American foreign policy foundation. Finally, it will be discussed how the Neo-Gramscian theory treats the concept of hegemony, which emerged from the criticism of realist, neorealist and liberal theories, and is basically the application of Gramsci's ideas to the discipline of international political economy. By this way, the concept of hegemony is studied from different perspectives by different approaches in terms of the actors, who have become the hegemonic power in the

international systems, and the main decisive factors which have provided the actors their positions.

Understanding the Philosophical and Etymological Roots of the Hegemony & Gramscian Theory of Hegemony

“Hegemony” as a Greek originated word which purports in linguistic manner *authority, rule, and political dominance*. In Cambridge Dictionary it refers to the position of being the strongest and most powerful and therefore being able to control others. In Merriam-Webster Dictionary, it mean “preponderant influence or authority over others” –or “the social, cultural, ideological, or economic influence exerted by a dominant group”. The first use of this concept in history was to describe the relationship between the Greek cities that joined the Athens city-states in order to form an alliance against the Persian Empire in ancient times (Ferguson, 2003: 156; Wikinson, 2008: 119). Specifying with reference to the historical events, hegemony was first used to characterize a state’s power over a neighbour state “corresponding with the states of ancient Greece”, but has been more broadly described as “social or cultural predominance or sovereignty; predominance by one group within a society or milieu, or by a particular range of sociocultural ideas, way of doing things, or item, particularly to the exclusion of others” (Oxford English Dictionary, 2014). However, the etymology of the word hegemony is originated in the Greek, *hegeistahi*, which denotes to *lead*.

In the case of Athens, hegemony means organizing and directing joint efforts without the need to exert permanent political power over others. In addition, it refers to the superior, ordinate power, which might have been individual, social group, or state exerting over other groups, or states in Antique Greek political thought. Succintly, being in coherence with linguistic, a hegemon in international system can be described simply as the ruler state of a group of states, which means unavoidably some degree of social order and collective organization.

The concept of hegemony in modern political science and international relations theory means a certain ruling class in a capitalist society which can establish its sovereignty and sustain its ruling position by generating alliances with other classes and by making political compromises (Van der Pijl, 1989). If the ruling class manages to adopt its class culture and its worldview to other classes of society, all other classes become believers in the necessity of the existence of the hegemonic system and they perceive the position of the ruling class as being indispensable in the social structure. The ruling class, on the other hand, does not need to resort the pressure on society for the continuity of its power, thanks to convincing functions.

Fundamentally, in literature, hegemony is used at least four different meanings (Robinson, 2005, pp. 559-560):

Hegemony as an international domination: Hegemony in international relations is defined as active domination. For example, the era of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics over Eastern European countries or the domination of the US over capitalist world.

Hegemony as state hegemony: The dominant state being in the center sets the rules in the world capitalist system. Examples in the historical process are Dutch, British and the United States hegemonies.

Hegemony as an ideological hegemony: The ruling class maintains and develops its own domination. In this sense, hegemony means cultural and intellectual leadership. In capitalist

societies, the bourgeoisie maintains its stable period. However, crisis periods may interrupt the leadership.

Hegemony as leadership within the historical bloc: It means the construction of consent or ideological leadership in the special historical project. For instance, the US provided its international hegemony after the Second World War to a large extent by consent.

The most important figure introduced the concept of hegemony to the academic and a political debate in most intense and effective ways was Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937), a founding member of the Italian Communist Party. He was the theorist that perhaps most closely associated with the concept of hegemony. By “hegemony” he refers to a process of moral and intellectual leadership of ruling classes over subordinated classes of post-1870 industrial Western European nations (Gramsci, 1971, p. 57; Davidson, 2005, p. 10). Here the concept of hegemony also implies the importance of the consensual practice, by which the active participation of the subordinate groups (consent through hegemony in civil society) is maintained. From this point of view, Gramsci has brought in the concept of hegemony a very different dimension effectively shaping today's understanding.

Gramsci frequently uses the word hegemony to refer the aspects in which a dominating power attains consent to its rule from those it subordinates—although it is real that he periodically uses the term to cover both consent and coercion together (Gramsci, 1971). Gramsci (1971, p. 182) regarded hegemony as the dominance established by a dominant group as domination and intellectual and moral leadership in concrete relations between those who ruled and ruling. Hegemony projects the admission of the values, norms, and expectancies of the ruling groups by the subordinate as common or general interests (Gramsci, 1971, pp. 160-161). Gramsci advanced the notion of hegemony in order to understand the revolutionary political strategies experienced in Russia and Western European countries in the first quarter of the 20th century.

