

RISK SOCIETY, NATION STATES AND IMMIGRANTS: MEDIA AND RISKS UNDER GLOBALISATION CONDITIONS

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Abstract

This study analyses the opposition of globalisation and nationalism (and/or localism) exclusively within the scope of international migration problem. Within the first decade of the 21st century, the rapidly increasing oppositions between supranational economic and political structures have become decisive forces in society and politics. The ideals based on Enlightenment, universalistic discourses, those shaping the course of globalisation, have been confronted by nationalist political movements trying to preserve their identity. This encounter has the potential to become a major catalyst as the source of political and social problems in the 21st century. International migration has increased due to globalisation, so triggering risks and conflicts, while it has caused a strengthening of radical nationalist movements defining themselves in terms of other identities.

In addition, the media, which has long been used as an ideological apparatus to create a uniform identity by the manipulations of centralised supranational, has been weakening the sovereignty of the nation state. Therefore, the controversy between economic tendency towards globalisation and the native features and interests of politics has been rapidly increasing. Within this scope, the current study analyses the social, economic and political problems caused by the risks arising from the opposition of globalisation and nationalism.

Key Words: *Risk society, national state, migrants, globalisation, media.*

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Introduction

Social, economic and political problems arising from international migration have swiftly become decisive factors of society and politics in the first fifteen-year period of the 21st century. A significant number of the main problems with which politicians have dealt are related to international migration, particularly in the developed countries. It is noteworthy that the main factors affecting voters' decisions are generally related to migration policies of each party during electoral processes in these countries. Therefore, social scientists have been largely interested in international migration and migration policies, and have carried out several high-quality studies (Ali & Hartmann, 2015; Bello, 2017; Martin, 2014; Solimano, 2010). International migration and migration policies have been analysed seriously by taking their social and economic impacts into account (Djajić, 2001; White & Tadesse, 2011).

The cultural influences of international migration have also been an important issue (Sowell, 1997). In addition, various studies have been gaining a major base in communication sciences (King & Wood, 2001; Demos, 2013) in regard to analysis of about how immigration issue have been presented in the media and how particular immigrant groups have been able to use the media (Ogan, 2001). All of these studies are concrete indications showing the importance of international migration problems in the developing world. Moreover, focusing social scientists on the international migration issue expresses nation states' demand for additional and more detailed sources of information to organise and control their societies.

It seems that attempts of nation states to keep their societies under control with old 19th century political apparatuses have been doomed to fail under the new conditions of the 21st century. Indeed, the risk factors, which Beck (1992: 22-23) states have increased due to ecological problems as well as scientific and technological developments, have also been escalated by new risks arising from international migration and the weakening of the structural character of nation states. As long as the

dimensions of nations/nation states are exceeded and the vast consequences of economic development necessitate supranational coordination, there will also be an era where multiculturalism becomes influential. Hence, nation states have employed institutions to manage to keep their societies uniform but these too have started to fail in terms of regulating and controlling their territories and sovereignty.

Moreover, nation states have become subject to the guiding activities of supranational political structures. This situation has also led to a dichotomy between “local decision-making processes of politics” and “globalisation process”. While the dichotomy increases risks and ambivalences, it makes it highly impossible to foresee the future. Therefore, in the context of radicalised modernity, where certain characters of modernity have become indicative factors, a multi-dimensional understanding have been necessary to eliminate potential risks and conflicts that may be caused by the issue of international migration. In this context, the current study analyses the social and political implications of newly risks emerging from the rapid increase in international migration under globalisation conditions.

This study analyses the social, political and economic impacts of globalisation on nation states and international migration. The economic integration of different regions has also made political integration a very current issue in the world, especially over the second half of the 20th century. Thus, international migration has increased rapidly and is now unprecedented in history. The increasing demand for a cheap labour force in developed countries has led to the fostering of international migration. In this process, a controversial issue has emerged around the social structure of the new megacities comprised of varying individual identities, religions, ethnic origins and cultures, having the structural characteristics of nation states. Therefore, rapidly increasing emergent risks and conflicts have begun to cause social and political problems over the first quarter of the 21st century. In addition, the media has long been used by nation states as an ideological apparatus, which has become non-

functional in creation of a uniform national identity and culture. Hence, this study reaches to a conclusion that various risks and conflicts arising from the globalisation and international debates about nationalism and nativeness have become decisive factors having an influence on society and politics in the first quarter of the 21st century.

