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in the Postpandemic Period:
From the 19th Century Concert of Europe
to the 21st Century Concert of Globe**

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Global Security and Cooperation in the Postpandemic Period: From the 19th Century Concert of Europe to the 21st Century Concert of Globe¹

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Abstract

The establishment of the 19th-century “Concert of Europe” provided a relatively sustainable political stability and peace for almost 100 years yet was unable to prevent the transformative powers and revolutionary dynamics rising from within. At the turn of the 20th century, the European continent began to signal new quests for change, resulting from shifts in the political balance of power and the advancements in military technology in particular. The international policy heritage inherited by the 21st century from the previous one, which gave rise to two global wars, is not a “total sum of the relations among nation-states,” but a globalized world where “there is little space of maneuver left for the states to make changes in the system.” In this new setting, perceptions of global security go beyond the traditional military framework and are reshaped within the perceptions of the 21st-century security architecture with its new dimensions such as environmental threats, epidemics, economic crises, and natural disasters. On the other hand, it was exactly a severe trauma that paves the way to an existential crisis for the global society, who have already faced with two major threats, as “global terrorism” and “global economic crisis” in the first twenty years of the new century to suffer a pandemic (COVID-19), while fighting against many uncertainties of being on the verge of a transition to a new civilizational mode, namely Industry 4.0. Despite the common enemy of the pandemic which equally threatens all countries, they are unable to operate the UN, NATO, or WHO as a common platform of cooperation but as a ground for competition between countries, which does not seem promising for the future. It is crucial to know that threats to peace and security in the upcoming period will not emerge from only non-state actors such as global terrorism, environmental problems, or pandemics and will not be limited to a particular part of the world, but also rise from interstate relations, like the U.S.-China rivalry. It is only possible to transform the 19th-century “Concert of Europe” model into a 21st-century “Concert of Globe” system, with a multilateral and fair participation of the members of the global community.

Keywords

concert of Europe, concert of globe, pandemic, security, global cooperation, US-China rivalry, COVID-19

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Introduction

The World Economic Forum was initially founded as an independent international institution by German economist Klaus Schwab in 1971 and it took its current name in 1987. Alongside the fact that it has gathering of thousands of important figures every year in Davos, the Forum has been the host to some historical moments such as the first time meeting of leaders of East and West Germany or again the first time get-together at ministerial level between South and North Korea. The meeting in January 2017 was witnessing yet another significant breakthrough in terms of political history. The leader of the world's largest greatest Communist Party and The President of the People's Republic of China, Xi Jinping had decided to attend the Davos Summit where all the trajectory of the capitalist economies had to be drawn. In this summit, hosting more than 2500 participants from 90 countries, it was highly anticipated what the powerful leader of China, that was making fast advances towards becoming the largest economic power of the world, had to say about global developments, especially in light of the fact that the same leader earlier set out his country's grand strategy by voicing "it is time for us to take the action and contribute to the humanity" ("Xi Jinping's Report", 2017)

Carrying the honor of being the first leader of China participating in the World Economic Forum, Xi Jinping has opened his speech titled "Jointly Shoulder Responsibility of Our Times, Promote Global Growth" by quoting the following words from the novel "A Tale of Two City" by Charles Dickens. "It was the best of times; it was the worst of times." ("World Economic Forum", 2017). The original text was going on as:

*"It was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness,
it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity,
it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness,
it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair,
we had everything before us, we had nothing before us,
we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way"*
(Dickens, 2012: 6).

Dickens had used these words to describe the chaotic atmosphere and the socio- psychological reflections of this disarray brought forth by the French Revolution. In the tale from the end of the 18th century, the city of Paris reflected a devastating era of terror during which almost forty thousand people were sent to guillotine while the state of affairs in London was depicted as secure, orderly and full of hope renewed by the industrial revolution still in its infancy. Indeed during those years, the new production network model triggered a change in the social and political atmosphere shaping it in quite a painful way. The revisionist tendencies of the protectors of status quo were paving the way to the genesis of a conflicting and unsafe environment. Nevertheless Europe had entered a period of great leap in terms of cognition and intellectual activity, on the one hand enriching itself due to its imperial colonial powers on the other hand beginning to take a central position within the world system as a result of its industrial and military capacity to position itself in the center of the world with its industrial and military capacity.

French Revolution, defined as “the revolution of human mind” (Palmer, 1963: 3) in later years, turned into a milestone in rebuilding of new Europe. For this revolution was a merely local political riot, but instead played a striking role in first disintegrating, and then replacing the system of governance along with all the values and their social, economic and cultural roots it had been built upon. Without a doubt in this period of construction, the role of Napoleon; should not be underestimated, who spread the impact of the revolution to not only Europe but to the whole world by using the slogan “*liberté, égalité, fraternité*” and until 1815 shattered Europe with his armies. The revolution while promising its supporters the salvation from the nobility, institutionalized religion and traditional pressures highly respected in the monarchy whereas had a content synonym to mobs’ gloomy force and terror (Davies, 2006: 725). Thus, the change as well as the attempt to suppress it have become the determinant factors of that era. Born out of the ideas of revolution and taken different routes in the process “liberalism, socialism and nationalism” - also known as 3 “isms”- (Billington, 2009: 236) , movements have not just partaken in forming political structures in the 19th century, they also have provided a foundation to all revisionist currents with their effects reaching forth until today.