Gramsci used the concept of hegemony to define the system of alliances that the working class must carve out to demolish the bourgeois state and ensure workers serve as the social base of the state (Maglaras, 2013, pp. 1-2). As can be understood here, he was quite influenced by Marx's thought system and concluded that changes in international power relations or world order cannot be considered independently from basic social relations. According to Gramsci, as long as any state is hegemon in the international system, it must establish and maintain a universal ideological world order (Piccone, 1974; Hawley, 1980; Burawoy, 2003) This order is not only established in an interstate sense; in this framework, it should include the civil society forces of the world scale in the conceptualization of hegemony. Civil society is concerned with all branches of ideology (law, art, philosophy, political science, economics, philosophy, religion, folklore, culture) and all forms having taken by ideology (school, universities, media), including the organizations which create and disseminate it. This qualitatively expanded new form of hegemony must function together in the political and civil society fields and these fields must be fully intertwined. In this context, a hegemon state is a versatile and complex structure, and it is formed in a holistic understanding through values, norms and practices that determine social relations. Addition, hegemony is leaned upon consent rather than coercion. Consent plays critical role in ensuring the reproduction of order while hegemon power developes a universal language for other nations by trying to spread its own ideology and direct others into its own interests. Gramsci does not deny the essentialness of coercion in

hegemony. However, he emphasizes that the hegemony must be achieved through consent, which is desired to be built on permanent and solid foundations.

Gramsci fulfilled the inversion of the Marxist understanding of the (sub)structure-superstructure metaphor, yielding precedence to civil society as the domain in which identities were taken form and the dominance of social elites assured under capitalism (Germain and Kenny, 1998: 9). Beside, Gramsci diverges from Marxism which mainly pays attention to the coercive enforcements and activities of the state as a tool to exploit the proletariat (Hobden and Wyn Jones 2008).

Gramsci uses the concept of historical bloc for structure-superstructure metaphor as the togetherness between them. Often this concept is used as if expressing a certain social group; however, in fact, it is used in a broader scope, including the relationship between the structure and the superstructure. In this context, superstructures develop and change through social production relations. As he writes:

“Structures and superstructures form an historical bloc. That is to say the complex, contradictory, discordant ensemble of the superstructures is the reflection of the ensemble of the social relations of production” (Gramsci, 1971: 366).

Historical bloc is the arrangement of economic and socio-political structures that sustained and regenerated the social order in historically particular periods and it is also the momentary matching of the structure and the superstructure at a certain time and place (Boothman, 2017, pp. 131-132). At this stage, there are some key points Gramsci emphasizes. The first is to understand that historical materialism should not be reduced to historical economism which is a mechanistic and fatalistic concept in understanding hegemony (Bates, 1975, p. 352), in other words, it is not only dependent on economic developments and changes. The second is to be careful against an illusion that superstructure is determined through technological developments. The structure, the economy and the classes, formed accordingly, while the superstructure, law, culture and politics, cannot be determined in a direct causal relationship. The developments in technology do not directly change the structure in a similar way. Both the changes in economy and technological innovations are the factors providing changes in the superstructure. In other words, they do not create this change, but, only create the necessary ambiance for change. Failure to observe the historical bloc causes distortion in the content and form of historical dialectics. According to Gramsci, ignorance of this fundamental reality would result in mistake that can be described as economism and ideologism. While ideologism in the historical bloc is held by structures and superstructures together, economism does not deviate from ideologism (Woolcock, 1985, p. 207). Gramsci describes the content of the historical bloc as material abilities which refer to economism and its form as ideologism.

Examining the relationships between the structure and the superstructure is the essential view of the concept of historical bloc. In reality, the essential issue of the relationship between structures (classes formed depending on economic factors) and superstructures (ideas) is the study of the bond that provides their unity, and Gramsci describes it as an organic link which allow Gramsci to claim the dialectical integration between structure and superstructure as a single entirety:

“Material forces are the content and ideologies the form, though this distinction between the form and the content has purely didactic value, since the material forces would be

inconceivable historically without form, and ideologies would be individual fancies without the material forces" (Gramsci, 1971, p. 377).