The Infrastructure of the International Migration: Globalisation

Globalisation processes generate the main basis of international migration. Mutual economic and political relationships and increasing dependence among countries have made the displacement of the labour force possible through freedom of movement. The mobility of the labour force across borders develops the cultural, religious and ethnic diversity of modern megacities². However, it weakens the uniformity of the national identities. It then becomes impossible for nation states to maintain their absolute order and control all the subjects and factors in their sovereign territories. Therefore, the world that has been constantly rebuilt during the modernisation process turns out to be a different structure than it has been anticipated. The main reason for that is that the ideals and ideas of Enlightenment were based on a belief that science and technology would make the world and society better regulated and control state economic and politic results caused by globalisation process. However, they have instead witnessed increasing risks and conflicts. One of the most important consequences of globalisation is international migration. International migration has weakened all the ideological and institutional apparatuses established since the beginning of the 19th century for regulating and controlling societies of nation states. Therefore, making the right predictions for the future has become increasingly impossible.

As has been emphasised by Spellman (2008: 209), integration of the world economy is a central phenomenon of the globalisation

²With the “megacity” concept mentioned in this study referring to the cities whose population exceeds 10 million, such as London, Tokyo, New York City, Paris and Beijing.

involving regular transfer of opinion, money, service and products across the borders, internationally. It is highly likely that ‘globalisation’ as a term - one including the afore-mentioned meaning - will be the main driving force of economics and politics in the 21st century, much as it was in the 20th century. Globalisation entails that all societies and countries have become highly dependent on each other and now directly influence the social structures and living individuals in the world. This can no longer be envisaged to be confined to a geographical area where the effects of any political or economic event take place in a region or country are. No community at any time in the history has experienced societies become so dependent on each other as they have today. Yet, globalisation is not only limited to exchange of goods in a global market place, but also causes a wide range of social and political implications whose consequences cannot be predicted beforehand. The most important social and political consequence of globalisation is international migration. Indeed, as has also been stated by Xu (2007: 87), who notes that forces of globalisation over the past decades have resulted in huge waves of migration.

The main factor that makes globalisation to occur is the revolutionary developments in communication systems and technologies. These are technologies enabling messages to be instantly communicated from one venue to another, widely connected to society where countries are not only economically but also culturally and politically connected. Thus, supranational structures become superior while weakening the local apparatuses that enable nation states to manipulate and control their societies. This global shift also leads to the emergence of contradictions and conflicts on economic, social and political issues. Tensions that emerge between the political decisions making the mechanisms of nation state dependent bodies and difficulties arising from developments of supranational organisations increase the risks. Instead of the traditional rules of nation states, there is an acceptance of supranational global decisions on social, economic and political structures, while losing their state control leads to the emergence of various conflicts between

globalisation and national interests. While these tensions increase conflicts and risks, local identities put serious oppositions to the challenges posed by globalisation processes.

While globalisation inevitably influences international migration in all regions, local identities, nationalist ideologies and xenophobia rapidly gains strength. On the one hand, globalisation, as the infrastructure of international migration, has made nation states difficult to regulate and control their own social and political structures. On the other hand, it has caused radicalisation of nationalist ideas that empower nation states. Hence, in megacities filled with full of cultural and ethnic diversity in developed countries, local political ideas aim towards maintaining national uniformity. Therefore, as the result of globalisation, multicultural megacities and the various tensions have arisen between the monolithic political and cultural structure characteristic of a single nation state (Ozkan, 2016a: 54). This situation has led to economic, political and social problems that are difficult to overcome. In the face of global developments, promoting international migration, local tendencies and nationalist movements display various confrontations. Hence, the risks that cannot be anticipated beforehand have become decisive factors for society.

Risks and Nations

Social and political developments, which are driven by globalisation-triggered international migration, dominate inter-dependent relations both in terms of the contradictions and the ambivalence they face with nationalist opposition. While trying to establish economic relations with countries and societies on the one hand, it is impossible to remain isolated from the social and cultural influences of globalisation on the other hand. However, any progress to achieve economic welfare necessary for the ideal sustainability of life, leads to a weakening of the social and political structures of globalisation. In addition, since there have so far been no specific government to well administer the globalisation process, the risks and ambivalences driven by globalisation

have become more indicative. While the apparatuses of the national governments to use against the effects of globalisation have rapidly weakened, regulation and controlling of the social fabric of the region have become increasingly difficult where the nation state dominates. Therefore, nations have become unforeseen, unplanned and weak in the face of the risks caused by the ambivalences of globalisation.

