

POPULISM AS A CHALLENGE TO THE GLOBAL ORDER

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ABSTRACT

The global political landscape is experiencing a potent force currently reshaping the post-cold war liberal order once dominated by global elites. This paper attempt to explore how populist movements are eroding multilateralism, international norms, migration flows and free trade movements in favor of protectionism, nationalism and anti-immigrant policies. Populism advocate for mechanisms aiming to optimize national interests over global interests. The current World order is experiencing tremendous defections from climate change, human security governance and security governance arrangements which plays a pivotal role in shaping modern civilization. By undermining the values of humanity, this paper proposes strategies which can help enhance global cooperation and limit fragmentation in global governance. In order to address these challenges, the paper recommends enhancing global policies on inequality, democratic institutions, empowering civil societies and the promotion of social cohesion. The findings of these papers call for an urgent need in improving the current situation degrading situation by promoting cooperation, peace and stability globally in an increasingly constraints political environment.

The controversy surrounding elitism around the world has gradually necessitated the rise of populist movements which defines a unique paradigm aimed at empowering the voices of ordinary citizens once forgotten by the global elites. Populism remains a contested concept, but generally, in its current political context, the term refers to a set of policies driven by a charismatic leader who claims to speak in the interests of ‘the people’ and against an ‘established elite’ (Hawkins, 2003, p. 1138). States cooperate with international institutions to achieve a common interest through the application of shared values and norms by limiting conflicts amongst them. The objectives of foreign policy must be defined in terms of the national interest and must be supported with adequate power (Morgenthau, 1952, pp. 260).

The World today is constructed on national interests and values in which states optimized their domestic character in pursuit of their goals. These goals can only become materialized when national consensus reconcile with domestic interests which engender the rise of populist within state systems. Similarly, states in today's international politics are not only merely trying to maximize interest in the present but also to secure their future positions (Waltz, 1993, pp. 63). The question is, why is populism seems so recurrent on the global order which was once characterized by liberalization and prosperity of democratic societies and institutions?

1. THE IMPACT OF POPULISM ON THE GLOBAL ORDER

1.1 THE DISINTEGRATION OF MULTILATERALISM

A world where there is little trust toward global institutions, populist movements or leaders often prioritize national interests over institutional cooperation or multilateralism. Institutions which once flourish with economic prosperity, human right and democratic governance amongst states is now under serious threat from populism. States will structure their foreign policies to align with national interest which might define global politics. The structuralist realists see domestic politics as a means to an end and the ultimate end is survival (Mearsheimer, 2006.p.72). The rationality amongst the realist school of thought is that domestic politics shape the behavior of states in interacting with one another. Populism will inevitably define a paradigm in international politics where liberalism fails to demonstrate or reconcile the needs for ordinary citizen which will lead to protectionism on the global political economy.

1.2 THE RISE OF NATIONALISM

Populism movements often create national movements and xenophobia within the state and its allies. Populism will create nationalism when there is a common identity, ideas and norms which seeks to identify a particular group of states or societies having shared certain values pertaining to their unity. Among ourselves, we keep the law but when we are operating in the jungle, we also must use the laws of the jungle. In the coming period of peace in Europe, there will be a temptation to neglect our defenses, both physical and psychological. This represents one of the great dangers for the post-modern state.” (Cooper, 1996, pp. 37). Nationalism will limit cooperation amongst states by downgrading global institutional norms and values which form the basis for global governance. For example, anti-immigration populist leaders seem to use this as a cornerstone to restrict immigration by justifying unemployment and crime waves as a reason behind such policies. This aligned with Hungary, Poland and Czech Republic in the European Union.

1.3 UNDERMINING INTERNATIONAL NORMS AND VALUES

States governed by populist leaders will go as long to defect or quit international treaties if such norms or values counteract their national interests. For example, it could only be argued that Donald Trump quit the Paris climate accord in 2016 because

it does not satisfy American interests. When global governance is threatened with key players defecting from international accord, it creates a room for a disorder global order where populist agendas are pursued. Self-interested actors cooperate with each other for mutual gains (Keohane, 1984, pp. 863). However, they neo liberals will still argue that anarchy and security dilemma inhibit cooperation especially if its national interests are not maximized. This will undoubtedly create disorder on the global stage.

1.4 CHALLENGES TO GLOBAL ECONOMY INTEGRATION

Populist leaders in order to show support for the neglected masses, they create protectionists or restrictive measures to improve domestic economy which often violate global trade norms. Some of the policies at times also bring pains on the countries imposing them unknowingly hence, when the global economy is decoupling, it creates trade wars, tensions and little trust amongst states hence, disorder is inevitable.