The organic link between these two elements has been established by some social groups, namely organic intellectuals, whose work is not at an economic level, but at an upper structural level (Woolcock, 1985; Burnham, 1991; Monasta, 1993; Raber, 2003; Alexakos, 2007). Each social class involved in economic production creates its own class of organic intellectuals, which is active not only in the economic field, but also in the social, political, cultural and ideological fields. The organic intellectuals do not just generate ideas. In addition, they organize social forces by developing the project of hegemony which takes care of the interests of the social class they belong to. In this context, the organic intellectuals ensure the creation of ideas and institutions which form the common identity of the historical bloc (Maglaras, 2013, p. 5). It plays a key role in acquisition the consent. In this context, Gramsci accentuates the significance of organic intellectuals who can propagate and validate hegemonic ideas of dominant social forces as a congruent world view for setting up alliances between different social groups (Gramsci, 1971, p. 330). Addition, it is necessary to highlight that the historical bloc is not only satisfied with gaining power in civil society and the economy, but it also requires persuasive ideas and arguments to support political networks and organizations, and tools to realize the moral-political leadership in Gramsci's words (Gill and Law, 1993, p. 94). As noted by Gramsci:

"The dominant class exerts its hegemony to the degree that it can realize and maintain a historical coalition of contradictory sociopolitical forces, on the economic, political and state superstructure, which are linked by ideology. Hegemony is thus the moment of the political leadership and at the same time and for the same reason it is the leadership in the field of ideas, that is, intellectual leadership" (Gramsci, 1971, p. 41).

Concisely, the concept of hegemony was revolutionized by Gramsci, he efficiently altered hegemony from a rather unidimensional character of international relations to "an organizing principle, or world-view, that is diffused by agencies of ideological control and socialization into every area of daily life." (Carnoy, 1984, p. 73). In this context, Gramsci's views and writings on the concept of hegemony have led many theorists and schools of thoughts in different disciplines withal. Therefore, various classifications of the theoretical expansions of the concept of hegemony have emerged such as Realism, Neo-Realism, Liberalism, and Neo-Gramscian theory. The views of important representatives of these approaches will be touched in general below.

Location of Hegemony in a Dominant State in terms of Economic and Military Power: A Review of Realist-Neo Realist and Liberal Theories

Realist theory, deals with the concept of hegemony through a positivist approach, according to which hegemony points to an influential power alone. The main elements of this power are accepted as economic and military capacities, and in this context, social and cultural influences that affects hegemony being neglected (Bieler and Morton, 2004). The term realist hegemony, used in the same sense as the notion of domination, does not unilaterally take into account the consents of the states under that domination (Joseph, 2000). In this context, it is possible to assert that the view of Realist theory of hegemony is quite different from that of the Gramscian theory.

Classical realism puts particular importance on state as a unitary player following its own national interests, and the obviation of values and morals within the framework of

international relations (Morgenthau and Thompson, 1985,p. 166). With another saying, the main actors in the international system are the sovereign states and foreign policy can only be carried out by the states. States are unitary beings, and just like individuals, they have their own goals, and act as conscious rational actors for achievement of these goals. It would not be wrong to claim that power is the main driving force from the outlook of this understanding; because the states try to increase their power to the maximum level in order to carry out their interests to a higher level and raise the foreign policy as the target board. This indicates the main goals of all states in the international system are to achieve some kind of hegemonic power. Of course, military and economic powers are the basic elements to reach this position. The realist theory suggests that the most important element required for any country to become a hegemonic power is its material capabilities and resources. In this context, it is emphasized that being superior in military, economic, geographical and industrial fields are key factors in transformation of any state into hegemonic power, while the importance of culture and discourses are underestimated.

The realist theory of hegemony, has come to the fore immediately after the Second World War as the first comprehensive and systematic approach in the discipline of international relations and treats hegemony as the superior power of a state or group of states. Since the second half of the 20th century, realism has been one of the main paradigms of the US, together with the motive to spread and legitimize its needs, interests and views worldwide (Yarmolenka, 2014, p.11).