In its substance, modernisation is based on the idea of making rational decisions in almost every field from economy to policies. Thus, an increase in consciousness regarding humanity, economy and policies are an important key to modernisation. Even then, nation states have had huge difficulties in making rational decisions to foresee the causes and consequences of social, economic and political developments, especially in the following decades after the cold war. Yet the nation states have remained weak in coordinating both their institutions and living individuals in their countries because supranational structures destroy the social construction that the nation states have built by effectively coordinating the citizens of modern nation states.

As the coordination within national borders through transportation and communication systems (between entities built by the industrial community) has begun to hold an international qualification, it has become open to the positive and negative effects of non-national factors. Thus, the economic and political infrastructures established in the industrial societies may be regarded as factors enabling the emergence of the risk society. Escalation of international migration in industrialised countries has contributed to welfare increase in the developed countries. However, this weakens the coordination between the people, which is necessary for the ideal processing of a modern nation state.

The social tensions caused by identity problems between ethnic and religious groups mark them as risks and conflict factors and therefore the main reasons driving social and political developments. Indeed, as Steiner (2009: 46) has noted, immigrants have become an inflammatory

issue associated with public safety and questions of national identity both in the US and the Europe.

In the aftermath of the cold war, the expectations were that a new era started when crisis and conflicts had lessened and those that begun were soon left unreciprocated. Rather, it seems more plausible to argue that we have been in a transition period in which crises and conflicts have been diversifying. Indeed, the first half of the 21st century is a reminder that we should build economic and political structures on a new foundation. Nation states, which are preserving their existence against all kinds of crisis, seem to be trying to develop new counter-measures against the key supranational organisations. It has also been observed that nation states have applied isolationist politics to populations to neutralise external factors in the face of uncontrolled change and transformation processes caused by globalisation.

The fact that ambivalence and uncontrolled problems have become definitive factors has caused politicians to use the present risks and conflicts frequently as instruments of political success. As Buchanan (1977: 208) has pointed out, just like economists and intellectuals, politicians also tend to concentrate primarily on their own subjective interests. Thus, if politicians focus only on achieving success at all costs, this can lead to an increase in risks. In circumstances in which politics has increasingly transformed into entertainment of some variety, racism and xenophobia have been treated as humorous, acceptable and understandable. Hence, this situation undermines communication between immigrants and nation states, producing a one-sided manipulation process. The weakening of sovereignty and the controlling powers of nation states has led to a loss of function of the administrative apparatuses, which are effectively used in the conditions of industrial society. Thus, the possibility of nation states failing to regulate and administer their societies, comprised of different identities, has also brought new risks to the agenda. The increasing tensions between diaspora and national identities, the main core of national states and their

reason to exist, make the future less predictable than it has been for all of modernity.

The Media in the Risk Society

Media is the main ideological apparatus allowing nation states to control and keep their community in order. A nation state facilitates coordination among entities through the media in the process of building its sovereignty and institutionalisation. Therefore, an understanding of the role of media on society and its impact on politics as being useful to understand communication and interaction between the state and immigrants in the risk society emerged in late period of modernisation³. The modernisation process is constantly rebuilt through the coordination of all entities bringing a society together through a centralised government. To do that, all knowledge and information in circulation must be arranged and controlled through the media. It then becomes possible for a nation state to manipulate and manage a society comprised of individuals, mainly informed through the media.

The most obvious difference between nation states and traditional states is that nation states have a sophisticated and complex bureaucracy to coordinate and manage individuals and society under its sovereignty. Thanks to the administrative resources of the modern bureaucracy, the nation state performs coordination in an efficient way for a dedicated purpose among different geographical regions, groups and classes to bring a society together. To accomplish this, a society must be uniform. The society thus becomes facilitated and all the individuals bringing the society together should speak a single language and move in a coordinated way among themselves. The media is thus a system enabling all individuals to have constant communication and interaction with each

³ In the introduction section of the study entitled ‘Explorations in Communication’ and with McLuhan (1960: xi) as its editor, it was stated that it is no coincidence that media informs everyone about any event occurred around; hence, the media has converted the world into a ‘global village’. Indeed, to identify the effects of globalisation, there should be comprehensive analysis regarding the effect of media on society in detail.

other, using a common language and symbols. Thanks to this system, a mechanism between the state and the individuals, and the individuals among themselves is established to communicate and interact constantly with each other to achieve effective and continuous production and consumption.

