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THE PROCESS OF GLOBALIZATION IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

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Abstract

The changing nature of state and society has created a new era for international politics, i.e., global society. The theoretical base of globalization reveals that structural variables do not constrain actors but also provide them with some opportunities. Globalization, as an ongoing process, has started in the 19th century. Technological changes, financial integration, and internationalization of services have been considered as the primary causes of globalization. The growth of international trade after the Second World War has been one of the engines of globalization. Therefore, business and economic activities are accepted as prevailing types in the process of globalization.

Keywords: International Relations, Global Society, The Process of Globalization, Interdependence, World Economy.

Uluslararası Politikada Küreselleme Süreci

Özet

Uluslararası ilişkilerin çalışma alanı, ulusal sınırları aşan bir karaktere sahip olduğu için, doğasının “küresel” olduğu kabul edilebilir. Devletler arasındaki ilişkilerin derinleşmesi; uluslararası aktörlerin yayılması ve daha etkili olmaya başlaması; ve siyasi konularda ulusal ve ulusal sınırları aşan olaylardaki farklılıkların ve benzerliklerin anlaşılmaya başlanması, uluslararası ilişkilerin sözkonusu karakteristliğini pekiştirmiştir. Bu da, geleneksel ulus-devlet sisteminden farklı olarak, değişik düzeylerde ulusların sınırlarını aşan yaklaşımların oluşmasına olanak sağlamıştır. Bu çerçevede, devletlerin ve toplumların değişen doğası ve ekonominin sınır ötesi mahiyetinin gelişmesi ve derinleşmesi, uluslararası politika çalışmaları için yeni bir çağ yaratmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Uluslararası İlişkiler, Küresel Toplum, Küreselleme Süreci, Karşılıklı Bağımlılık, Dünya Ekonomisi.

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Introduction

Since, the *raison d'être* of the field of International Relations (IR) involves a relationship transcending national level, the nature of the study of IR can be considered as global. The global characteristic of IR has been enforced and developed by international transactions such as deepening connections among states, spreading international actors, and realizing differences and similarities between domestic and international politics. This, therefore, has created a multi-leveled international approach, different from traditional nation-state system¹. Within this framework, changing the nature of state and society, and varying the context of political economy can be seen as important aspects of creating a new epoch for international politics².

This article tries to focus on development of globalization process in IR, considering business and economic transactions, in particular. Since the nature of international proceedings is considered as global, the essential character of the current phase can be evaluated as "global society". Similarly, the effects of open market economy and free international trade have been affecting socio-political context of international transactions. The notions of global society and free international trade have been accepted as core values of the current system in the world. In that context, therefore, the article examines economic and business transactions as locomotive powers of global movement. In doing this, the article analyzes rapid technological changes, international market integration, and internationalizing of services as prime causes of globalization. It also regards energy resources as significant contributors to international cooperation.

Moreover, the global description of the current system can easily be discerned not only by interdependent relationships of governments and intergovernmental institutions, but also by multilateral transactions based on non-governmental organizations (NGOs), citizens' movements, transnational corporations, academia, and the mass media³. These complicated interrelationships and transactions have reinforced the sense of human solidarity, on the basis of increasing their capacity, and constituted a foundation for the emergence of global civil society. It is worth, therefore, to examine and contribute to the concept of globalization as an evolving subject under the aegis of global society.

¹ Norgaard, Ole, Thomas Pedersen and Nikolaj Petersen (editors). The European Community in World Politics. Pinter Publishers, London and New York, 1993, p.27

² Gill, Stephen and James H. Mittelman (editors). Innovation and Transformation in International Studies. Cambridge University Press, 1997, p.6

³ Our Global Neighborhood, The Report of the Commission on Global Governance, Oxford University Press, 1995, p.335

Global Society and Globalization

Society is known as the totality of social relations and today, since all forms of social relations everywhere in the world are based on global networks, society is, in this sense, can be seen as global.

In the post-Cold War period the structure of national societies has been changed. This new situation has created both the idea of pluralism and multi-ethnicity as well as new form of migration and cultural diversity. Within this framework, therefore, the idea of global society and different forms of social identity has grown while the idea of national societies has declined⁴.