Although the international system was quite simple in the 1950s and 1960s, it was bipolar and hierarchically organized in Cold War era. Realism led by Morgenthau (1993), became the dominant paradigm of the period, marked the hegemony and international system debates. In fact, the power of realism in hegemony and international system discussions during this period stemmed from the suitable ambiance after the Second World War and especially the position of the US (Wohlforth, 1994). In the post-war atmosphere, while the US is aiming to establish an order under its leadership, the conceptual tools of realism were based on the foundation of such an order in the context of power and interest. Perhaps for this reason, Hoffman (1977), one of the leading thinkers of the discipline of international relations, described realism as an important tool for the rationalization of the US Cold War policy. However, the international system has moved from bipolar simple structure to a more complex structure since the early 1970s. Meanwhile, both the Western Bloc represented by the US and the Eastern Bloc represented by the Soviet Russia have undergone tremors, and subsequently, tensions have increased, and different approaches to economic and political issues have been brought to agenda. Addition, realism was ineffective in elucidating the advancements taking place in the international money and oil markets in the 1970s. Consequently, realism was inadequate in clarifying the international system and the concept of hegemony in that period. This brought new and different perspective to the concept of hegemony. Essentially, neo-realism, the modern version of realism, emphasizes the consent dimension of hegemony on the maintenance of the hegemonic power, unlike classical realism (Waltz, 2004, pp. 2-6). Subsequently, neo-realism argued that the world order could be carried out by creation of the common interests.

Neorealism is sort of a new version of realism. Neorealism has parlayed by the discernment opened up by the agency of Kenneth Waltz. Waltz has intensified his analysis predominantly on the bipolar world system which has grown out of after the Second World War and the Cold

War. Waltz stood upon that the bipolar system was a fruit of the Cold War, by asserting this structure would proceed even after the break down of the Soviet Union (Waltz, 1988, 1990, 1993, 2004). The balance of power system is viable in an anarchic international system from Waltz's standpoint. According to Waltz the hegemonic one, that is, an imperialist one, which have the features of having dominance and leadership of an all-powerful state (Gill, 1991, p. 278).

There are other different perspectives comprised in the Neo-Realist theory of hegemony. As examples, one of which is the Charles P. Kindleberger's (1975) Hegemonic Stability Theory and the other is the After Hegemony thesis developed by Robert O. Keohane (1984). The Hegemonic Stability Theory links the stability of the international system to the existence and maintenance of the hegemonic power, because the international system is hinged on the concepts of an anarchic international order and power balances (Kindleberger, 1975: 305; Keohane, 1984, p. 31). As stated by Kindleberger: "for the world economy to be stabilized, there has to be stabilizer, one stabilizer" (1975, p. 305). Within this aspect, the hegemonic stability theory presumes that when there is a strong dominant power, there will be stability; but, when a strong power begins to slip and a new challenger rises and a war is more likely. In other words, in case of the decline of a hegemon, the international system entered into instability. Thus the neo-realist apprehension of hegemony pays particular attention specifically on the leading roles of the state within the framework of international relations, and describes the hegemon as the main element of order in an anarchical inter-state system (Milner, 1998, p.113).

On the other hand, contrary to the Hegemonic Stability Theory, After Hegemony thesis claims stability is not associated with the continuation of hegemony, and even if hegemonic power is weakened, it is sufficient for the actors of the system to benefit rationally from the cooperation for the continuation of the international order. However, although it is the subject of different theses, in the end, the definition of hegemony based on material power and excluding the ideology element remains much narrower than the concept of Gramscian definition and consideration of hegemony (Snidal, 1985; Grunberg, 1990).

Robert Gilpin (1981, 1987, 1988 and 2001) also gave a different perspective to the concept of hegemony and left its mark on this period. Unlike other (neo)-realists, he focused on international economic processes rather than military and economic issues and pointed the multinational corporations out whose influence rapidly increased and intensified in the United States especially. He has demonstrated how the activities of the United States' multinational corporations have gained importance and their roles in the international system and the United States' hegemony. He claimed that being the leading hegemonic power in the international system cannot be constrained only by military and economic powers of a state, but, the role played by international private organizations and multinational corporations' international connections in order to increase cooperation and ensure consent. In this period, the subject of internationalization of capital is also being at the forefront. Gilpin stated that there was an exigency for a hegemonic state in the international system for the internationalization of capital as well as multinational corporations, non-state private organizations (Gilpin, 1976, pp. 184-191) he generally established a connection between the existence of the internationalization of capital by means of the US multinational corporations. Further, he brought forward that and the stability of the international system of the 1970s is one of the important corollaries of the US hegemony. Concisely neo-realist theory of hegemony

is relied on an idea that strong international economic order is possible only with the presence of a hegemon state that provides international public services, such as security, peace, and freedom as accentuated. Markets can only be managed and operated best in an environment where these services being provided.