Towards a System of Concert of Europe

French Revolution did neither come to life out of nowhere nor proliferate in empty space if one considers its high rate of spread and its range of access. When the production relations were converted radically towards the end of 18th century, the last remnants of the feudal structure also entered the process of disappearance. Towards the end of 1700s, mercantilism was replaced by the production economies; thus, the global spread of colonialism and its implementation were altered. The former unilateral ideology of colonialist looting was substituted by a new colonial approach searching to build economical dependencies.

On the one side, politically, spiritually and intellectual transformation beginning with the French revolution and gaining momentum via Napoleon's strategy of military expansion; on the other side the new economic order burgeoning under the influence of the Industrial Revolution, combined with the societal change and imperialist strategies in the wake of urbanized population and production boom respectively, catalyzed the emergence of historical breaking point. These periods of time when the flow of history accelerated until 1815, lead to breed many notions of the modern politics as we know them today. The revolution as a phenomenon to leap to the future; definitions of "left and right" as political determinants; the widely spreading of the universal human rights and voting rights; the liberation of the Jews; the first successful riot against slavery and leading up to its abolishment; the distinction of terror among the states and guerilla war among resistance movements as tactical vehicles and the rise of the police state as a way along with authoritarianism and the elevation of the leadership cult of defeating the democratic yearnings (Hunt, 2020).

According to the historian Eric Hobsbawm, "[b]y any reckoning [the Industrial Revolution] was probably the most important event in world history, at any rate since the invention of agriculture and cities" (1996a: 29). Right after this era, the social structure became widely diversified, and in parallel to the developments in medical sciences the population rate has increased substantially, so that when by the early 1800's the census count was only 187 millions in contrast to its reaching circa 400 million in the 1900s (McNeill, 1994: 467). Following to the population flow from rural to urban areas and the transition to factory style production, the "new economy's" rapid spreading and the increased range has created a critical diversification among the societal texture as well. The shift of labor from agricultural to industrial society and the transformation of relations of production, imposed an inevitably obligatory innovation in the superstructure. The political architecture, having mutated from feudal relationships to colonialist empires at the end of the medieval age, has paved the way to the emergence of the "modern nation-states" in the next phase, in other words at times of the new industrialized society, especially in the European geography.

The destruction on the one side triggered a process of massive reconstruction, and this was not an unexpected consequence. While the industrial society was built on a set of brand new political, social and cultural codes, thousands of years old traditional systems dissolved, and the economic, social and political patterns of agricultural society vanished over time. 19th century was a period when also the war was industrialized. As of 1880's, the military engineering became prominent; the involvement of the steamboats and the railroads brought into a service enabling long distance mass travels, these advances have made a revolutionary transformation in regard to the military approaches (McNeill, 1982: 223). From the second half of 1800's onwards, the cross-border arms trade has begun simultaneously with the production of industrial military equipment coming to life (McNeill, 1982: 241).

Following the Napoleonic wars, an era of “Concert of Europe” has started in the aftermath of Vienna Congress in 1815, to be continued for roughly 100 years, in Europe, where the political structure was shaped according to the classical power balance, i.e. in a multi-centered way. This political design which was also called the “Vienna System”, has succeeded to preclude the bloody wars for a long period of time and besides the Franco-Prussian War (1870-1871) causing more than 200.000 deaths, no political problem has arisen between states which would shake continental Europe. However Eastern Europe witnessed two grand wars between Ottoman and Russian Empires, one broke out in Crimea (1853 -1856) and the second one in (1877-1878). Even if all of the big and small scale wars were included, the results overall in Europe would show that during the Concert period, the casualties of wars were seven times less compared to the previous century (Evans, 2010). In this way 19th century European politics allowed many small-scale battles while preventing them from turning to a war disrupting the general balance of power and kept all ambitions of transformation and preservation under control (Frankel, 1964: 161).

The main security concern leading to the solidarity between the emperors of Central Europe, was that the political movements emerging in this period opened the doors to an “Age of Revolutions” (Hobsbawm, 1996a) threatening to reinforce the inner instability. The revolutionist movements ravaging in whole Europe made the actual political powers to form an alliance which were trying to preserve their current political status. Because all of them knew if even one of them would show vulnerability, this would create a domino effect and may spread to the whole Europe, in other words to their homelands. Therefore, Austria, Prussia, Russia, Britain, and France known as the big five of Europe took the lead roles for this adaptation period. It was deemed the only way for each of them in order both to ease their undertakings of global colonialist actions and to bypass this unstable and staggering revolutionist era without any loss or harm. Hence in the II. Paris Agreement signed in 1815 after the Waterloo defeat of Napoleon, the rising of the “anti-liberal and anti-revolutionist spirit” is highly explicit in terms of its subsidiary aspect of organizing in the postwar period (Lascurettes, 2017). On the other hand, this period, as Henry Kissinger (1957: 5) stated, “may not have fulfilled all the hopes of an idealistic generation, but it gave this generation something perhaps more precious: a period of stability which permitted their hopes to be realized without a major war or a permanent revolution”.