Like some other researchers, Roland Robertson suggests that the idea of declining national societies can be evaluated as early stages of globalization. He also put forwards that conflict can lead to awareness of mutual dependence and promotes development of common responses that contributes to cooperation⁵.

In today's politics, global crises can be seen as principal ways of defining and explaining global society because conflicts affecting states converge them in order to find a solution to common problems. Global crises are important not only because of their harmful effects to human beings but because it is through such crises that one can identify global society and development of its institutions⁶. Therefore, it is not difficult to say that environmental, economic, social and political crises are parts of the bigger perspective of worldwide social relations.

Global crises have also played an important role to stimulate global consciousness that represents the awakening of global awareness. Global society exists in interdependent relationships with the state system as well as international institutions. In this context, the needs of a society can be met by different international organizations, as well.

The above-mentioned structure of global understanding and interdependent relations are sometimes stated within an ideological perspective explaining the core subject. According to Immanuel Wallerstein's "world system" approach⁷, for instance, globalization is considered as development of a unified world-system, dominated by

⁴ As far as the concept of "global society" is concerned, human behavior and basic human needs should be taken into consideration as a link between biology and the international system. For more information, see: Burton, John (editor). Conflict: Human Needs Theory, Macmillan, 1990, pp. 60-81

⁵ Shaw, Martin. Global Society and International Relations (Sociological Concepts and Political Perspectives). Polity Press, 1994, p.13

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ According to Wallerstein, state behavior is determined by the structure of capitalist world economy (CWE) rather than interstate political structure. For more information on CWE, see: Hobson, M. John. The State and International Relations, Cambridge University Press, 2000, pp.134-142.

the socio-economic relationship of capitalism in which division between economic, political and social relationships are considered artificial⁸.

International Political Economy, moreover, is one of the new subjects for international relations that connects economy and international politics within the framework of ideas of global economy, global market and global socio-economic system. This is a sign of economic, cultural and political development globally, independent of relations between states⁹. Thus, individuals and groups develop relationships with international institutions beyond national context. In this sense, therefore, the concept of civil society can be extended to the global level.

Thus, global society, having the largest context of social relationships, is understood as a field of unifying forces of production, trade, communication, culture, and political transactions that interact with many differentiations. The distinctiveness, however, is seen as a group of forms – some of them global, some are starting to be global, and others still limited to national contexts. To Giddens, for instance, globalization creates opportunities for actors, as well as crises in which they have to remake their own lives and identities. He also put forwards that a global society is dominated by knowledge-based abstract systems that coordinate human activity as well as constrain individual action and choices¹⁰.

A Theoretical Perspective for Globalization: Structural Approach

Theoretically, globalization can be analyzed through the process of structural approach¹¹. This approach postulates the significance of two independent variables, structure (rules and resources implicated in social reproduction) and agency (capacity to make a difference or “transformation capacity”), interacting in an ongoing historical process¹². According to this approach, structure and agency are mutually constituted in an ongoing process that paradoxically both harden but yet fracture structures and constrain but yet empower agents, in a reciprocal, interactive process over time¹³.

⁸ Olson, C. William and A.J.R. Groom. International Relations Then and Now, Origins and Trends in Interpretation. Harper Collins Academic, 1991, p.226-242

⁹ Shaw, *op.cit.*, p.8

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ This approach has been dealt with by Anthony Giddens in “The Constitution of Society” in 1984

¹² Cerny, G. Philip. “Political Agency in a Globalizing World: Toward a Structural Approach”. European Journal of International Relations. Volume 6, Number 4, December 2000. p.438

¹³ The process of structure-agent interaction revolves around two dimensions. The first is the character of the structural context of action. It emphasizes whether structural constraints are tight or loose, i.e., whether or not material conditions limit actors’ room for maneuver in a quasi-coercive manner. The second involves the orientations of individual or group actors themselves. It explains whether actors are structure-bound or transformational - i.e., whether they are not only in possession of adequate material resources to pursue effective strategies of change but also strategically aware of the existence of alternative possibilities and motivated enough to try to effect change; *Ibid.*

In the light of the process of structure-agent interaction, globalization can be said to generate a multiple equilibrium based on multi-layered, asymmetric mixture of international, transnational, domestic and local processes¹⁴. Therefore, many structural variables that are involved in the globalization process do not merely constrain actors but also provide them with some opportunities for exercising advantage within that process. Globalization, also, constitutes a loose structural pattern, and presents strategically situated actors with a complex range of opportunities and constraints.