By the change of the international order of the 1970s, some other approaches have emerged giving new perspectives to the international system and hegemony. One of them is the liberal institutionalism. According to liberal institutionalism, the international system underwent a significant change in the 1970s, and this led to the evolution of the concept of hegemony. With the increasing involvement of non-state private actors in the international system, a more complex world was formed in which interdependence relations enhanced. Therefore, the international system and hegemony were becoming more and more difficult to study within the conceptual tools of realism and neorealism (Keohane and Nye, 1972, 1974 and 2001).

From the perspective of liberal institutionalism, hegemon state has both motivation and necessary skills in establishing and supporting open regimes whose existence depend on the presence of the hegemon state. With another saying, establishing and maintaining an open world economy require a strong and authoritative leader. Hegemonic power must control raw materials, capital resources and the market on a global scale. On the other hand, it must have a competitive advantage in the production of high value-added goods, and must be stronger than all states in the international system in order to manage international economic relations. On the other hand, liberal institutionalism argues that the hegemonic power must be willing to govern the international system. Further, liberal institutionalism does not consider military power as a dominant element of hegemony; it claims that hegemonic power should have military capacity at a certain level. Keohane (2001) argues the hegemon cannot use its military power directly so as to achieve its economic goals. He highlights the concept of *complex interdependence* rather than military power. Keohane and Nye characterize interdependence as reciprocal impacts among actors arising from international transactions, movements of money, goods, people and messages across international boundaries (Keohane and Nye, 1989, pp. 8–9).

As may be understood so far, while Realist Theory emphasizing the dominant role of state in the process by reducing that concept only to the element of military and economic powers, Liberal Institutionalists purport that the role of state institution has decreased in the system especially since the 1970s, and a network of relations being directed by transnational actors has come in sight. There is a global restructuring of capitalism by these actors. Gill (1993) analyzed the restructuring of global capitalism and global production in the context of structural change has taken place in the 1970s. He asserted that there was a shift from the historical blocs that had been going on since the Second World War to the transnational historical blocs formed by neoliberal forces (Transnational class, transnational capital, transnational state, transnational institution, transnational corporations emerged within the framework of transnational and neoliberal transformation of capitalism) in the 1970s (Gill, 1993, p. 40). The subject where the ideas of both views are common is that hegemony is achieved through the construction of a system and the institutional structures building this order have great importance for the continuity of hegemony (Yavuzaslan, 2015, p.196).

However, roughly after 1980s, some other theories have emerged handling the concept of hegemony and international system discussions which have included in the analysis of the

leadership and organization of the political, intellectual and moral discourses of different class-related forces, a particular class or fractional group, with a Neo-Gramscian perspective.

Neo-Gramscian Theory of Hegemony in International Relations (IR): Critique of the State-Centric & Ahistoric Approach of the Realist and Neo-Realist Theories

In its most general description, the Neo-Gramscian concept of hegemony bases upon a structural concept of power, where the constitution of stable, hegemonic order implies a strong fit or compatibility between dominant *ideas, institutions and material capabilities* at both national and international levels in the global political economy. It can be argued that such a hegemonic fit has also generally exists with respect to the relations of the major capitalist powers in the post-war global political economy (Gill, 1986, p. 206).

The Gramscian hegemony discourse was applied to international relations widely by Robert Cox and Stephen Gill, which was based on an understanding that has considered the system of states from the perspective of internal social forces and more generally from the perspective of global social and economic change, in contrast to statist, military and economic power-oriented Realist, Neo-Realist and Liberal theories. It is the Post-Positivist and Post-Realist approach adopted by the Neo-Gramscian understanding. Through these approaches, this understanding has tended to explain the connections among internal social forces, state structures and world politics. By using the method of historical materialism, Neo-Gramscian analysis has extended research beyond traditional international relations theories focusing on statist, military and economic powers by widening the realm of hegemony which reigns relied on a congruent unification or harmony between an alignment of material capabilities, the common collective sight of world order and a range of institutions which direct the world order with a specific appearance of universality (Cox, 1981, p. 139; Linklater, 1989, pp. 28-29). It particularly criticizes state-centric and ahistorical perspective of those mainstream international relations theories. In contrast to mainstream courses to hegemony in international relations which cultivate a static theory of politics, an abstract ahistorical formulation of state and recourse to cosmic soundness (Cox, 1981, pp. 128-132). Opposed to the constant and ahistorical structure of the social world, Neo-Gramscian theory points and directs to ensure a mentality of changeable and transhistorical courses. The presumption of neutrality in knowledge production is given a grilling as Neo-Gramscian theory acknowledges that:

“Theory is always for someone, and for some purpose...All theories have a perspective. Perspectives derive from a position in time and space, specifically social and political time and space. (...) There is (...) no such thing as theory in itself, divorced from a standpoint in time and space” (Cox 1981, pp. 128-129).

