

THOUGHTS/PREDICTIONS ON THE EFFECT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC PROCESS UPON THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM

KOVID-19 SALGINI SÜRECİNİN ULUSLARARASI SİSTEME ETKİSİ ÜZERİNE DÜŞÜNCELER/ÖNGÖRÜLER

Şenol KANTARCI*

*Prof. Dr. at Akdeniz University,
Department of International
Relations

*Prof. Dr. Akdeniz Üniversitesi,
Uluslararası İlişkiler Bölümü

Mail/E-posta:

skantarci@akdeniz.edu.tr,

skantarci@hotmail.com

ORCID ID:

0000-0001-7651-3150

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Abstract

Is the Covid-19 epidemic a landmark with its global dimension, that is, an important breaking point? Has the international system entered a transformation process with the epidemic? The discussion of these questions has formed the backdrop of the main topic of this study. Moreover, one of the issues raised with the Covid-19 process is whether the overall dynamics upon which globalization is based will be questioned more with this process. Again with the study, is the world witnessing a new revolutionary process with the new situation emerging as the effects of the Covid-19 outbreak play out? Or else does this process serve to convince humanity, the world public, that a revolution is already underway? Therefore, in this study, the questions of the effect of the Fourth Industrial Revolution on globalization, whether globalization will shift to digital, and whether the Covid-19 outbreak will bring about an overall change on the dynamics of international politics, especially in nations, are discussed. Of course, thoughts in the study have not go beyond a prediction. In fact, this study should not be considered scientifically as it runs contrary to the logic of Social Sciences. Because the author of this study has tried to explain a case whose effects have not yet settled with a fortuneteller approach. Does science need this? Of course it does. If it had not already happened, this study would not have been carried out.

Key Words: International System, Covid-19 Pandemic, Fourth Industrial Revolution, Globalization, International Politics

Özet

'Kovid-19 salgını küresel boyutu ile bir 'milat' yani önemli bir kırılma noktası mıdır? Salgınla birlikte uluslararası sistem bir dönüşüm sürecine girmiş midir? Bu çalışmanın ana konusunu bu soruların tartışması oluşturmuştur. Ayrıca Kovid-19 süreci ile birlikte gündeme taşınan konulardan birisini de küreselleşmenin üzerine oturduğu genel dinamiklerin bu süreçle birlikte artık daha mı çok sorgulanacağı konusu oluşturmuştur. Yine çalışmada, Kovid-19 salgını sürecinin etkileri olarak ortaya çıkan yeni durumla birlikte dünya yeni bir devrim sürecine mi şahitlik ediyor? Yoksa bu süreç zaten başlamış olan bir devrime insanlığı yani dünya kamuoyunu ikna etmeye mi hizmet ediyor? Dolayısıyla bu çalışmada Dördüncü Sanayi Devrimi'nin küreselleşme üzerine etkisinin ne olacağı, küreselleşmenin dijital mi kayacağı şeklindeki sorular ile Kovid-19 salgınının özelde devletler genelde ise uluslararası politikanın dinamikleri üzerinde bir değişim meydana getirip getirmeyeceği konuları tartışılmıştır. Elbette ki çalışmadaki düşünceler bir öngörüdür ileri gitmemiştir. Aslında bu çalışma Sosyal Bilimler mantığına aykırı olduğu gibi bilimsel olarak da düşünülmemelidir. Çünkü bu çalışmanın yazarı bütün etkileri henüz yerleşmemiş olan bir olguyu bir falcı yaklaşımıyla açıklamaya çalışmıştır. Bilimin buna ihtiyacı var mı? Elbette ki var. Zaten olmamış olsaydı bu çalışma da yapılmamış olurdu.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Uluslararası Sistem, Kovid-19 Salgını, Dördüncü Sanayi Devrimi, Küreselleşme, Uluslararası Politika.



“Whether you accept the infallibility and remove sovereignty from this, or infallibility from sovereignty; either way, you have to recognize and bless a power. And whether it is the pressure of governments or the mind of philosophers, rule the people or the king, the result is the same.”