The Key Characteristics of the “Concert of Europe”

The system of the “Concert of Europe” is a very appropriate model for clarifying 19th century European balance of power system and the diplomatic and international political stability in the course of an anarchist order. In the eyes of realists, this system demonstrates the capacity of nation-states to act in alliance within the framework of the international power distribution and

perceptions of national interest. According to liberals it is a model to show off the benefits of international organizations and collaborations to mitigate the effects of international anarchy and to help even selfish states. From the constructivists viewpoint, it is the product arising as a result of the interactions between states and an example for the significance of the transnational collective identities (Lascurettes, 2017). This system was configured upon a range of alliance agreements and declarations, fundamentally was in search of protecting the interests of Europe's great powers while ignoring the non-European powers and was designed to procure neither peace nor justice in the world (Schulz, 2019: 27).

On the focus of this concert system, is Europe's great powers' elite statesmen, remitting with the stipulation of abiding to certain principles in the affairs among themselves. While the principle rule before 1815 had been based upon the abolition of all the international agreements in case of the emperor/sovereign's death and the validity of the agreements would be maintained under the condition of the renewal by the new king, this practice was removed afterwards. The agreements were regarded as signed not between individual monarchs but rather between the states and their validity was cancelled in case one party wished to abdicate it (Evans, 2010).

The spirit of the "Concert of Europe" was based upon four fundamental principles (Lascurettes, 2017). The first foundational principle of the Vienna System involved designating a privileged status for the most powerful actors in the system in the first place. Although it is now commonplace to differentiate "great powers" from the others, this would not have been recognized in Europe prior to the 19th century. The reason behind the acquired relative stability during the 19th century was the fact that the great powers were united in the post Napoleonic period with the purpose of securing this special status. In the I. Paris Agreement which was signed on May 1814, and ended the sixth Coalition Wars; Britain, Austria, Russia and Prussia defined themselves as the major powers and charged themselves to establish and to protect peace on the entire continent. Although there were more than 200 delegates participating to the negotiations at which almost every government in Europe attended, the decisions were made by quartet and for the first time "the small and great powers" of Europe were identified. "It was at the Congress of Vienna that the terms great at small entered clearly into the diplomatic vocabulary" (Reinalda, 2009: 18).

The II. Paris Agreement made before the Congress, was also shaped in parallel to the Quartet Alliance Agreement and has again aimed at building consultation and support mechanisms so that the great powers would preserve the ongoing stability. As for the "Holy Alliance Agreement" prior to Vienna generated by a Russian initiative and at which Prussia and Austria participated later on, it brought Protestant and Catholic kings together in order to maintain the *status quo* under the wings of Christianity. Each of the three nations promised to lend assistance to each other against threats and made an open call to other big and

small scaled governments to join in this political unity, which was supposed to create an alternative to the elite association that Metternich and Castlereagh had been trying to establish (Bridge & Bullen, 2013: 39). As a summary, pre- and post- Vienna Congress was entwined with a series of alliances, congresses, and conferences and to a great extent this logical sequence reflected the desires of the great powers of Europe.

The second characteristics of the Concert of Europe system was “an acknowledgement by the great powers that only together would they establish, defend, and redefine as necessary the political and territorial status quo on the continent. Simply put, no unilateral territorial changes would be permissible without consent from (or at least consultation with) the great powers acting in concert. Simply put, no unilateral territorial changes would be permissible without consent from (or at least consultation with) the great powers acting in concert” (Lascurettes, 2017: 6). This principle is the follow up of the first principle, departing from the idea that stability in Europe is conceived as a whole. Because the “Concert System” was built after the Napoleonic Wars, had the mission of setting a barrier both to any hegemonic attempts and revolutionist approaches, it was not only seeking to keep France from re-attempting but also to stop any kind of hegemonic quest (Schulz, 2015).

The third characteristics of the Concert of Europe is its proposal of “a loose mechanism for consultation and dispute resolution through periodic great power” (Lascurettes, 2017: 6). This approach was inspired by Immanuel Kant’s idea of “perpetual peace” (1795) where he foresaw the model of *foedus pacificum* is based upon a belief of being able to ensure sustainable peace by establishing mediating mechanisms and collaborations between free states based on international law. However, it is also clear that in Kant’s model, the system is conceived as a federation of republics rather than a consortium made up of great powers under the governance of monarchs.

Forth, “in assessing polities across Europe that would seek the recognitions of sovereignty and the protections built into the Vienna System, the great powers would henceforth look favorably only upon those with nonrevolutionary and conservative (non-liberal) domestic political institutions” (Lascurettes, 2017: 7). The concert approach is not a system driven by change, but by conservation and by a regressive reaction to the speed of change which led to a desperate desire to stop time. Despite having successfully established an order to be sustained for almost a century, it was not possible to resist the dynamics of change emerging from within that same order. The foundation of the Italian Unification in 1860, the unification of German principalities to establish a new governance in 1871, British Empire’s extraordinary power of colonization made it virtually impossible to maintain the old status.

The End of the Centennial Concert of Europe: 20th Century and the Age of Global Wars

By around the first decade of 19th century, one can speak of a major shift from a polycentric world with no dominant center to a center-periphery hierarchical order in which the leading edge was in northwestern Europe, a previously peripheral part of the Eurasian trading system (Buzan, Lawson, 2013: 625). In the early 1900s, the Great Britain had started to control 23% of the global landscape and 24% of the global population as the “empire on which the sun never sets” (Ferguson, 2004: 15-16). At the end of this fast-advancing expansion process, colonization of the 90% of continental Africa was completed in 1890, while it was only 10% in 1870 (Armaoğlu, 1999: 81).