Neo-Gramscian theory presumes that the state and its pivotal role in expressing the interests of capital being at center stage; however, it focuses on an integrative apprehension of the state as “a complex congregation of institutions, organizations and forces”. The hegemonic triangle formed by material capabilities, ideas and institutions gains tangibility within social, economic and political structures and any hegemonic power cannot come to life by having only one of these elements (Cox, 1983). Cox's approach to the shaping of these structures is being in line with the Gramscian perspective which he adapted to international relations. While discussing the formations and effects of social, political and economic structures; states, including hegemon power, are not being uniformized and analyzed by taking into consideration only

civil society and their relations with social forces. Transnational powers are also taken into account.

Cox (1987, p. 7) defines hegemony as a mechanism created by a dominant state, leaned upon the consent element in an ideological context, securing the superiority of the leader state, operating in accordance with general principles, and providing a certain level of satisfaction for other states. With another saying, he often defined hegemony as a state dominating over other states in the international system. While a country is being on its way to become hegemonic power, it tries to appear as if considering the interests of other countries. Therefore, it tries to impose its own administration on other countries. In this context, international institutions and organizations eliminate opposing ideas during the formation process of hegemony, and provide support of other countries, thus forming the world system as elements which help the hegemonic power in propagation of the desired order within the structures of the passive revolution (Cox, 1996, p. 139).

Unlike reducing hegemony to a single dimension based on the material capabilities of states such as the economic and military powers, the Neo-Gramscian viewpoint underlines the need of harmony among material abilities, institutions and ideas for the establishment and functioning of a versatile and complex hegemony. This situation was previously called the historical bloc (*blocco storico*) by Gramsci as previously mentioned. In addition, by developing Gramsci's remaining views at the national level; Neo-Gramscian theory introduced the concept of transnational historical bloc. The transnational historical bloc more broadly refers to the alliance of different class forces, politically being organized around the whole set of hegemonic ideas that give consistency and a strategic goal to its foundational elements (Cox, 1983, pp. 162-165). In addition, its leaders must be consciously engaged with a planned struggle for emergence of a new transnational historical bloc. Every new transnational historical bloc does not only need power in the field of civil society and economy, but it also needs persuasive ideas, arguments and initiatives that establish, maintain and develop its political system and administration (Gill, 2003: 58).

In order to see the form in which the concept of the transnational historical bloc takes place in practice, the world order setted up after the Second World War would be a substantial guide. Cox has especially dealt with the supremacy of the United States at the time of his studies. Just after the Second World War, Pax-Americana based on the restructuring of the social and economic foundations of Western Europe and Japan within the framework of the Marshall Plan, and the New Deal based on Fordist production style and state planning through Keynesianism were being at the center of a transnational historical bloc built on the internationalization of the state form (Gill, 2003, p. 57). There was a posture being forged historically specific way in which mass production was institutionalized for the purpose of thrusted modes of American centered leadership and world hegemony in the post Second World War period (Rupert, 1995). US have played an active role in reconstruction of the advanced capitalist states along liberal democratic lines. Moreover, the US supremacy in the international system was developed through an outward expansion of the American historical bloc which propagates its ideology of neoliberalism within the objective of legitimate the US' claim to power. Cox internalizes Gramsci's assertion that a social class comes out as hegemonic by creating consent among subordinate classes and not through coercion.

Conclusion

Hegemony is a word which gains different meanings and interpretations in the context of schools of different scholars and views belonging to international political economy. The origin of the word dates till back to Ancient Greece. The word was also used in the middle ages and then, it was in use again in the 19th century. It literally means accepting dominant and superior power through consent, without the force of a gun; even it is not entirely a consensus. In other saying, hegemony describes the leadership of a social group, individual or states in terms of material or abstract influence and guiding superiority over other groups and states. Similarly, today hegemony mainly is that a state in the international system imposes its superior dominant power on economic, military, social, cultural, ideological, institutional and political issues in order to keep up its regional and global interests.