The most significant impact of globalization is in the day-to-day relations which is based on state intervention and state-business-labor interactions, challenging different “national models” of capitalism. Today, economic and business globalization prevail in the system. Neo-liberal ideology¹⁵ requires such developments as inevitable. If state actors enforce economic globalization, then governance structures in the 21st century international system will be likely to reflect the priorities of international capital in a more instrumental way¹⁶.

The Stages and Causes of Globalization

The process of globalization has been started at the beginning of the 19th century. According to some historians, the outbreak of the First World War was the end of the first stage of globalization. In this stage, Great Britain was the dominant power that was challenged by the United States of America (USA), Germany, France, and Japan. After a short period of pause, the Second World War marked the beginning of another stage in which the USA was a hegemonic power¹⁷. In the second stage, trade liberalization, followed by the liberalization of current account payments, revived globalization and contributed to the process of economic and financial integration¹⁸.

These two stages of globalization have had different characteristics. For instance, related with major technological developments in the current phase, the fall in costs

¹⁴ *Ibid*, p.439

¹⁵ Neo-liberalism emphasizes the role of international regimes in helping states to realize common interests. In doing so, neo-liberals portray states as rational egoists who care only for their own gains. International politics is not the realm of pure conflict. Often cooperation would make all participants better off, but it is hard to achieve owing to the pervasive uncertainty that characterizes international life. Neo-liberals argue that regimes help states to cooperate for mutual benefit by reducing uncertainty and informational asymmetries. For more information, see: Hasenclever, Andreas; Peter, Mayer; and Volker, Rittberger.

“Integrating Theories of International Regimes”. *Review of International Studies*. Volume 26, Number 1, January 2000, p.7. Also, for neo-liberal world order, see; Rupert, Mark, *Producing Hegemony: The Politics of Mass Production and American Global Power*. Cambridge Studies in International Relations: 38, 1995, pp.39-58

¹⁶ Cerny, *op. cit.*, p.457

¹⁷ Sarcinelli, Mario. “Globalization after Seattle”, *The International Spectator, A Quarterly Journal of the Istituto Affari Internazionali*. Volume 35, Number 2, April-June 2000, p.58

¹⁸ *Ibid*

of information transmission has been much steeper than the reduction in transportation costs while the opposite took place during the previous one. This has reinforced the globalization trend. Moreover, the presence of integrating agents such as transnational organizations or multinational corporations has been considered as another characteristic for the second stage¹⁹.

Rapid technological change and decreasing the costs of moving goods have been considered as the primary stimulus behind contemporary globalization. For instance, there are three different links between this stimulus and market integration²⁰. First, technological determinism provides a close explanation for the integration of international financial markets. The information technology revolution has rendered capital controls much less effective than ever before. Thus, while multinational firms have increased their international activities, the costs of moving goods and information have decreased. Moreover, governments' removing barriers to foreign ownership of domestic assets have enforced the multi-nationalization of production. Also, political factors have played a larger role in trade liberalization than in the other facets of market integration.

Second, the propensity for international market integration has brought an opportunity to wealthier countries to be integrated into global markets. Third, democracy has both ambiguous and balancing effects on economic policy choice, including international openness. On the one hand, it makes leaders more accountable to their citizens, which would promote openness to the extent that market integration is welfare improving. On the other hand, however, it empowers distributional coalitions with interests in resisting market liberalization.

Therefore, it is easy to say that international financial integration has become an essential force to form globalization. Moreover, the multi-nationalization of production and trade liberalization have distributional implications for different segments of domestic society, to which governments may seek to respond with policies of domestic redistribution²¹.