At the turn of the 20th century, the European powers began to signal new quests for change in order, resulting from the conflict of sharing colonies after global imperialism reached its natural borders on one hand, and the influence of political movements that opposed the system along with other elements of change such as industrialization, modernization, urbanization, and the trend of nation-states. While industrialization bred nationalism and nationalism bred the concept of nation-state (Gellner, 1983) smaller political units entered a phase of unification while major multinational empires entered the process of disintegration with World War I. Historian Laurence Lafore, in his work *The Long Fuse* in which he analyzed the underlying reasons for the start of World War I, says that while colonialist competition and the influence of militarism accelerated the process that led to war, the actual reason was the expansion of the idea of nationalism and the notion of national sovereignty opened the doors to abuse (Lafore, 1997: 30). As a matter of fact, the disruptive influence that emerged when German princedoms united and partook in the international competition joined the escalating armament race, the rise of the new allies system, and the rebellious streak of the minorities to give birth to the “new spirit of the times” – change!

Another element that triggered the disintegration of the Euro-centric system is the fact that the U.S. from the other side of the Atlantic and Japan from the other side of the Pacific joined the geographically global world system. More than 100 states joined the battle in the first global war of the 20th century: Canadian soldiers were sent to France, the Anzacs to the Gallipoli, the Indians to Europe and the Middle East, the Chinese to the British, and the Africans to the French fronts to fight (Hobsbawm, 1996b). For the first time, the fronts of conflict went well beyond the borders of Europe to reach the Atlantic and Pacific, marking the first naval war on the Falkland Islands. In 1918, the toll of the war had been unprecedentedly heavier. According to a research by the Harvard University, there were 902 great wars between 500 B.C. and 1918 and that the number of people who fought and died during World War I was seven times more than the 901 wars that came before (Bergman, 2014: 345). The fact that this war, during which it is estimated that nearly 25 million people died, was perceived as the “war to end all wars” (Hollis, Smith, 1991: 19) stems from optimistic expectation that humankind would not fall for the same mistake again.

In the 1920s, the destruction brought forth by the war made the issue of “advancing peace”, a popular theme of international policy (Preston, Wise, 1970: 78). The League of Nations, which was established right after the war on January 10, 1920 and is seen by some as an extension of the Paris Peace Conference, also reflects a longing for the stability and solidarity of the past. The first 10 articles of the founding Treaty of the organization which was born out of a necessity for collective security were shaped by the content to prevent war and to support peace. The League was considered as an instrument in order to revitalize an advanced “Concert of Europe” system (Karl Polanyi, 2001: 22). The political architecture of the era was built on four pillars: The first was the presence of a balance of power system among great powers which prevented a long and devastating war, the second was the acceptance of a shared gold standard to symbolize the singular organization of world economy, the third was a self-regulating market, and the fourth was the liberal state (Polanyi, 2001: 3) However, the political balance of the 20th century (especially after the late 1920s) was built on different values.

The League of Nations, which was signed by 63 countries, had less than 60 members even during its most crowded period due to the constant entry and exit of the members. The biggest deficit in terms of the project was the fact that the U.S., which undertook the role of the most assertive entrepreneur under the leadership of President Wilson during the foundation of the organization, could not become a member due to the Senate rejection. The Soviet Union could only join the organization in 1934, and its membership was terminated five years later. Failure was made inevitable due to the exclusion of Japan, Germany, and Italy. Although the “Concert of Europe” system is seen as a precursor to the League of Nations Council in the context of great powers taking on the responsibility of peace and security (Murphy, 1983: 10), it failed to operate with the same efficiency due to the economic, political, and international conditions of the period.

One of the most important enterprises activated in addition to post-war peace treaties is the Kellogg–Briand Pact, signed in 1928, which prevented the use of war as a legitimate tool in international politics and foresaw the solution of political problems through peaceful means, regardless of the nature and source of the conflict. Aiming for the 19th-century model in essence, this effort made it into history as a peace enterprise deemed “childish” by strategist George Kennan, “ridiculous” by diplomat Kenneth Adelman, and “as irresistible as it was meaningless” by Henry Kissinger (Hathaway & Shapiro, 2017: xii).

In fact, all international regulations and efforts to defunctionalized wars were unsustainable because of enormous political and economic pressure, especially after the 1929 crisis. Moreover the belief in and the optimism about the success of these attempts became the essential factors for failure to prevent a new war. In this regard, David Starr Jordan, a freedom and peace activist and the president of Stanford University, asked the question, “What shall we say of the Great War of Europe, ever threatening, ever impending, and which

never comes?” and famously answered, “We shall say that it will never come. Humanly speaking it is impossible” (Jordan, 1913: 467). In fact, the most well-known concept about the peace regulations that followed World War I is that these regulations failed to prevent a second and an even bigger war (Roberts, 2003: 249).

While World War II caused a much bigger destruction than its predecessor, it ended the lives of 20 million civilians in addition to nearly 19 million soldiers (Brzezinski, 1994: 9). The fact that after the war, both the United Nations with the goal to “ensure peace and security” (1945) and the NATO with the aim of “regional defense” (1949) and the Warsaw Pact (1954) enabled two different perspectives to gain functionality. The political elite started to design a global organization which would ensure the continuity of the status quo by eliminating shared security threats and a military chain of allies which could interfere in case the first goal failed and the possibility of war was imminent.

