

Globalization: The end of state Sovereignty?



Ofran Badakhshani:
1586513
Words: 1442

Index	
Introduction.....	3
Globalization.....	3
State sovereignty.....	4
Analysis.....	4
Conclusion.....	6
Bibliography.....	7

Introduction

“A specter is haunting the world’s governments, the specter of globalization”. The world order and politics are facing a new danger; the sovereignty of the nation states is under question. According to some theorists there is a constantly growing dependency and interconnectedness between the nation states, and the governments have become weaker and less relevant than ever before. But what does this dependency and interconnectedness mean and to what extent does it affect the sovereignty and autonomy of the nation state? In other words does globalization mean the end of state sovereignty?

In order to answer the above question, an explanation of the two notions above is required. I first provide you with some contemporary definitions of globalization and state sovereignty, and then try to measure the impacts of globalization on the state sovereignty from different perspectives. And because globalization and state sovereignty are very wide and contested notions, this paper concentrates only on four perspectives, namely economical, political, philosophical and criminological.

Globalization

As has the impact and growth of globalization changed, so has its meaning during the last decades. But what is certain is that globalization is not something of today or yesterday. Among the so many given definitions, Martin Wolf defines globalization as a “journey, but toward an unreachable destination, the globalized world. A globalized economy in which neither distance nor national borders impede economic transactions. A world where the cost of transport and communication were zero and the barriers created by differing national jurisdictions had vanished” (Wolf, 2001: 178).

But globalization is a very wide notion, which embraces the social, cultural, and political interdependency of states. Globalization refers also to the integration and interaction between different people and nations. Take the European Union as an example, where the member states share the same democratic values and norms, or the convergence and similarities of the constitutions of the member states, which could lead to a European law or constitution.

State sovereignty

The notion concept of sovereignty refers to the three-fold capacity of a state, which is the “absolute supremacy over internal affairs within its territory, absolute right to govern its people, and freedom from any external interference in the above matters” (Wang, 2004: 473). So a state is sovereign if it has the ability to make and implement laws within its territory, and can function without any external power and assistance, and doesn’t acknowledges any higher authority above itself in the world of independent states. From the above definition one can draw the conclusion that either a state can be sovereign or not, since sovereignty is defined as the absolute supremacy and right of the government in a given state.

Analysis

A realist like Steven D.Krasner agrees on the collapsing autonomy of states but deny the impact of globalization on nation state, which could possibly lead to the death of state sovereignty. He argues, “Those who proclaim the death of sovereignty misread the history. The nation state has a keen instinct for survival and has so far adapted to new challenges, even the challenge of globalization” (Krasner, 2001: 20). He also argues that globalization is not a new challenge or phenomena. Even though I agree that globalization is not something of today, the question that remains is whether contemporary globalization is likely to have a different impact on the nation state then that of the past? For today’s globalization distinguishes itself from that of the past in terms of rapid communication, market liberalization and the global integration of goods, services and production.

Taking the example of the European supremacy era in world trade, and its relation with the Far East, we can speak of a global trade and exchange of goods and services. This explains the difference between modern globalization and that of the past. Even though it might not be appropriated to compare the ancient world with today’s modern nation states, as we did not have independent and sovereign states then; we had independent regions. For example, China was not dependent on economical relations with Europe in the past; nor was Europe on China. But today there is an increasingly growing interdependency between them. The nation states are compelled to build relations with other states in order to sell their goods, services and develop a stronger and larger economy. So due to this interdependency we can undermine one of the three-fold capacities of a sovereign state -the absolute freedom from any external force, which shapes the

conduct of the nation states. Although states are not literally forced to modify their conduct toward the international society or other states, it is in their interest to do so.

Part of the sovereignty is also the ability of a state to solve its domestic problems on its own. But since problems and threats are getting more globalized, it is almost impossible for a state to act alone and entirely independent. Taking the international crime as an example, let's assume there is a weapon trade between two criminal organizations rooted in Germany and in The Netherlands. In order to demolish this crime network The Netherlands is dependent on the assistance of Germany and vice versa. This undermines the second notion of sovereignty, which is absolute supremacy over internal affairs within its territory.

Also seen from a philosophical point of view, there is a demising process in the sovereignty of nation state. The emergence of International Human Rights Organization, which is based on the Kantian philosophy that views the world as a community of free individuals; a community where nations and borders are no longer relevant or of any meaning.

According to this philosophy one can speak of a world, which is going toward a global civil society. It might be worth mentioning what the notion of global civil society stands for.

Originally the notion of civil society referred to, or was characterized by, a social contract. "Civil society was a type of state on the principle of equality before the law, in which everyone including the ruler at least in the Lockean conception was subject to the law"(Kaldor, 2003: 583). But as theorists came to speak of a global civil society, its meaning changed and it referred to a "platform inhabited by activist, NGO's, and neo liberals, as well as national and religious groups, where they argue about, campaign for or against, negotiate or lobby for the arrangements that shape global developments"(Kaldor, 2003: 590).

There is a certain movement to perceive so to speak in the world order. States are more likely to join each other in terms of cooperation and political relations. The European referendum for the European law can be considered as such a movement and tendency. Though there is already cooperation between the state members, but the European law, if passed, would have definitely had a different impact on the cooperation between the member states. Europe would then be more of one Europe rather than a Europe, which consists of member states. But also the emerging of negotiations on the Persian triangle, which is supposed to constitute a more widely political and economical cooperation between Khorasan (Afghanistan), Iran and Tajikistan could be another example.

Viewed from a criminological point, “the perceived normality of high crime rates, together with the widely acknowledged limitations of criminal justice agencies, have begun to erode one of the foundational myths of modern societies: namely, the myth that the sovereign state is capable of providing security, law and order, crime control within its territorial boundaries” (Garland, 1996: 448). The notion of legitimate organized violence monopoly, which is of great importance for the internal order as well as for the foreign accountability of a state, is challenged by the international criminality. Since states cannot provide security for their citizens and are not capable of guaranteeing internal order, one of the fundamental elements of state sovereignty is undermined and questioned.

Conclusion

Taking the increasing growth of interdependency between the states, the emergence of transnational institutions, multinationals and benevolent organizations and the integration of international laws under consideration, one can conclude that there is a declining process to perceive in the sovereignty of the nation states. Nation states are also domestically under attack of the high rate of criminal and terrorist events. Since nation states no longer can guarantee the security of their citizens and cannot independently act in order to solve their domestic problems, there is a lack of sovereignty. So the globalization will gradually lead to the demise of nation state and its sovereignty.

Bibliography

Garland, David (1996): "The limits of the Sovereign state: strategies of crime in contemporary society." *The British Journal of Criminology*, 36/4: 448-449.

Kaldor, Mary (2003): "The idea of global civil society." *International Affairs*, 79/3: 583-593.

Kranser, Stephen D. (2001): "Sovereignty." *Foreign Policy*, 122: 20-29.

Wang, Guigo (2004): "The impact of Globalization on State Sovereignty." *Chinese Journal of International Law*, 3/2: 473-483.

Wolf, martin (2001): "Will the nation state survive globalization?." *Foreign Affairs*, 80/1: 187-190.