François Guizot

INTRODUCTION

This study is comprised of discussions on the effects of the Covid-19 outbreak on the international system. In the study, the ‘system’ analysis was conducted on the basis of economic and security, and it was analysed whether the ‘Covid-19 outbreak’ was a ‘landmark,’ that is, whether it was an important breaking point and whether the international system entered a transformation process with the outbreak. One of the issues brought onto the agenda with the Covid-19 process is whether the general dynamics that globalization is based upon will be questioned or not. Accordingly, questions such as; “What would be the impact of the Fourth Industrial Revolution on globalization?” and “Would globalization shift to digital?” whether the epidemic would manifest a change particular upon the dynamics of international politics or generally in states are debated.

In the study, the pre-epidemic developments were evaluated in general, from the point it would not be the right approach to expect the Covid-19 epidemic would suddenly bring about a new system transformation from late-2019/early-2020 onwards.

Is the Covid-19 epidemic that emerged in late-2019 and left an indelible stamp on the entire world in 2020 a milestone in the change of the international system or a landmark in its transformation? This topic is discussed in the following subtitle.

In addition to the errors in the use of theories in system analysis, other problems arising from the reductionist approach also manifest themselves.- The word ‘problem’ has been specifically chosen here. - In studies pertaining to international system analysis, advocating the transformation/formation of the ‘system’ only depending on one event and - the system - suddenly reveals a shallow/reductionist analysis in explaining the subject. Because while the ‘system transformation’ is occurring, a large number of pillars make up this transformation. Moreover, it does not seem possible for the system to change with a global crisis or incident that occurs suddenly in an international environment before these pillars emerge or even mature. In fact, the phenomenon that occurs in history during the process of system change supports this as well. For instance, with the end of World War II, the pillars of the United States (U.S.) and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (U.S.S.R.) would emerge as the ‘bipolar axis’ dominant force go back to the early-20th century. Therefore, after analyzing a crisis of major magnitude that suddenly emerges, and developments that caused it in the medium- or long-term, it is seen that the results generally bring about new major transformations - of course, once again, over a certain time cycle. For instance, there was about a half-century long infrastructural process that caused the outbreak of World War I. The environment that emerged during this process, and prepared World War I, the real reason of which was based on economic-based colonialism, began to mature particularly as a result of developments in the final

quarter of the 19th century, and also transformed into the great world war during the first quarter of the 20th century. On the other hand, World War II came about as a result of economic-based - unequal - sharing, which World War I could not resolve, and gave rise to significant consequences.

Theorists conducting a system analysis on the structure the basic elements, which are separated by certain boundaries, and which are constituted by states and conditions of the era with orderly and dependent relations, made different definitions for the international system. Many theorists, such as George Modelski, Kal J. Holsti, Morton A. Kaplan, Immanuel Wallerstein, Robert Keohane, Richard Rosecrance and Joseph Nye were amongst those who had conducted analyses of the structure of the international system.

Kal J. Holsti sums up the international system as any independent whole of the political units. In his system approach thesis, Holsti examined historical data within a regular and classified framework. According to Holsti, the international system is a whole, from tribes to city-states, from empires to nation-state structures (Holsti, 1974, pp.92-96). On the other hand, Richard Rosecrance defined the international system as a structure consisting of disruptive inputs, regulatory mechanisms and environmental restrictors. In his system analysis, Rosecrance has specified the period '1740-1960' by dividing it into nine different systems (Rosecrance, 1963, p.7). Rosecrance examined the periods by dividing them into two as 'balanced/stable' and 'unstable/unstable' systems. (Rosecrance, 1963, p.220). One of the most important system theorists, Morton A. Kaplan conceptualized the international system as behavioral regularities that can be uniquely defined, and variables that differ from the external environment and have a network of relationships between them. (Kaplan, 1957, p.4; Kaplan, 1957, p.685). Immanuel Wallerstein handled the international system within an economic-based structure. In Wallerstein's economy-based historical process, actors were identified as '*center*' and '*environment*.' On the other hand, Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye evaluated the international system on a more general definition, based on '*complexity*' and '*interdependence*.'

In the study, international policy was evaluated on the 'system' analysis on the basis of economic and security, and it was analyzed whether the Covid-19 epidemic was a landmark, that is, whether it was an important breaking point and whether this outbreak ushered in a transformation process of the international system.