In an industrial society, it is possible for a nation state to create a uniform identity, culture and society through communication systems. Nation states primarily regulate and control information-building processes through educational institutions. Organisation and control of the circulation of information through media ensures centralisation in nation states and becomes the main identifier in every social, economic and political fields. However, having possible instruments to manipulate nation states by international economy and politics causes knowledge, production and circulation to become uncontrollable. Transnational Migration Theory claims that immigrants have formalised transnational identities and communities using transport and communication in the most advanced sense (Fujita, 2009: 171-172). The effects of supranational political and economic structures have thus strengthened through transnational identities and communities that weaken the sovereignty of the nation state and render ineffective the former information systems used in uniform identities, societies and mass cultism. Therefore, while the weakening effects of international migration on the uniform nature of the nation may, in some way, increase cultural diversity, it still brings uncertainties, risks and conflicts to the fore.

In the late modern period, a society comprised of ethnic and religious individuals and groups which use different knowledge sources, has become impossible to govern through a centralised media, as was the case in industrial states. Thus, since the beginning of wireless telegraphy, the functions of nationally-centred media have rapidly weakened in assisting the nation state in building identity, culture and society. As the media become subject to the manipulation of supranational political and economic structures, it acquires functions that, in its sovereignty, makes

the nation state difficult to regulate and to control the circulation of information. Hence, nation states face new uncertainties and risks. Due to the economic and political influences of external factors, these weakened nation states cannot administer the coordination that has always been needed in new societies comprised of various ethnic, cultural and religious differences.

Concluding Thoughts

Through this study, I have sought to draw the attention to the fact that we have witnessed a new turn from the beginning of the 21st century. Indeed, the reconstruction process after the Second World War has provided free circulation of both capital and labour force (Solimano, 2010: 110). Thus, after the 20th century, when modernisation has almost been completed in a significant manner throughout the world, a new turn has begun in which the risks and conflicts are the main determinants. The huge proportion of these risks and conflicts stem, in fact, from the social, political and economic impacts of international migration as international migration changes social and political structures both for migrating countries and emigrating countries. Furthermore, international migration, which has led to an increase in speed of social and political changes and the discrepancies between social structures and identities, has the potential to result in various conflicts, both within and among countries.

International migrations forcing social and political structures into rapid change have also had a varying influence on increasing ambivalence. When individuals experience the weakening of their social and political entities in the process of socialisation, they become more anxious about their future. This situation of high anxiety, acting effectively and decisively on social life, also causes increasing tension between globalisation process and various local oppositions. Beside the social and political structures that nation states have built for many years, the “high anxiety” arising from both immigrants and natives about not foreseeing their future has put their national entities and cultures under new risks. Therefore, “high anxiety” has become one of the main

indicators of private life and societies in today's world where both national and international risks have arisen (Ozkan, 2016b: 55).

According to Anderson ([1991] 2006: 67), almost all of the “national print-languages” of the newly nationalist movements, emerging between 1820 and 1920, had central ideological and political presuppositions. Using “national print-languages” as an ideological and political apparatus, nation states could achieve social, political and economic advances by providing perfect coordination among people connected to the system by citizenship. Nation states also provide these progresses by constructing uniform identities using the media as an ideological apparatus. Thus, manipulation becomes much more efficient in a society created by individuals acquiring uniform identities under the sovereignty of a centralised power structure. Nation states have been able to revise their governments continuously by manipulating the mass (i.e. nation) through coordinated events due to uniform identities in the nation. Since the beginning of the 21st century, however, ghettoisation in the media weakened its use as an effective apparatus in establishing of a uniform identity. Each centralised and modernised government desires to construct and circulates information from a single centre. However, with the impact of international migration, administration of a society composed of diverse groups with different information sources becomes difficult; hence, the new types of risks and conflicts dominates the whole social structure.

Despite all the wars and conflicts that have taken place in the 20th century, signed treaties among the nation states have achieved a significant degree of reorganisation of international power balances and ensured order and stability. Even under Cold War conditions, the balance of power among the nation states has prevented the rehabilitation of damage otherwise impossible to repair. However, the risks and conflicts faced after the post-Cold War period are extremely complex. Nevertheless, the neutralisation of all risks and conflicts is always possible by constructing rational decision-making processes.

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