Gramsci, the theorist who first used the concept of hegemony, examined the meaning of hegemony without ruling out the historical perspective. Gramsci regarded hegemony as the domination of a class over other classes in society, or the domination of a state over other states. Gramsci evaluated hegemony as the superiority of a dominant group as domination and intellectual and moral leadership in the concrete relations between the rulers and the ruled. From Gramsci's point of view, it would not be difficult to hold forth that hegemony is being predicated on the dialectical unity of the elements of coercion and consent. Therefore, in order for any state or class to rise to a hegemonic position, it should not neglect the principle of consent. In the formation of consent, thought and culture play a guiding role. In point of fact that the hegemony is unquestionably a key concept in Gramsci's thought, and it is too broad to be defined in a few words since it is related to many factors. Hegemony is a notion used to investigate the relation of forces in a given society as stated by Gill and Law (1989, p. 476). Further, it is a process in which a certain way of life and thoughts are being dominant in a society, and a single concept of reality is being evident with all its institutional and special aspects. In addition, it is essentially the order that expresses all tastes, ethics, traditions, religious and political principles, and all social relations, particularly the sociopolitical situation in which their intellectual and moral connotations are being absorbed into the whole society. Thus, hegemony is a concept including cultural, social, political and economic fields. Gramsci's understanding of hegemony is stood up a holistic framework.

On the other hand, realist theory equates hegemony with the distribution and mobilization of source which make possible the hegemon to exert over other actors (Gill, 1986, p. 206; 1991, p. 292). Any hegemonic state can be subsidiary to perpetuate the balance of power by stabilizing the international system. Nevertheless, it is assumed that states competing in the international system quest for a new balance of power. Further, it is emphasized that hegemonic changes in the system may occur by means of the great power wars. Although realism drew attention to the concept of hegemony from certain aspects, it did not offer a conceptualization of the state. Realist theory evaluates the state only from the perspective of the global balance of power. Hegemonic state characterized as the most powerful state in the international system both economically and militarily, through the ignorance of the political, cultural, institutional and ideological aspects. In addition, realist theory has closed its eyes to the class relations of the capitalist state. Moreover, realism was in a failure to represent the reconstruction of international consent. Since, by means of a positivist approach, it looked upon the notion of hegemony as the dominance exercised by a state over other states in a certain territory or as a field of domain. Realism did not take into account the cultural aspect of the term and the consent of the dependent actors in the international system. Therefore, it can be affirmed that the level of analysis of realism is confined with the state and the international system.

Neo-Realist theory of hegemony bases on the assertion that the international system would remain unstable unless it is stabilized by any country. In another saying, it matched with the sight that the relative decline in the power of the hegemonic state would pave the way for disorder, enhancing antagonisms between the capitalist states and a breakdown in the post-war liberalizing international economic order (Gill, 1986, p. 205). Theory associates hegemony with the dominance of one state over others in the system. From such a perspective, the features that distinguish the hegemon from other states in the international system are that it is being the provider of international public goods, the last lender, the final market, the guarantor of international monetary stability, and the strongest state militarily. However, considering hegemony as a phenomenon that may only exist through the assistance of military and economic power elements would not yield correct results, especially in today's world.

Liberal institutionalism connects the continuation of a hegemonic order with the foundation of a liberal economic order, by claiming that if an international capitalist system based on liberal economic foundations is established, world order in the absence of hegemonic power would be possible. Although liberal theory has expanded the scope of the analysis of hegemony, it also has some gaps and omissions. Liberalism has passed off the social relations of production, which are being the source of profit and class distinction in the capitalist societies in the international system. However, these relations are important points that should not be blocked out for any power to reach a hegemonic position.

Neo-Gramscian theory, brought a new perspective to Gramscian theory of hegemony, and revealed the importance of international institutions and organizations, material capacities and ideas for hegemony, especially in today's conditions by asserting dominance by a powerful state may be an essential but not an adequate stipulation of hegemony. It regards hegemony as being created by coherence between social forces, including inter-state relations (Gill, 1986: 205). Neo-Gramscian perspectives reconsiders sovereign ontological presumptions in International Political Economy by virtue of a theory of hegemony that directs attention on social forces generated by changes in the social relations of production, forms of state and world order. Hinged upon an intersubjective ontology and historicist epistemology, the Neo-Gramscian theory of hegemony investigates the appearance and transformation of international regimes, international institutions and social-power relations as fixed firmly in particular historical structures (Cox, 1981, p. 89). Historical structures mirror the mutual coaction between material capabilities, ideas and institutions by means of which social forces form the ideological framework of the world order and united international regimes (Overbeek, 2004, p. 118). The studies of Cox and Gill can be interpreted as a new critique about analyzes of the state-centric and ahistorical neo-realist theory of hegemony. Their studies have illuminated the processes of historical change that have seen paved the way for significant progresses in International Political Economy, particularly in the context of the methodology and theory. Further, they have offered insights into nature of capitalism, the state and the institutions.