THE IMPACT OF 08.08.08 AND THE 2008 WORLD ECONOMIC CRISIS ON THE SYSTEM AFTER 9/11

While the 2000s witnessed the R.F.'s return to the game board with Putin at the helm, the process in which the R.F. expressed its concern about the U.S. moving unfettered through its former satellites and its close proximity was underway. One of the most tangible examples of this was at the 43rd Munich Security Policy Conference on held 10 February, 2007, when R.F. President Vladimir Putin criticized the effort of a country of being '*the only ruler in the world*,' in reference to the U.S. In his conference speech, Putin argued that this could have detrimental effects, not only for everyone in the current system, but also for the dominant power, and constituted the toughest scolding of the U.S. by the R.F. in the post-1990 era. In his speech, Putin highlighted that an attempt to create an artificial and unipolar structure was made after the Cold

War, but that a single sovereign power pursued its fondness of running the world alone but couldn't manage. Putin went on to state that mankind has undergone unipolar periods throughout history and witnessed the desire to achieve world leadership but that some could not attain this desire, using harsh diplomatic language to criticize the U.S. (Emeklier, 4 January, 2012). Castigating not only the U.S., but the entire Western front at the conference, Putin emphasized that the use of forces such as NATO, the U.S. or the E.U. on their own initiative would be wrong, and that the UN's function should be prioritized. In his speech he stated that he found the European Security Cooperation Organization (OSCE) negative and even a failure in the context of its current function, warning Europeans that this organization should be committed to fulfilling its true duty. Putin stated that from then on, the R.F. would show itself as an important actor, from the economic to the security field.

Putin's unexpectedly fierce outburst at the 43rd Munich Security Policy Conference created a shock effect amongst the Americans and Europeans whereas some analysts even went so far as to surmise, "*Is this the beginning of a new Cold War?*" The U.S. and British media reacted to Putin's statements with the same harshness and anger. (Lipschutz, 3 November, 2012). However, in the face of the events occurring in Eurasia, the Western world, and especially the U.S., was not very effective against the Putin's stance.

Although the 8 August, 2008 war (Battle of 08/08/08) between the R.F. and Georgia seemed like a small regional war, it marked the beginning of a new process that may be defined as a landmark in terms of world politics and balances. Because, considering the actors involved in the conflict and their strategic and security-based calculations, it was observed there were significant results on a global scale.

Supporting the pro-Western regime and government in Georgia, the only thing the Western states, especially the U.S., could do with the start of the war was to warn the R.F. in a very harsh language. Although this situation brought up the question, "*Who will stop Russia?*," in taking the complexity of the international environment and global balances into consideration, it is seen there is no external factor to stop the R.F. In fact, developments during and after the war were shaped more or less in favor of the R.F. and on its initiative. (Çakmak, 2009, p.52).

With this war, which can be regarded as a landmark in terms of causes and consequences, the idea that brought American supremacy to the fore with its designation of the New World Order on the basis of a single polarity that emerged right after the 1990s was struck a heavy blow by the War of 08/08/08. For this reason, economic relations developed by the countries in a dependent manner have shown it is not possible to call the next period the Cold War again in an era when the energy and international relations network was so intertwined and *global interdependence* (Rosenau, 1980; Keohane, 1977; Maghroori & Bamberg, 1982) was on the steady rise. In addition to these political developments, the 2008 world economic crisis and the calamity created by this crisis rendered that year important in the system transformation.

Moscow's foreign political attitude, which took on the entire Western world during the Syrian crisis which began in 2011, is also significant. One of the motives of Russian foreign policy in both the Czarist and Soviet eras is the desire of Russia to descend to

warm seas. This motive was accomplished during the R.F. era when Putin clenched two Russian military bases in the Eastern Mediterranean, Syria's ports of Lazkiye and Tartus.

As a result of the crisis that emerged in the Ukraine in the northern Black Sea in 2012, Putin linked the Crimean Peninsula to the R.F. in 2014. His openly threatening the Western world to divide the Ukraine in two if necessary and the Western world remaining passive to this threat was important in terms of the R.F.'s freedom of movement in Eurasia as a regional power. Therefore, the 2008-2019 period is crucial when acting upon the logic of Roserance's system definition. Because both the 08/08/08 War and the 2008 global economic crisis can be considered as the historical year that initiated the transformation of the 'system' in his system analysis. Here, the 08/08/08 War, which indicated the existence of the R.F. as new great power, had a disruptive effect among the actors, and the actors are now confronting each other.