The United Nations had the perspective of designing the “Concert of Europe” model on a global scale as an organization that provided a privileged position for global and large-scale powers. The fact that the five winners of the war (the U.S., Russia, China, England, and France) were granted the veto power at the Security Council with great power status reflects that spirit from 1815. The world system has never been seen as a political arena among peers, and the old belief that stability and security could only be ensured with a harmony among great powers persisted in this new order as well.

The “Concert of Europe” system served as an example to the League of Nations and the United Nations, which were its successor models of organization, in many aspects. Above all, all three are structures founded after a destructive war by allies which gathered to stop “one state” with the ambition to create an empire to rule the world. This way, the great powers of Europe not only established peace among themselves but also ensured – as monarchs – their inner stability against liberal, democratic, and nationalist uprisings (Trennt & Laura Schnuur, 2018: 23). In this regard, it is possible to say that the United Nations is not the first but the third example of international efforts of institutionalization in the periods that followed after 1815 (Trennt & Laura Schnuur, 2018: 22).

The United Nations is not the only means of organization founded after the second global war; in fact, its position can even be regarded as secondary along with the disruption based on the ideological patterns of a bipolar system. One of the most significant pillars of the political architecture that continued until the last decade of the 20th century is the fact that bipolarity was the main characteristics of the order, during the years of the Cold War, and that all perception of security was shaped around the framework of taking up a defensive position against the “tangibly defined other.” The twin defense alliances, NATO and the Warsaw Pact were the main protectors of the existing status quo, led by the victorious two superpowers U.S. and the Soviet Union, and aimed to prevent any kind of revisionist claim against the prevailing order.

To some, the Cold War, built on the principle of competing ideological blocs and nuclear deterrence, was an “imaginary war” which enabled the foundation of giant military industries in the U.S., Russia, and their allies (Kaldor, 1990). Immanuel Wallerstein (1993: 1-2) takes this argument one step further and mentions a partnership between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. He believes that post-World War II is the construction period of *Pax Americana*, and that it is founded on four pillars. The first is the gathering of great industrial powers, including the defeated states of Germany and Japan, in a relationship of alliance. The U.S. would call it the “free world.” The second pillar is for the U.S.S.R. to undertake leadership within the borders defined as the “Socialist Bloc” with the conditions to position itself as an ideological opponent, to keep the peace in Europe, and to preserve the borders. The third is to achieve local acceptance about the U.S.’s responsibility to protect the world system and to slowly nationalize the colonies in the Third World. At the heart of this relative stability created by the Cold War, lies a sense of consent, based on U.S. dominance.

The Cold War was recorded in history as a “war” for some and as a “peace design” that prevented the hot wars for others. The principles of peace and security on which the period was built, managed to keep a peace order of 75 years in the Transatlantic and Pacific axes. The stability brought along by the bipolar balance of power eliminated the possibility of a hot war between the dominant actors of the system and enabled the thriving of a project like the European Union while paving the way for a great economic and political development on a global scale. The end of the Cold War made it possible for new states to join the international system, creating a new border line of 26,000 kilometers on the global surface. 26 of the 33 new members of the United Nations were new states, and 17 of them were born out of the debris of the Soviet Union (Roche, 2014).

The symbol of the end of the Cold War is the fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989. With this, the countries of the Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union landscape became integrated into the global capitalist market. Some of these countries were accepted as members of NATO, others joined the global peace system as part of the Partnership for Peace Project founded in 1994. The developing partnerships and the peaking of the collaboration period after the fall of the Iron Curtain paved the way for the acceptance of liberalization and democratization, which turned out to be the global economic and political standards of the newly emerging order. In fact, it is the belief that globalization reached the point of no return that lies at the heart of the idea that liberal democracies had the final victory after many along the century as developed within the framework of Francis Fukuyama’s (1989) “the end of history” argument.

While some hold the opinion that the 20th century was an “American century” and that every ideal it represented won every battle for a hundred years, it was also interpreted as the formation of a unipolar world order under the

leadership of the U.S. which was described as a “benevolent empire” (Porter, 2017). Some believe that “not since Rome has one nation loomed so large above the others” (Nye, 2002: 1) and this created a convenient environment in the world system to build a “hegemonic stability” (Gilpin, 1991: 88). On the other hand, one should also consider the fact that, in this new order which developed along with the “world is flat” argument (Friedman, 2006) and gained impetus with the revolution of communication and the internet, there are now new actors besides the states and that they have gained enough power capacity to compete with the state establishments.

The new order, carried the production systems outside the nation-state borders unlike the foresight of the industrial civilization, started moving around in an integrated environment where the entire world has become a global village. The continuation of the war between the states and the non-state actors either on visible or invisible grounds led to the shaping of political polarization on a complex path. The concepts such as “post-international politics” (Rosenau, 1990) or “cobweb” (Burton, 1971) which have been seen in international relations studies and used to define the system since the 1970s are quite functional to define the political architecture built on the principle of complexity of the post-industrial order (Arıboğan, 2019b: 34). In fact, the concept of “post-industrial society,” coined in literature by Daniel Bell in 1973 (Bell, 1973), points to a sociological transformation and claims that this, like all new civilizations, will impose a change that permeates all aspects of life, both personal and social.