1.5 RESTRICTIONS ON GLOBAL MIGRATION PATTERN FLOWS

Interconnection between states and movement of people from one country to another create not only employment security but also accelerate economic growth on the global economy. Populist leaders often place restriction on migration patterns to align themselves with domestic agenda which resonate with the ordinary citizen once neglected by the global elites. This policy often ends slow down global economic prosperity thus, creating a huge poverty gap difference between the global South and North.

1.6 DESTABILIZING GLOBAL ALLIANCE SYSTEM

Populist rhetoric and programs often prioritize unilateralism at the expense of diplomacy. This kind of pattern can strain global alliance system and partnerships between states. This fragmentation often leads to geopolitical tensions and conflicts thus, disrupting global stability and cooperation between states as well as international institutions. The nub of the dispute between liberals and realists regarding both institutions and economic interdependence has to do with whether they promote world peace. Liberals believe they ameliorate conflict; realists do not” (Mearsheimer, 2018,pp. 143).

1.7 DEGRADATION OF HUMAN VALUES

Human right is an essential value enshrined by global institution aimed to regulate the behavior of states towards individuals. Populist leaders in most cases prioritize material politics than human being. This explains why poor working conditions, abuse of women rights and excessive labor seems to be one of the common features in most populist regimes. This will lead to human rights abuse and a disorder global order which Ann Tickner will agree.

1.8 THE DESIRE TO EMPHASIZE ON NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY IN SHAPING FOREIGN POLICIES

Populists emphasize on domestic agenda than cooperation. A World in which power politics ceases to rule nationally, will be a World which law has vanquished force, a lawless World would be one in which force had vanquished law (Carr, 1939, p 249). In the United States of America for example, “Make America Great Again” (MAGA) and Project 2025 are domestic policies which aimed at emphasizing more directives towards the wellbeing of Americans by legitimizing the political actions of Donald Trump at the expense of international cooperation hence, destabilizing the global order rules.

2. HOW CAN POPULISM BE ADDRESSED?

2.1 TACKLING GLOBAL SOCIOECONOMIC INEQUALITY

Populism arises in the society when there is significant economic inequality. Government can focus on prioritizing inclusive economic growth, reduce income distribution between the rich and the poor by promote equal opportunities in societies. It will helps stabilize the World order. Bull invented the idea of a “society states” where sovereign states cooperate within a frame of shared interests and values. The society is not a unified government but a system where there is respect and mutual understanding amongst sovereign states to achieve their goal. This can be done through recognition of each other’s sovereignty (Bull, 2002, pp 13). Cooperation can help overcome income inequality according to Bull.

2.2 ENHANCING GLOBAL AND NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

Populists exploit the loopholes of democratic institutions to make their case publicly. Strengthening this institution through transparency, accountability and just law will help restore the confidence in the global order. Bull invented the idea of a “society states” where sovereign states cooperate within a frame of shared interests and values. The society is not a unified government but a system where there is respect and mutual understanding amongst sovereign states to achieve their goal. This can be done through recognition of each other’s sovereignty (Bull, 2002, pp 13).

2.3 EMPOWERING GLOBAL CIVIL SOCIETIES

Civil society as an intermediary between citizens and authorities, they can help propose good laws, dialogue with various stake holders in respect to policies formulations. This can only be done if if societies encourage civil societies by integrating

these NGOs in policies deliberation process. This will help resolve the issue of bad regulations which populist leaders embark on to convince the society at large in buying their ideas. This help shape a stable global order.

2.4 PROMOTION OF SOCIAL COHESION

Populist movements often exploit the gap between the privileged and the less privileged groups to dish out their rhetoric. If states can foster social cohesion and inclusivity amongst the society, it will help address divisive policies which creates division on the global order. This is established diplomacy, treaties and international law facilitating states to co-exist peacefully without conflict thus, aiming to achieve a common course of action (Bull, 2002, pp 8).

2.5 SENSITIZATION ON POLITICAL EDUCATION AND MEDIA

Media literacy is vital in strengthening and empowering global societies in understanding and evaluating the complexities pertaining the truth behind any rhetoric which populism may be communicating. This will help quell down narratives which does not resonate into practical life thus, it will help shape our global order.

Conclusively, populism remains one of the major challenges facing the Global Order and it does not seem to go anywhere very soon. States will need to formulate concrete policies based on equality irrespective of race, religion, age and sex. By strengthening these policies mentioned above, it will help create and equitable and resilient societies which it would be difficult to create margins. Nevertheless, they exist other important challenges to the global order such as: climate change, security alliance systems, nuclear weapons, geopolitical tension in Africa and South China Sea, and protectionism These poses a serious challenge to mankind which needs to be address through global institutions by improving cooperating with sovereign states. States must assume their responsibilities in ensuring peace, security and inclusiveness to coexist without any conditional in order to develop a sustainable global order.

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