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RISING POWERS AND GLOBALIZATION IN STRUCTURAL REALIST SENSE⁴

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ÖZET: The Globalization is a phenomenon in International Relations which is expected to bring a systemic outputs especially in the polarity of International system. The rising powers concept is referred to indicate the states encouraging shifts in power structure of international system. In this study the structural realist understanding of globalization and rising powers concept will be evaluated. For providing a structural-realist explanation of globalization phenomenon and rising powers concept within the framework of their interrelationship, the implementation of structural realist theory is practiced through referring to Kenneth Waltz's systemic approach to International Politics and John Mearsheimer's explanation of structural Realism.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Rising Powers, Globalization, Structural Realism.

1. STRUCTURAL REALISM AND ITS SENSE OF GLOBALIZATON

Traditional Realist theoretical school of International Relations considers an international sphere in which only states exists as political actors and the regulation of the relations among those sovereign states is ruled by the anarchic international system which is the ordering principle of the International Relations. Therefore that propositions bring a principle that states in the international system acts as rational actors in line with their self-interest. And the fundamental common self-interest for the states is to protect their survival in such an anarchic world.

That suggestions and propositions are common in all realist schools of International Relations. However there are distinguishing points by which later schools of realist thought define themselves through. The first and foremost principle is the consideration of the human nature as main driving force of the state behaviour in International System. In classical realism the conflictual characteristics of the International system is came from the egocentric nature of the human.

⁴ Bu makale 26-27 Kasım 2016 tarihlerinde İstanbul'da düzenlenmiş olan International Congress of Management, Economy and Policy adlı kongrede bildiri olarak sunulmuştur.

The systemic approach of structural offers to see globalization as a major systemic transformation of international relations which brought significant effects on the Westphalian structure of state systems (Kay, 2004:15). The reason behind this theoretical preference of this study is based on the fact that globalization has effects on both International System and states' unitary structures. And the structural realism emphasizes on the structure over agent in International System as a determinant of state behaviour (Wendt, 1987:342).

In realist understanding, the globalization process is confronted with scepticism because the erosion of Westphalian values such as territories, boundaries, sovereignty and nation-state system is considered as a major threat for states (Harrison, 2006). The reason behind this consideration lies in the neorealist assumption of states as the only units and actors of International Relations. And as main actors of International Politics states face the threat of losing their fundamental existence in an entirely globalized World because in terms of international politics globalization promises to produce a supra-national humanitarian culture and the disappearing of traditional restrictions imposed by Westphalian state system (Harrison, 2006).

Actually there are very little evidence for suggesting that the sceptical view of realist tradition is maintained by structural realist approach, however the certain emphasizes on states as main actors, the prevalent understanding of security as maintaining the existence of states and considering the international system as division of power leads structural realist point of view on International Politics to be sceptical about globalization process which has liberal/idealist origins and which claims the self-help system is not inevitable. The logic of theoretical inquiry takes structural realist understanding in their position within the debates of globalization.

Structural Realism attaches the biggest importance to the state power as only means of pursuing the national interest and providing security. Accordingly states are inherently eager for power and that situation inevitably produces struggle for power. Thus, the position of power as the only variable in international system leads just a few options for states to follow their interests and security requirements such as setting a balance of power or being so dominant as to bring stability to world order as a hegemon state. Some of the scholars stand for a balance of power, where any attempt by one state to achieve world dominance is countered by collective resistance from other states.

The hegemonic states define and establish international rules and institutions in favour of its own interests and would have the capability for containing conflicts in international system. In structural realist understanding global relations can only be generated by the power struggle between states in various concepts such as hegemony, balance of power, bandwagoning etc.

The fundamentals of realist thought in International Relations and structural realist considerations of state, international system and global relations is explained thus far. In this

point the phenomenon of globalization in the context of International Relations will be analyzed in order to catch the intersections and connections between structural realism and the phenomenon of globalization.

At the very base, while realists argue that the main guidance of state behaviour is self-interests the globalization stands on the concept of universality or universal principles of liberal international philosophy. Realism suggests that every state must be aware of different actions of the other states and for doing so, they must inevitably invest their power in material/military sense. That theoretical conflict constitutes the main contradiction between structural realist understanding of international politics and the promises of globalization process.

Another theoretical clash is derived from the antithetical characteristics of the globalisation process towards the territoriality of states. States, in structural realist perspective, are positioned in international system in accordance with their power as dominant or subordinate.

The scope of the phenomenon of Globalisation is also discordant for the theoretical preferences of structural realism. Structural realism ignores cultural, sociological, economic and psychological features of different states in its state behaviour and international system imagination. However those are among the main dimensions of globalization which argues International Relations is not reducible to power politics. Especially through the global communication, the increased significance and determinancy of identity with the construction and communication of meaning.

Structural realism also ignores the importance and role of other actors in generating globalisation such as sub-state actors, international institutions, global firms, agencies and other private-sector organizations. Additional types of power-relations on lines of class, culture and gender also affect the course of globalisation. Some other structural inequalities cannot be adequately explained as an outcome of interstate competition.

2. STRUCTURAL REALISM AND THE SENSE OF RISING POWERS

The situation of a rising power in realists understanding is the product of international outcomes of its foreign policy behaviour the consequent shift in distribution of power in the international system. Realist International Relations theory is generally interested in changes occurred in power structure and in state power. Realists argue that changes in the distribution of power that are triggered by a rising power have significant implications for the overall stability of the international system. In realist understanding increases in state power threatens the international system.