In terms of economy, this change was shaped by certain era-specific developments such as the creation of a giant capitalist market, the global distribution of investment and production, the mobilization of labor, and the fact that global finance gained extraordinary fluidity and a nation-less identity with thanks to its freedom from being attached to a geography. On a political level, it signifies a direct transition from a system among nation-states to a pluralist model of interaction which includes global and non-state actors. Naturally, the security architecture of the 21st century is designed within a formula that includes these new actors in one way or another. In this new system, international politics takes place not as a “whole of relations that comprises the sum of the foreign policies of all states” (Gönlübol, 1978: 27), but in a globalized world where “states have very little space to make changes in the system with their role in the making of foreign policies” (Rosenau, 1990: 279). There’s no doubt that global security perceptions began to be evaluated with other aspects such as environmental threats, pandemics, financial crises, and natural disasters as per its content defined as “comprehensive security” (Derian, 1995: 26). Therefore, it became inevitable for many aspects of daily life including economic, political, sociological, theological, and technological to be interpreted with a focus on security.

The 21st-Century Perception of Security: Terrorism, Economic Crisis

The fact that the new century began with the terror attacks of 9/11 led to the prioritization of security concerns over all issues such as power, peace, competition, conflict, and collaboration, and so the spirit of the time was built on this dynamic. The period after 2001, during which the global threat of terrorism overshadowed international competition and conflicts in the meaning of creating a massive security threat, is a time when all great powers of the system came together to make decisions and to develop a joint reaction towards the common enemy defined as “radical Islamic terrorism.” After the 9/11 attack, in less than 24 hours, NATO Council gathered and executed, for the first time in history, the fifth article which activated the “collective defense” principle as a response to an attack against one of its members. Meanwhile, the United Nations shortly took over the operation initiated by NATO and started to conduct the ISAF (International Security Assistance Force) command based in Afghanistan as per the decision dated December 20, 2001 and numbered 1386.

The operation conducted in Afghanistan against Al-Qaeda and the Taliban regime which was its supporter led to the perception of all Central Asia and the Middle East as a basin of evil by the allies over the course of time. Such a tangible manifestation of a common enemy design for the Western world and the fact that its position and identity characteristics were so well-defined was an important step in the construction of a collective security architecture. Likewise, the design of the notion of security is an exclusionary process based on the perception of “us and them,” and it means knowing what you’re up against and from which direction the threat may come. In this regard, it is a subjective attitude to decide whether an issue poses a security risk. The “securitization approach” points to the fact that every security design is an innate quality of politics and, therefore, asks analysts, decision-makers, or activists this ethical question, “Why do you perceive this as a matter of security? What are the effects of doing or not doing this?” (Waever, 1999: 334).

The fact that the global security threat, embodied via Al-Qaeda and derivatives, became the most significant problem of the 21st century and the binder of the “us sentiment” is ultimately the product of the construction of a subjective perception. Just like the design of a common enemy - revolutionist movements and uprisings - which gathered the emperors of the 19th century around the same table of diplomacy and created a period of harmony for 100 years, the global perception of terrorism enabled the definition of those who belong through the description of the “other.” The priority of an anarchist environment is to protect the essence, i.e. self, and to ensure its safety. In this regard, the concepts of security vary based on the scope and approach within which the self is defined compared to the other (Wendt, 1991: 339). Likewise, identities are relational and interest oriented. Indeed, securitization is instrumental as part of the construction of identity. According to Wendt, who is one of the founding fathers of the theory of social constructivism in international politics, classifies security systems into three categories. The first is the “competitive

security” in which the benefit of one is regarded as the loss of another. Based on a Hobbesian anarchist environment in one sense, this model prioritizes relative benefits and losses. The second is the new liberal systems that include “individualist security” systems in which states continue their egoist behaviors pursuing their absolute gains. Lastly, there are “cooperative security” systems which include collective security mechanisms that grow weaker or stronger based on the members’ loyalty to the community (Wendt, 1991: 400). The direction the global system will follow is decided by conjecture.

Although the great powers of the system after September 11 first came together under the leadership of the U.S. against the “other,” they made an effort to maximize their own gains over time. After the attack, Putin, who fully supported the U.S. and defined terrorism as the “plague of the 21st century,” (Loughlin, Tuthail & Kolossov, 2005: 3) benefitted from this alliance by including the Chechnya problem, which was his own security issue, in the “radical Islamic terrorism” package. The rhetoric of “war against terrorism” not only helped the U.S. and Russia to find a common reason to collaborate but also made it easily visible to see the differences of perception between the two. The U.S. focused on international measures since it regarded terrorism as an external threat while Russia defined the risk raised in its own landscape with a similar content as banditry against national unity and a type of radicalism that disrupts social order (Hill, 2002). China defined the national security threat stemming from East Turkistan as a group of “radical Islamists”, which was financed from the Middle East, trained in Pakistan, and gained war experience in Afghanistan and Chechnya, that joined the global network of terrorism (Chen-Peng Chung, 2002). Although they regarded terrorism as a local issue, they instrumentalized the anti-terrorism security discourse when it was realized that the definition of Uyghur Turks as an extension of the global terrorism network would be an ideal adhesive in the integration with the other world.

The concept of security which, despite being a strong political concept, includes conceptual ambiguities along with a subjective and weak framework, (Buzan, 2016) and “securitization speech act” (Munster, 2012) transformed the foreign policies of countries after 9/11 while enabled the redistribution of economic resources in favor of the military-industrial complex. The total military expense of the world increased from 798 billion dollars (Sköns et al., 2001) to 1.9 trillion dollars in 2019 (Global Military Expenditure, 2019). Since this means that the financial resources reserved for education, health, tourism, etc. would now be directed towards the security industry, an economic reconstruction became inevitable.