One of the countries that rose silently in the face of the U.S., which had led the way in capitalism before, during and after the Cold War, and had begun to get weary, was the P.R.C.

It may be accepted that the U.S. possesses great might in military terms, but it is necessary to see that the distribution of its power is multipolar in many other areas. For instance, it has clearly been seen with developments between 2000-2010 that the U.S. administration has become unable to acquire its own issues in trade, antitrust and financial regulation without the consent of the E.U. (especially Germany and France), Japan, the R.F., the P.R.C. and others. In 2007, the growth rate of the GNP of the E.U. was 1.5 times higher than the U.S., six times higher than the U.S. and the four times higher than India. This situation has brought about increased shares of these countries in the world GNP compared to the U.S., Beginning in 1970, the P.R.C. increased its GNP four times and outperformed countries other than the U.S. and Japan in the volume of GNP whereas the P.R.C. increased its foreign trade volume by 100 times during the same period. This increase also rendered it possible for the P.R.C. to outstrip Japan in terms of its share of world trade. In fact, together with Deng Xiaoping, the P.R.C. had entered a rapid transformation process in almost every field since the 1980s as it began the process of opening out. Membership into the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001 after a 15-year negotiation process accelerated P.R.C. efforts to expand abroad in the economic field. During the Beijing Olympics on 8 August, 2008, the P.R.C. waved the PR flag with the slogan "*One world, one dream.*" Having benefited from the process after the 2008 world economic crisis that broke out in the same year, the P.R.C. continued with its high growth rates as it expanded its market area. So much so that with its growing market, the P.R.C. entered into an era of interdependence that developed with the Western world. The P.R.C. began to be defined as an important '*revisionist force*' in the international system, especially during the Xi Jinping era. While the P.R.C. garnered attention as a rising power, it pursued a foreign policy which followed events carefully and did not react immediately, with policies such as '*peaceful rise,*' '*mutual win-win,*' and '*not interfering in the internal affairs of other countries*' throughout the 2000s. Having rising quietly in its region, Beijing took alternative steps that challenged the Western-based system in the post-2008 period, which disturbed Washington in particular. Amongst

developments that bothered Washington, causing it to focus its attention on the P.R.C. were its attempts to develop cooperation with the R.F., its 'One Belt-One Road' endeavour, cooperation activities developed with Africa, Middle East, the Mediterranean and Europe, its institutions developed as an alternative to counterpart Western-based institutions as well as efforts to strengthen their military technological capacity. The P.R.C.'s military preparations for U.S. allies in the Pacific region were among the developments which ruffled the feathers of the Washington administration. (Koç, 23 April, 2020). The serious rivalry between the P.R.C. and the U.S. in both economic and military fields has become clearly evident, with the Washington administration's sanctions imposed against Beijing particularly since the second half of 2019.

Following the economic leaps by the '*four Asian tigers*' known as Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan and South Korea, all described as the 'economic miracles' of Japan, which has a voice in the world economy, the P.R.C. successfully used the '*enlightening authoritarianism*' model from these countries to spurt forward. The world economy leadership had begun shifting towards new centers during the post-2008 global economic crisis era. The example of India is also important. In 2008, the Indian *transnational* company, Tata Motors acquired two famous British companies Land Rover and Jaguar from Ford, an American-based company. (Primakov, 2010, p.19-20).

The country that worries the P.R.C. more than the U.S. in its backyard is India. In regards to the balance of power and hegemony that has started to form in the region in recent years, the P.R.C. has begun to view India as one of its biggest rivals. The American administration had made an effort to develop special relations with India in order to check the rise of the P.R.C. In fact, many bilateral agreements, including strategic military cooperation, were signed between the U.S. and India. One of the Beijing administration's greatest fears and concerns it perceived as a threat to its economy was the possibility that U.S. companies would shift their production bases from the P.R.C. to India, Vietnam and other countries in the region. (Köse, 23 April, 2020). In fact, it is not realistic to think the dependence upon the P.R.C., which has a 30% share of world production, would disappear entirely in the future. Thus, it can be foreseen that this global rivalry between the U.S. and the P.R.C. will continue to steadily rise throughout the 2020s.