Another feature might be the internationalizing of services affected by technological innovations. Electronic commerce, for instance, is a new way of doing business between producers and consumers and between producers and producers. In the nineties trade has reached greater numbers, particularly finance, with huge movements of funds and capital, trans-border mergers, and stock market links²².

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p.59, 60

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p.976-977

²¹ *Ibid.*, p.978

²² As stated by Scholte, there are three ways of conceiving of globalization. The first is in terms of relations beyond borders (cross-border), the second in terms of relations opening borders (open-border); and the third in terms of relations spanning borders (trans-border). In the last case, the borders are neither crossed nor opened, but simply transcended. In fact, according to the third concept of globalization, Scholte suggests that global relations are circumstances without any distance and relatively disconnected from a particular location. Sarcinelli, *op. cit.*, p.64-66

Within the context of globalization in today's world, energy resources, such as oil and gas have also been considered as efficient means of promoting international cooperation that increases the impact of economic factors on the entire system of international relations. According to Ivanov²³, for example, oil and gas can be considered as an effective foreign policy weapon and an efficient vehicle for developing mutually beneficial international transactions in expanding new and promising energy markets. In a similar way, Togrul Bagirov²⁴ has stressed that oil and gas are powerful foreign policy weapons, instrument of economic pressure, and at the same time a major incentive²⁵.

Interdependence in Business Sector and World Economy

With greater degrees of interdependence in a globalizing world, the interconnections between social movements are becoming more important. Leaders of social movements are thinking more about how to work together to bring about change on a global level that will have implications on the local level. Raymond C. Offenheiser, President of Oxfam America²⁶, emphasized, for example, that:

“ There are more opportunities today than twenty years ago, because the linkages between actors on different levels is now richer and denser, and technology has enabled a new set of relationships to evolve that was unthinkable twenty years ago”²⁷.

Offenheiser also stressed that;

“I think we have realized that there isn't much basis to the idea that armed struggle is the path for achieving radical social change today. Instead, we need to be savvy and professional, with a sound understanding of the institutions and systems that we are working to change...I don't think alliance building is a new concept. The anti-slavery movement of the 19th century was a global movement that united all sorts of organizations...into coalitions and alliances... So the alliances idea is not now new, but the technologies available to carry it out are different.”²⁸

He concludes that;

²³ Ivanov, I. “Addresses to the Readers of the Special Issue of International Affairs on Russia's Oil and Gas Strategy for the 21st. Century”. International Affairs, A Russian Journal of World Politics, Diplomacy and International Relations. Volume 46, Number 2, 2000, p.2

²⁴ Executive Vice President of the Moscow International Petroleum Club.

²⁵ Ivanov, *op. cit.*, p.10

²⁶ Oxfam America is an organization dedicated itself to finding long-term solutions to poverty, hunger, and social injustice around the world.

²⁷ Offenheiser, Raymond. “Development in An Era of Globalization: An Interview with Raymond C. Offenheiser, President of Oxfam America”. The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs. (The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University), Volume 24-2, Fall 2000, pp.99, 100

²⁸ *Ibid.*

“...globalization has created more kinds of challenges, and therefore our work demands new skills, new vision, new interactions with institutions we have not historically worked with, and new methodologies to work at global, regional and national levels.”²⁹

To some researchers, globalization is a process with many positive sides because it makes easier for the states to cooperate in the field of economy, stimulate economic growth, and leads to exchange of high technologies in the economic, scientific, technological, and intellectual spheres which promotes progress throughout the world³⁰.

From the point of economic development, a new political philosophy for the contemporary world has been taking into consideration as one of the positive sides of globalization process. This so-called new economy that based on the revolution in information technologies³¹, looks for the best possible balance between the market, state and society. This approach, therefore, blends traditional liberal orientations with the European social-democratic ideas. According to the supporters of “new economy”, states should invest more and more into human capital by bringing more money to science and education. To them, it has a clear economic dimension including the need to reform the Bretton Woods institutions, a new way of multilateral trade talks, and integration of the developing countries into world economy³².