While the 2008 economic crisis dealt a second blow to the globalization process led by non-state actors, the world witnessed - for the first time after the crisis since 1945 - (“The post-2016”, 2017) a recession of globalization with the influence of state mechanisms that returned to the system with their protective and regulatory roles (Arıboğan, 2018: 46). The establishment that experienced the biggest blow from the crisis was the European Union model which was

regarded as the perfect project of the 20th century. The European integration movement, built on common norms and values collectively determined by a group of global business leaders and intellectuals, were constantly questioned even by its members after this period, which also witnessed the first steps of the recent disintegration process. In this context, it is possible to say that the Brexit process was not a surprise, and that, as expressed by Britain's former Finance Minister Alistair Darling, the "financial crisis [which started a decade ago] has become an economic crisis, than the economic crisis has turned into a deep political crisis" ("Darling: Brexit," n.d.).

Not only the global economic crisis influenced the world's financial and economic markets but also the wide masses who were dissatisfied with the global course of events put the blame of their traumas on the globalization process. It shortly became out of fashion to define the world as a place built on a system of shared norms and values without borders, where labor and capital roamed unhindered and cultures intermingled. The liberal West in particular witnessed the fastest rise of populism, conservatism, discrimination against the other, and negative nationalism. The belief that a global and liberal world would be born after the fall of the Berlin Wall turned into disappointment as the Mexican Wall became a flag for the U.S. President Donald Trump's policies. While the notion of a walled-in world cascades, it has marked the end of an idea for permeable borders among countries and drove nearly 70 countries to the strategy of "constructing border walls" (Jones, 2020). While the "Cold War" offered people, the evil gift of the Berlin Wall which had a shadow greater than itself, the "Cold Peace" paved the way for a "century of walls" which makes the disunity of the world visible even from space (Arbogast, 2018: 3).

Security and Collaboration after the Pandemic

The third biggest global crisis of the 21st century started with the shocking footage from the city of Wuhan in China in January. Although initially it was believed to remain a local disease like the SARS virus which became an epidemic in 2003, it was soon understood that this new disease is the most serious health crisis the world is facing since the Spanish flu in 1918 ("Who Director," 2020). After the diagnosis of the first patient on November 17, 2019 (Brayner, 2020), the new virus named COVID-19 spread all across the world despite all measures and, by March, 11, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) had to announce a pandemic, which was a "global outbreak". While people had to stay at home with curfews all around the world, the first reflections of a heavy global economic recession began to be felt. The economy in China shrank for three months for the first time since the death of Mao Zedong in 1976 (Wall Street Recovers, 2020) and downsized by 6.8% (Nagarajan, 2020). Only in the first two months, 36 million people in the U.S. lost their jobs (Rapoza, 2020) and European economy entered an economic stagnation, heaviest since World War II and big enough to surpass the 1929

economic depression (Guggenheim, 2020). The U.N. reports state that, due to the pandemic, global economic production will experience a loss of 8.5 trillion dollars in two years and that 34 million people around the world will “fall below the extreme poverty threshold” while 130 million will fall down to the “poverty-stricken” level” (“COVID-19 to Slash,” 2020).

Doubtless, it is an existential crisis for the global society to face such a heavy trauma while struggling with many ambiguities at the entrance from a post-industrial civilization to a new order of civilization called Industry 4.0. Although some claim that the pressure to use technology imposed by the pandemic will accelerate this transition, every threat against people’s lifestyles, wealth, and relations will surely create a security risk. Indeed, the concept of security in the modern sense is based on four goals defined by needs: survival, welfare, freedom, and identity (Galtung, 1985: 146). People are beings that need security and look for mechanisms for self-defense against dangers in order to survive - just like regimes or states.

The push factor of the “Concert of Europe” system founded in the 19th century was the political movements that encouraged uprising against monarchical regimes. The pull factor was the fact that the peace and stability created in Europe provided a favorable environment for the cross-border operations of the colonialist powers of Europe. The harmony between monarchies was functional to lighten the pain of sociological and economic transformation and the transition into an industrial civilization and positioned Europe at the center of the world’s political system. The Concert of Europe system can be seen as the predecessor of the European Council, and even the G-8 and the U.S.-U.N. summit meetings (Ginsberg, 2007: 27). Similarly, the European Union project is a re-attempt at realizing a concert model, previously tried in the European landscape, this time with a more organized structure. However, the weakening status of the organization, which has been one of the pillars of a sustainable peace and stability in the European landscape since World War II, have deepened with the pandemic crisis. In addition to the already-present data that member countries such as Hungary and Poland have been going down a more authoritarian path, various measures taken in an attempt to control the pandemic such as curfews, state of emergency declarations, and closing the borders demonstrate that nation-state authorities are becoming more introverted and more centrist. However, this is not only limited to Europe. The fact that a similar approach has been seen around the world and that introverted self-help systems are preferred instead of global security and cooperation patterns prove that the world does not perceive the pandemic as a shared threat, or even so, does not lead to collective security arrangements in order to deal with it.

The most distinctive political effect of the pandemic is that it provides a leverage effect to clarify the tension between the U.S. and China. The U.S. President Donald Trump has been pointing at China as the responsible party for the crisis and offers various signals that they might refer to sanctions.