As stated earlier, while the U.S. and the rest of the Western world were dealt a major setback by the global economic recession of 2008, referred to as 'The Crisis of the Century' after The Great Depression of 1929, India, Japan, and particularly the P.R.C., were not affected as much. Therefore, it would not be a coherent approach to ignore all these developments and label the overall picture as *unipolar* American hegemony. In several other areas, power is now organized in a combined manner amongst state and non-state actors scattered over a vast area. (Nye, 2005, p.14). For instance, even the E.U. started to show itself as the political and economic power that questioned U.S. leadership in the Western bloc from the second half of the 1990s onwards. (Özen & Taşdemir, 2006, p.3). The power of Germany, in particular, has become increasingly evident in almost every field within the EU.

In summary, it can be stated that the decade right after the Cold War era (1991-2001) can be assessed as an intermediary period marked mainly by the energy transfer line

routes with the U.S. settling in the Basra Gulf region, the First Iraq War in the Middle East, as well as its effort to redesign Eastern Europe. Moreover, with the Bush Doctrine announced about a year after 9/11, the U.S.'s great military power and intercontinental operations failed to achieve the desired results, and in fact, its failure with little gain also provided clues about how the subsequent process would play out. Tangible developments that occurred since the mid-2000s deem it necessary to conduct a new analysis on the position of the international system, whereby mutual dependency has increased even further during the globalization process.

The *Pax oeconomica* that 19th century intellectuals had imagined was perhaps achieved through this interdependence. The *Pax oeconomica* concept means that a ceasefire process has been achieved between economic powers. According to this idea, goods intensive exchange and international trade are the most important factors that can create a basis for peace by preventing possible wars. The phenomenon of supporting economic liberalism and promoting foreign trade on a global scale will in many ways link '*national interests*' to '*international interests*,' whereby the system will inevitably turn towards peace. This prediction overlaps with the basic argument of neoliberal theorists, who put forward the phenomenon of '*interdependence*.' (Arıboğan, 2004, p. 52-53, 56). In other words, *the new process necessitates multinational coalitions that can overcome common problems and threats*. Because a distinctive feature of the world economy is that the development of manufacturing powers transforming into the shape of international companies and international relationships integrating on a regional basis have now started to become inevitable.

Is the Covid-19 epidemic that emerged in late-2019 and left an indelible stamp on the entire world in 2020 a milestone in the change of the international system or a landmark in its transformation? This topic is discussed in the following subtitle.

EFFECTS OF THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK: MILESTONE WITH GLOBAL MAGNITUDE ON THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM

It is quite difficult for a crisis to transform the system so suddenly. That is because, as Rosecrance put it, the system is formed over a certain period with the influence of regulatory mechanisms and environmental inhibitors in response to disruptive inputs.

Moving from this point, in terms of world outbreaks, the manner in which the Covid-19 epidemic rapidly took over the entire world in such a short period of time, leaving all of humanity desperate during the epidemic can be regarded as a milestone. However, viewing this process as a milestone in terms of system transformation will not be a very proper approach. Because, as stated in the aforementioned subtitles, along the emergence of major Asia-based powers, the system had already entered the inversion process as far back as 2008.

Although there is no clear conclusion about the subject, starting from the 19th century onwards, an '*awareness*' of the transformation of the international structure into a pluralistic system was expressed in the report of the U.S. National Intelligence Council entitled '*Global Trends 2025: A Changing World*.' According to the report, by the year 2025, as the power axis shifts from West to East, non-state actors will contribute to the pluralism of the system with emerging market states, by having a significant

impact in the international system. Again, according to the report, countries such as P.R.C., the R.F. and India are expected to play larger roles in the Middle East during this period, referred to as the global multipolar system (Emeklier, 4 January, 2012). Zbigniew Brzezinski also had to admit that the strategic and geopolitical power center had shifted to the East (Eurasia) in his book published in 2011 and entitled '*Strategic Vision: America and the Crisis of Global Power.*'¹

One of the questions asked in the introduction part of this study was "Will the general dynamics on which globalization is based be further cross-examined with the Covid-19 epidemic?"