The industrialized powers have been discussing the “development” problems with the emphasis on finance in exchange for good governance, the rule of law, economic reforms, transparency, democratic elections, human rights, and ecological standards. “Sustainable development” is a balanced approach to socioeconomic development, protection of favorable environment and of the natural resources. Coherence is important in the globalization context for economic, financial, and social policies on the national and international levels. Social aspects of globalization receive much more attention than before which means that it should be oriented to a much greater degree on human’s varied needs and requirements, that its negative effects on people should be minimized as the “human face” of globalization means³³.

In a nutshell, therefore, it can be said that the growth of international trade after the Second World War has been one of the engines of the globalizing economy. While the world production quadrupled in the early second part of the 20th century, the total export of goods of all countries increased 17 times. In the early 1980s however,

²⁹ *Ibid*, p.105, 109

³⁰ Stukalo, A and T. Avdeeva. “Globalization of the World Economy”. International Affairs, A Russian Journal of World Politics, Diplomacy and International Relations. Volume 46, Number 4, 2000, p.60

³¹ Information technology revolution has contributed to global financial flows and resulted in increasing national-level moves to capital account liberalization in the 1990s. (*Ibid*, p.960)

³² Stukalo, *op. cit.*, p.61

³³ *Ibid*, p.63

the growth in production and export in industrialized countries dropped considerably, as did international trade. This period was marked by the demise of the system of fixed exchange rates established at Bretton Woods and the beginning of the developing countries was to introduce non-tariff barriers to trade³⁴.

From the mid-eighties to the mid-nineties, there was another acceleration in the growth of international trade. This was brought on by a change from a growth model based on import substitution to a model based on the opening up of markets, the development of exports, and the inflow of capital, which in turn brought technology and managerial skills. Parallel with this change, developing countries increased their share of world manufacturing production that took a leading role in satisfying international demand for goods with their exports, and increased their imports and contributing to maintaining international economy. Therefore, as a consequence of progress in technology³⁵ and the internationalization of production, manufactured goods are not only more complex today than they were in the past, but can now also be broken down into an increasing number of components and stages³⁶.

Anti-Globalist Approach

In the postwar period, there has been an ironic reversal of attitudes toward globalization. While rich-countries supported globalization after the Second World War, leading to the liberal international economic order, poor countries considered it as a peril rather than an opportunity. Today, however, policymakers in poor countries are abandoning national-based attitudes while rich-country leaders are reinventing the fears of policymakers in poor countries³⁷.

Anti-globalist campaigns generally focus on the deterioration of workers' wages, and income inequality. In that context, for instance, it is alleged that the deterioration of unskilled worker's real wages in the 1980s and early 1990s resulted from trade and foreign investment. The supporters of the globalist process responded to that allegation by suggesting that trade with poor countries has not produced poor people. To them, trade may have moderated the decline in real wages that other factors such as skilled-labor-saving technical changes were forcing³⁸.

By the same token, the supporters of the globalist process responded to the "income inequality" question by saying that inequality's consequences will differ hugely across countries, from negative to positive effects. According to globalists,

³⁴ *Ibid*

³⁵ Progress in technology is one of the perspectives of the rapid pace of international market integration in recent decades. For more information see: Garrett, Geoffrey. "The Cause of Globalization". Comparative Political Studies. Volume 33, Numbers 6-7, August-September 2000, p.942

³⁶ Stukalo, *op. cit.*, p.61- 63

³⁷ Bhagwati, Jagdish. "Globalization in Your Face, A New Book Humanizes Global Capitalism" (Book Review). Foreign Affairs. July/August 2000, p.136

³⁸ *Ibid.*

therefore, aggregating these errors is the fallacy of inappropriate solutions to globalization's alleged problems³⁹.

Conclusion

The facilities of the United Nations Organization can be considered as a reflection of the development of global process. Thus, it might, hopefully, be more explanatory to mention different phases of the United Nations (UN) as concluding remarks of the article. Since the UN is composed of almost all states in the world interacting with each other under the aegis of UN resolutions, the historical development of the UN with its prominent sessions can easily convey the basic idea of globalization with its historical development.