As a result, despite the differences in the perspectives of various international relations theories on the international system and the notion of hegemony, the main point that they converge is the existence of the hegemonic power. Hegemony has long been a prominent notion within the study of International Relations, as well as the social sciences mostly, and a concept used by analysts to figure out contemporary cases. Building on a substantial historical framework, this study follows up the different characterizations and explications of hegemony

in international political economy and demonstrates that the concept keeps going to be a contested one. It is also possible that new perspectives on the concept of hegemony and new theories formed by these perspectives would come forward in the future. It is expected that consequential events to be experienced in the world that would bring along radical economic, political, social and cultural outcomes would be effective in the occurrence of these theories.

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Instructions

1. Here, in consideration of the collapse of the Bretton Woods System, which had been build up near the end of the Second World War, many expected to observe which state might sit in for the United States as the hegemonic leader in the international system. Yet, as we fast-forward to the early 1990s, we discern that the US rose from the Cold War as the unique surviving superpower and not as a collapsing economic power, and hegemony turned back to the forefront of study within International Political Economy. Since this study includes conceptual analysis from the emergence of hegemony to the present day, rather than the analysis of American hegemony, superficial information about this process is incorporated.

2. World-system theory is an interdisciplinary dealing to world history and social change which lays stress on the world-system as the central unit of social analysis (Chirot and Hall, 1982; Sorinel, 2010; Wallerstein, 1974). World-system breaks the world into core countries, semi-periphery countries, and the periphery countries. Core countries sets sight on on higher-skill, capital-intensive production, and the remaining of the world centers upon low-skill, labor-intensive production and extraction of raw materials and this continuously consolidates the domination of the core countries both on the peripheral and semi-peripheral countries and also on the international system (Wallerstein, 1974, 2004). International system represents a world-economy stand upon the capitalist economy, which can be denominated as the international capitalist system. For a while, particular countries rise as the world hegemon; during the last few centuries, as the world-system has expanded geographically and became intense economically, this status has passed through the Netherlands, to the Britain and to the United States in more recent times. In the course of the history of the modern world system, a group of core countries has contested for achieve to the world's resources, economic domination, and hegemony over semi-peripheral and peripheral states. From time to time, one core state seized domination over the others. World-system theory was firstly constructed by Immaunel Wallerstein. Many world system theorists, particularly Immanuel Wallerstein and Giovanni Arrighi, regard their studies as an

amplification of Fernand Braudel and the Annales School of French Historical Thought. Wallerstein puts forward that hegemony “means more than mere leadership but less than outright empire” (Quoted in Ferguson, 2003: 156). It is “a state able to impose its set of rules on the interstate system, and thereby create temporarily a new political order” (Quoted in Ferguson, 2003: 156). Wallerstein belongs to the group of advocates who refuse the realist and liberal theory of state conflict or cooperation, and instead puts a stress on economic and material sides. In his opinion, the interplay of world powers operates on the basis of an integrated capitalist system, and states essentially look after the interest of the capital accumulated in their national or regional sphere. Arrighi’s approach to hegemony is also quite different and groundbreaking in the literature also. In his *Long Twentieth Century*, Arrighi (1994) took on Braudel’s understanding on the repetitive uptrend of finance, transforming it into an assertion about the financialization of modern capitalism. Arrighi’s actual concern nevertheless, lay in enlarging upon a theory of historical hegemony in the evolvement of capitalism. Arrighi alleged that the capitalist world economy apt to include a hegemonic power that makes headway in a cyclical type. Hegemonic powers replace each other as their skillfulness in production and trade reduces, while the domain of finance enhances. Financialization for this reason symbolize autumn in the recurrent orbit of a certain hegemonic power (Arrighi, 1994: 246). The historical trajectory of hegemony has passed over Genoa, the Netherlands, Britain and the US, respectively (Arrighi, 1994, 30-31; Arrighi and Silver, 2001). At every turn, the preponderant power has risen to some extent by being useful to itself of the financial sources of the collapsing and financializing hegemon.