While structural realism argues that the behaviours of states are shaped by the changes in the international system and distribution of power, those states would react differently in shifts in international power structure (Baylis&Smith, 2001:128). In this point the political attitudes of

a rising power makes the unique characteristic of that state. In structural realist understanding rising powers are expected to weaken the stability international system if it does not see the system as in favor of its own interests. Accordingly a rising power could act with two different motivations while challenging the international the status quo power.

First, as Morgenthau says (Davidson, 2006:12):

'a nation whose foreign policy aims at acquiring more power than it actually has, through a reversal of existing power relations-whose foreign policy, in other words, seeks a favorable change in power status-pursues a policy of imperialism'.

And Second, there is a role for external environment in the expansion of a rising power. The perceived threats and opportunities in the external environment. Rising powers might be motivated by its environment

According to structural Realism, International System shapes and restricts the behaviours of states (Liu, 2010:77). And the absence of World government produces anarchy and forces states to be rational in their behaviour. Therefore, structural realism asks why do states want power and how much power is rational for achieving foreign policy goals (Mearsheimer, 2007:72). And while globalization phenomenon is being realized in the World, there is no certainty whether great powers become satisfied with the global world order or do they have tendency for implementing power-politics through using force to intervene the process for consolidating their own sovereignty and self-help policies. In structural realist sense, the unconfidence among states makes it impossible to be aware of another state's intentions definitely (Mearsheimer, 2007:73).

Rising Powers is a recent realist category which corresponds the states improving their position and share of the division of capacities in international system, in terms of regional realm of influence, international trade and economics, military capabilities and political system. The rising power concept has initiated new debates which can be reduced to theoretical approach of structural realism. Scholars started to discuss the future of rising power concept(Tank, 2012:2), and states regarded as rising powers mostly with structural realist concepts. In most common sense, rising powers are indicating the BRICS countries as Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Korea and in order to analyze their systemic intentions and foreign policy attitudes two principal probability or choice have arised.

The rising powers could continue to improve their power and position in more peaceful and compromising manner, or they could challenge the existing World order composed of power division, global economic order and international institutions through establishing their own geopolitical initiatives, use of force or simply establishing alternative International institutions for their own benefit. John Mearsheimer's structural realist explanation says a state in International System would ultimately face the need to decide whether the current International Order satisfies its interests and benefits or the change in current order would

satisfy its national interests (Mearsheimer, 2007:73). Actually in deeper theoretical investigation, the factors behind that decision are dependent on unobservable facts such as culture, traditions, identity and religion, however structural realism, as its anterior forms, ignores those factors because the main aim of theorizing in realist traditions is to define the behaviours and tendencies of states as unitary actors with power-focused understanding.

The concept of Rising Powers also, basically, contains a systemic expression and it refers to the power as a means of improving systemic position of the state in International Relations. Thus another point to associated with structural realism is the power-centeredness, as a main variable, of rising powers. The effects of Globalization to the division of capacities and the structure of the International System is another main question in this study which can be explained ideally by the structural realist concepts

The reflection of the structural pro status quo/revisionism tendency in rising powers would be strongly related with whether they welcome or challenge the Globalization which is a recent agenda of International Relations. Naturally, globalization offers a stable transformation in International System and conveys no challenge for the systemic interest of existing great powers their world-views, ideas and institutional forms, however globalization also do not challenge the rise of new powers in International System especially in economic aspect. China and Russia as two of rising powers provides a useful experience for strengthening such study.

In historical process, Chinese rise in International System is considered as more "peaceful rise"(Bijian, 2005:17) based on international trade, cheap labor, cooperation with international institutions and passive security understanding in accordance with defensive realist explanation at least so far. However the rising experience of Russia after the collapse of Soviet Union has different characteristic, rather than participating globalization process with economic and commercial progresses, Russia in 2000's tried to improve its power capacity over the former Soviet territories with various power-based foreign policy doctrines.

Russian intellectuals and foreign policy elites considered the globalization phenomenon as a process which strenghtens the unipolarity in the International system, while China as seen in its foreign policy behaviours, has seen the same process as a profitable chance for ensure progress in International System at less cost. As shown those differences uncovers the fact that although different states are classified with the same concept of rising powers, their foreign policy attitudes and international behaviours could be completely different. And this difference is fall within the structural realist approach to International Relations which uses the systemic method for analyzing, offence/defence dilemma, status quo/revisionism choice and the consideration of change in International Relations based on power division.

CONCLUSION

Inspiringly the concept of rising power and the phenomenon of globalization coexist in the theoretical agenda of International Relations discipline. This study examined debates over

those two controversial topics in the structural realist perspective. Structural realism is consciously appealed in our discussion because its main referent level international system which is considered to have effects on state behaviour and our two concept the globalization and rising powers are directly relevant with the international system.

According to our discussion, there are contradictory points between two concepts both in structural realist sense and their promises as well. While the rising power concept refers to the individual states in realist understanding, independent from offensive or defensive attitudes of power politics, the globalization phenomenon imagines a process which is expected to surpass the monopoly of states as actors in international relations. Therefore the most principal inference in this discussion is that rising powers and globalization are referring two challenging situations.

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