Along with the 21st century international companies have entered an era in which the system of economic relations that somehow regulate the flow of investment, finance and trade was formulated. There are currently emerging transnational power centers within the boundaries of this system. So much so that the integration processes generated at the interstate level not only increase the power centers in the modern world, but also bolster the multipolarity. Moreover, the internationalization of private enterprises links these centers. Consequently, the poles of the modern world have become mutually interdependent, not only as a result of major breakthroughs in intensive industry developing with technological breakthroughs, but also through new forms of manufacturing relationships.

It is exactly at this point a question may arise: While the power is on the Western side as the current globalization process continues, will globalization begin to lose its effectiveness by initiating a breakaway process begin between East and West on the slide of power to Asia?

Of course, the point the world which has reached renders this impossible. *Multipolarity*, which has been occurring recently under the current conditions, does not actually bear seeds of discord, contrast or confrontation. This developing situation, though it does not eliminate the possibility of mismatching the national interests of the various states that make up the world of polarity, especially the U.S.A, it does not envisage a state's high level conflict with other countries. That is, the necessity for a logical relationship has arisen between developing *multi-polarity* and new and emerging power centers amidst mutual interdependence (Primakov, p.24-25). From a realist point of view, in the system defined as 'unipolarity,' sovereign power can determine the rules regulating its relations between states by calling upon its military, economic and cultural power elements and force the rules it sets upon all other states for compliance. Because its power allows for this. Nevertheless, the U.S. in particular has not been very successful in this regard as Republican administration politics have not received much acceptance. For instance, the pro-Israeli attitude the U.S. recently adopted as the 'Peace of the Century' regarding Palestine while declaring Jerusalem as the Israeli capital has raised the ire of many countries around the world. Again, instead of taking realist steps towards a solution of the Syrian crisis, which began in the 'Arab Spring', flared up into a civil war and turned into a major refugee problem, unwillingness exhibited by the U.S. to support peaceful steps as it strived to

¹ Even in the fight against the Covid-19 epidemic, the apparent success of Asian countries, particularly the PRC, as well as the USA and Europe's failure to achieve similar success - except for Germany and a few countries - and the inadequacy of health systems was also thought-provoking at this point.

protect its own interests have led regional countries to form their own initiatives to come up with a solution to the problem. In fact, the regional countries in question initiated the process with Syrian crisis conferences held in Astana, Sochi and Istanbul, which did not include the U.S.

Although the Covid-19 pandemic process dredged up debates involving various views on the system, considering what has already been explained, the system had already begun to take shape before Covid-19. Especially after 2008, as mentioned above, it has brought powers such as the R.F., the P.R.C., India, Japan and Germany from Europe against the U.S. That is, balance of power is experiencing a cycle, revealing new great powers, whereas the system has started to create a more visible '*multipolar*' power balance and entered into an obligatory '*Period of Coalitions*' process.

Signed in Sochi in April, 2008, the '*U.S.-Russia Strategic Framework Declaration*' is significant in terms of supporting the aforementioned. This declaration mentions the important potential of the two states' cooperation in the energy field. The Russian - U.S. statement underscored; "*On the basis of openness, transparency and profitability, we will work in cooperation with other producer states, consumer states and transit states to bolster the partnership between all interested parties in order to increase global energy security* (Primakov, p.143)."²

In fact, this whole network of relationships described thus far is not only based on economic matters. That is because world public opinion has more consciously adopted the obligation to go with coalitions on issues that concern almost every nation globally - at the point where globalization has inevitably arrived. This situation has essentially redefined international relations. These mutual relations have reinforced the need for all power centers to act together, in other words, to *work as a coalition* against new dangers and threats such as the Covid-19 pandemic, the prevention of global warming, especially nuclear weapons proliferation, international terrorism and regional problems.

Globalization has reached such a point in the 2020s that it has become even more pressing to take common steps towards the solution of problems that affect the nations existing on the planet. For instance, polar glaciers that have melting at an alarming rate in recent years, as well as catastrophic fires that broke out in the U.S. in 2017 and 2018, in Australia in 2019 and at Chernobyl in 2020 have garnered attention to the importance of global warming and the environment. Adopted by the approval of 195 countries in December, 2015, the United Nations Convention on Climate Change UNFCCC, historically known as the Paris Agreement, marked a turning point in the global struggle against climate change (<http://www.mfa.gov.tr/paris-anlasmasi>.^{16 April, 2020}). This treaty was approved on 5 October, 2016 by 55 parties constituting at least 55% of all global greenhouse gas emissions, and became effective on 4 November, 2016. This treaty was also regarded as an important opportunity to leave a more stable, healthier planet, fairer communities and more vibrant economies