In 1960, at the 15th session of the UN General assembly, for example, leaders of the member states were discussing the ideology of anti-colonialism. The agenda of that session was about a transition from colonial domination to the path of independent development that brought about the "Third World". Anti-colonialist ideology, therefore, formed many aspects of international life, politics, economic development, and public consciousness. Anti-colonial process was effective until even 1990s when these countries had to redefine their status with respect to one of the world power centers.

In 1995, at the 50th jubilee session of the UN General Assembly, the leaders of the member states put forward the importance of the end of global confrontation between two ideologically opposed systems. This attempt brought forth the basic principles of a new world order that could open the way to a new setup in the world⁴⁰. The UN's 50th anniversary, in September 1995, was sending a clear signal: A new world era was coming - an era of the United States (US) leadership and the emergence of new forces on the world arena. The 50th session was defining the new politico - economic situation in the world⁴¹.

In 2000, the third meeting of world leaders has marked a new world ideology: globalization. This ideology was a core of the report presented by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan. The report contains a highly relevant passage:

"Our post-war institutions were built for an international world, but we now live in a global world. Responding effectively to this shift is the core institutional challenge for world leaders today"⁴².

He also added:

³⁹ *Ibid*

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, p.23

⁴¹ Piadyshev, Boris. "The UN Millennium Summit" . International Affairs, A Russian Journal of World Politics, Diplomacy and International Relations. Volume 46, Number 6, 2000, p.20

⁴² *Ibid*, p.24

“globalization is a natural process. Just as in any natural process, someone loses and someone gains as a result, but evolution follows the mainstream course no matter what. A network of interdependent financial, economic, information, and other links have enveloped the planet”⁴³

In the UN’s 50th anniversary, another development consolidated the importance of globalization. The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) has proclaimed the year 2000 as the International Year for the Culture of Peace⁴⁴. It basically states that:

“...the linkage between peace and development and the need for a culture of peace that can lead, through education, science and communication, to the respect of all human rights and the promotion of democracy, tolerance, dialogue, reconciliation, and solidarity, as well as to the international cooperation and economic development, and thus to the sustainable human development”⁴⁵.”

In fact, the UN General Assembly has even proclaimed the first decade of the millennium to be that of the “International Decade for a Culture of Peace⁴⁶ and Nonviolence for the Children of the World (2001-2010).” This was a contribution to the global perspective for the member states. Ambassador Anwarul Karim Chowdhury of Bangladesh, for instance, said:

“as we struggle to address a multitude of problems that transcend borders, a culture of peace and harmony as opposed war, violence, and conflict could provide the foundation for a meaningful alliance for global action.”⁴⁷

Therefore, in the course of developing human society in the world, it is not difficult to mention a comprehensive network of social relationships that include all people. A global system of mitigating tensions among conflicting states; a global economic system with production and markets coordinated on a world scale; elements of a global culture and worldwide networks of communication; political ideas and the possibility of coordinated political action..., all are the end results of a long process of globalization.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ The idea of a culture of peace was first elaborated in a government milieu at the International Congress of Peace in the Minds of Men, held at Yamoussoukro, Cote d’Ivoire in June 1989. Also United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) was urged there by the Congress to construct a new vision of peace by developing a peace culture based on the universal values of respect for life, liberty, justice, solidarity, tolerance, human rights, and equality between women and men. For more information on “culture of peace” see: UN Resolutions; A/RES/52/13 and A/RES/53/243.

⁴⁵ Wadlow, Rene. “The Year 2000: A World Focus upon a Culture of Peace”. International Peace Research Newsletter. Volume 37, Number 1, March 1999, p.53

⁴⁶ In fact, the culture of peace is not only an aim or an ultimate goal of achievement but also a comprehensive process of long-term action to construct the defenses of peace in the minds of women and men. A culture of peace means changing value systems, attitudes, and behavior.

⁴⁷ Wadlow, *op. cit.*, p.54

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