To him, this is a “Chinese virus,” and the U.S. has faced with an attack far bigger than Pearl Harbor and even 9/11. Besides, the Chinese government demonstrated a tremendous act of irresponsibility by pressuring the World Health Organization and caused the entire world to suffer more damage. Nonetheless, the Chinese government’s counter strategy was to create an ambiguity regarding the source of the virus and to send aid to the surrounding countries in need as part of its “politics of generosity” (Green, Medeiros, 2020). Besides Xi Jinping, the President of the People’s Republic of China, is trying to establish a “victory diplomacy” by his messages, like “we won, we beat the virus”, “we fought better than any country in the world”. Thus, they have the opportunity to prove that, just like in the global economic crisis of 2008, state-centric authoritarian regimes are more successful at dealing with crises than liberal regimes.

Essentially, the pandemic crisis could produce neither a new *Pax-Sinica* nor a renewed *Pax-Americana*; on the contrary, both powers could leave this thing in a weaker stance. Historically speaking, the direction of a power equation rising through a hegemonic rivalry, is shaped by military capabilities, wealth, technology, and quality of leadership. The victory of Sparta against Athens, the rise and fall of European colonial powers, or the banishing of the British Empire from the western hemisphere - they have all taken place within this framework. However, the situation between the U.S. and China is different. China not only does not flinch from receding at the possibility of defeat but also prefers to display a low profile in its fight for global leadership in order to maintain its immense economic power. On the other hand, the U.S. resorts to counter tactics such as regime change, political instability, and planning actions to disrupt stability on a local and regional scale in order to prevent any rising power to become a contestant. In this regard, while the Chinese play the game of Go, the Americans move with the principles of chess (Ahmad, 2018).

It can be safely said that the power struggle between China and the U.S. and the global order scenarios will take shape in the future based on three factors: the change in the military and economic forces of great powers, how this change of power is perceived by the rest of the world, and which strategies these great powers will put into use. In the context of these three factors, it is normal for both China and the U.S. to worry about their global influence in the aftermath of the pandemic (Rudd, 2020). Although it is equally disruptive for both powers to leave the Cool War (Feldmand, 2015) turn into a Cold War (Barkin, 2020), it also would not be surprising for the already deteriorated relations, made so through trade, technology, and intelligence wars, to get even tenser and spread as far as Taiwan and the South China Sea (Buckley, Myers, 2020).

The balance of power and security after the pandemic can be analyzed neither in a centerless environment as it was in the 19th century nor under the conditions similar to the NATO-Warsaw split which created the two poles of the Cold War. The fact that regional powers are in intense competition in an already

polycentric global order without a center, in addition to the U.S., China, Russia, and the central countries of the E.U. signifies an unstable environment soon. The military, economic, cultural, and diplomatic competition between the countries does not lead to the use of the U.N., NATO, or the World Health Organization as a common platform despite shared threats and opportunities of collaboration. Therefore, it will be useful to keep in mind that in the times to come, the threats against peace and security might not be limited to non-state areas such as global terrorism, environment, and epidemics, but also may stem from interstate relations.

Conclusion

The “Concert of Europe” system was a peace arrangement founded by the great powers of Europe in 1815 and, over the course of nearly 100 years until World War I, maintained stability in the European landscape. This political architecture not only disallowed the hegemonic powers of the system to fight each other but also prevented anti-regime political movements to gain power and provided a convenient environment for the colonial activities that spread all over the world.

The efforts to renew this Concert system, which was hindered by World War I were not limited to Europe, and it came forth with the harmonization and satisfaction of the great power in the organization of both the League of Nations and the United Nations. While both arrangements were based on the preservation of the status quo which was approved by the winners of the war, the veto power at the United Nations Security Council was granted for the permanent members who were raised to the level of decision-makers for the sake of protecting peace and security.

The global society, facing with the threat of global terrorism, global economic crisis, and a pandemics in the first two decades of the 21st century, failed to meet the expectations in demonstrating harmony between great powers and hence made it impossible to build a “Concert of Globe” system. On the contrary, these crises were used as instruments by hegemonic powers to gain the upper hand against all others and forced the states towards a self-help system while implementing various and even contradictory survival strategies. The political polarization between the U.S. and China, which became even more visible with the pandemic, shows that the already-disrupted relations between the two great powers will continue to grow even worse and that the global order may experience a tempestuous period.

In the 21st century, the concept of security should not be defined only in the context of military risks, but it also comprises issues that require high-level international collaboration such as environmental conditions, pandemics, threats from terrorist organizations and organized crime networks, economic problems, immigration and refugee problems, etc. Scientists agree that the

COVID-19 will not be the last epidemics. Despite that, the dominant forces of the system not only are unwilling to collaborate but also are suspicious against international regulations and organizations on the basis that they serve the interests of the other.

Although the century we live in began with shared security problems and global threats against all humanity, states failed to build a structure which will encourage them to think and act together and to benefit from opportunities of collaboration. The foundation of a renewed, harmonious, and collective security architecture under the leadership of great powers is not feasible with the current atmosphere of changing power balances and the multidimensional competition atmosphere. A stable order can only be created not exclusively among the big players but within a more egalitarian mechanism among all the equal members of the system. The best cost-free way to ensure security is not to leave the responsibility of preserving peace and stability to monopoly of great powers but to support joint action of sustainable global organizations with fair representation. Therefore, the motto that the “World is bigger than five,” is more meaningful than ever.

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