² Despite this agreement, which in particular involves the energy security of the West, the United States is shocked in the Western world, particularly in the USA, by the fact that RF started military operation using unlimited power to Georgia, which is the most vital corridor that carried Caspian and Baku oil to the West approximately 4 months after this agreement. had an effect. So much so that the fact that the Western world desperately accepted the situation and left Abkhazia and South Ossetia in Georgia to Russian hegemony in the face of this military operation of R.F. passed into political history. In other words, as a result of the 08/08/08 process, the Western world agreed to a coalition with the R.F.

for the next generations, within the framework of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) (<http://www.avrupa.info.tr>, 16 April, 2020). Again, G20 leaders coordinated a global intervention during the economic crisis of 2008, whereas many countries organized coalitions and donation conferences to generate resources needed in other emergency situations, regarded as natural disasters such as tsunamis or epidemics. (Brown & Berglöf & Farrar, 7 April 2020; <https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary>, 16 April, 2020).

For the Covid-19 epidemic that emerged in late-2019 and created a global impact, it is inevitable that the world's nations act together and continue to fight to conquer the solution process together for the next, and possibly more dangerous outbreaks. So much so that the Covid-19 outbreak triggered a crisis that the world's great powers, including the U.S., could not overcome alone. Consequently, there has been a crucial demand for international cooperation through international organizations.

The architects of globalization converged at the Davos Summit held in January, 2020 to discuss matters such as the crisis in trust of capitalism, the income disparity of the stakeholders of economically-oriented capitalism, the status of the global economy, sustainable development, in addition to technology and the fourth industrial revolution, as well as one of the priority issues, that of climate and environment crisis.

Developments occurring after the Covid-19 outbreak and news published in this regard served to support the Davos 2020 Summit. So much so that during the post-Davos summit period, the theme that humanity mistreated the environment and eliminated the animal world was the topic of news broadcasts as a result of world news broadcasts about fish, ducks and swans returning to the canals in Venice on the heels of the absence of tourist boats and the closure of the city's shops. (<https://www.iklimhaber.org/turistlerin-yoklugu>, 19 April, 2020). In addition, the worldwide broadcasting of various stimulating videos, cartoons, etc. related to the environment and climate change attracted attention. From the aspect of raising awareness about environmental problems and climate change as well as revealing the call for global solidarity, all these and similar developments attracted attention in the wake of the Covid-19 epidemic.

Since the latter half of the 1990s, developments in technology have brought globalization a new dimension in terms of both scientific and socio-cultural aspects.

One of the questions in the introduction of this study was what impact the 'Fourth Industrial Revolution' would have on globalization and whether globalization would slip into digital. Today, unlimited possibilities to link billions of people to mobile devices, unprecedented amounts of processing power, storage capabilities and access to information have emerged. Beyond that, new technological breakthroughs such as AI, robotics, the internet of objects, autonomous vehicles, 3D printers, nanotechnology, biotechnology, material science, energy storage and quantum computing are developments indelibly etched into the fabric of the 21st century. Although most of these innovations are still in their infancy, they have approached a leap forward in their development as technologies moving together in the physical, digital and biological realms. (Schwab, 2016, p.9). All these innovations had already occurred prior to the Covid-19 epidemic. These technologies are no longer just inventions in the Western monopoly but rather are in the development monopoly of

emerging Asian powers such as the P.R.C., Japan and India. The so-called 'Fourth Industrial Revolution' in human history has altered the world to a different point, especially in the international system, in terms of state governance and determining the peoples' leader preferences. For instance, an era called the '*Fourth Industrial Revolution*' has been ushered in with a concept of managing the masses with perception management, thanks to free and liberal social media networks - with many solutions based on a multi-voiced axis and different solution recommendations - by keeping the media power of the administrations in their monopolies. With the impact created by the Covid -19 epidemic, we have entered a period of working more intensely with international coalitions, particularly in regards to health issues, with the World Health Organization in the forefront, as well as organizations such as the UN, EU, G8, G20 more willing than ever to come up with solutions in the name of global cooperation.

Most of the wars fought today in different parts of the world are either ethnic or civil wars. For instance, a total of 116 armed conflicts took place in 78 different parts of the world from 1989, just after the end of the Cold War, until the start of the 21st century. Of these, seven were international and 20 were civil wars with foreign intervention. These conflicts and civil wars continued to increase after the turn of the century. It would be very optimistic and even unrealistic to assert that these conflicts and wars will end after the Covid-19 epidemic. In other words, alliances, collaboration and conflicts of interest will persist in different parts of the world after Covid-19.

CONCLUSION

The laboratory of a Social Scientist is the true life experiences that have occurred in history and the experiences obtained from these true life experiences. In the known history, humanity has been tested with several epidemics which have taken the lives of millions of people. Approximately 50 million people lost their lives worldwide, in the epidemic known as the '*Spanish Flu*' which inflicted the world at the end of World War I in 1918. This figure is close to the human loss incurred during the next world war. So was the case that even this epidemic that threatened humanity could not prevent the outbreak of World War II. From a realistic perspective, the Covid-19 epidemic will not put an end to the anarchic system in international relations.

Although the Covid-19 epidemic has an impact on the dynamics of international politics in general, and in states in particular, it will not be a sudden impact. Every major crisis has the potential to attract a new leader(s). The attitudes of states and the leaders who run those states are crucial in crisis management. For instance, The Great Depression of 1929, which emerged as a result of the consequences of World War I and between two world wars, paved the way for the emergence of fascist, totalitarian leaders in Europe.

Crises also tend to give or take away greater powers or greater prestige. For instance, while England lost its perception as a great power in the world during the Suez Crisis of 1956, Nasser emerged as one the strongest leaders in the Arab world. The negative image that the U.S. descended into during the Covid-19 outbreak crisis had a negative impact on the perception of 'superpower' in the eyes of the world public opinion. On the other hand, the P.R.C. declared to show the whole world during the pandemic that it established a large epidemic hospital in Wuhan within six days and immediately

started dispatching aid to the Middle East, Africa and E.U. countries, displaying an example of public diplomacy. However, once Covid-19 blows over, one should not assume that the P.R.C. would suddenly don the military boots that the U.S. wears to become the new sheriff on the block.

While the U.S. was the greatest power that emerged in the post-Cold War era, new great powers, mostly in Asia, started to show themselves since the 2000s, rendering a multi-polar structure more visible in the international system. Of course, this scene, which has become steadily clearer, should not be construed that the period of American hegemony is over in the short term. In other words, the scenario of the P.R.C. rising to ultimate dominance on the back of the Covid-19 pandemic and replace the U.S. in the near- or medium-term is not realistic for at least the next decade.

As stated in the introduction of the article, it is inconsistent to argue that a crisis of landmark proportions could cause sudden system changes, but it should not be ignored that this type of crisis is important from the aspect of constituting a clue in coding the system. Therefore, it can be predicted that the multipolar system of the major powers will manifest itself more visibly over the next decade. Nor is the idea that a U.S.-led West marginalizing the up-and-rising P.R.C. and R.F., as was the case with its former Cold War policies, to re-establish a strong Western bloc against these two powers considered very consistent. If lessons can be learned from history, steps need to be taken in order to encourage international cooperation by eliminating the Western world's prejudiced and superior view for those that are not their kind.

The period that began to evolve since 2008 does not render it possible for a return to the more traditional 'statist' approach. Of course, every state is obliged to ensure its own adequacies against all kinds of crises, especially in regards to '*food security*' and '*health services*.' Tensions and / or crises will occur from time to time during the period until the new system is entrenched. Perhaps, as a brief transitional period, the process of '*bad relations*' will also occur as a result of mutual political polarization between the West and East (particular the U.S.-P.R.C.). Nonetheless, the multipolar structure, which began taking shape in the mid-2000s during the period when globalization was climbing towards its peak and interdependence was on the rise, is crucial in terms of showing the '*Period of Coalitions*' had been ushered in. The Covid-19 pandemic is not the main actor affecting the system that had begun to be altered since 2008. Because change had already begun long before Covid-19. As the French proverb says, "*Plus ça change plus c'est la meme chose*," ("*The more something changes, the more it remains.*") The message to be conveyed here is not that the '*something*' has changed, but rather the path to that '*something*' has changed.

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