

# CHAPTER 1

## THEORIES OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

The discipline of international relations' theory emerged after the WWI, as it was then called, the Great War, when the need of a discipline to reveal the causes of war and the conditions of lasting peace has risen. The establishment of the first common International Relations Institute first came up as a British-American initiative at the 1919 Paris Conference. The discipline, therefore, was essentially born with a crisis-explaining and -solving purpose at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, however, its roots and antecedents can be found in political philosophy, international law, as well as in diplomatic and political history.<sup>1</sup>

It is crucial to emphasize that the discipline of international relations does not have a unified theory, it rather consists of arguing and competing theories, some of which may become dominant over certain periods. The fundamental difference between the main theoretical trends of international relations lies in how they see the international system, what they consider to be its central actor and what motivational factors are important related to the behavior of actors in international relations. The **traditional theories** of international relations include **liberalism, realism, neoliberal institutionalism and neorealism** while **critical theories** comprise **constructivism, Marxism and feminism** – just to mention the most important ones. This chapter aims to present the above theories.

### 1.1 TRADITIONAL THEORIES OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

#### 1.1.1. THE LIBERAL TREND OF INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL THEORY

The first significant paradigm of international relations is liberalism or idealism which became the defining theory of the discipline after WWI and many of its theses derived from the shock of the war and aiming at defining the conditions of lasting peace in international relations.

The theory was strongly influenced by liberal internationalism, originated from the war winner Anglo-Saxon countries, which saw the pledge of enduring peace in the transposition of the institutions and mechanisms of liberal democracy into the international system. This was represented by one of the most well-known advocates of liberalism, *Woodrow Wilson*, the 28<sup>th</sup> President of the United States who proposed – as one of his 14 points announced in January 1918 –, the establishment of the League of Nations whose main purpose was to ensure lasting alliance and cooperation between states.

Within the liberal trend of international political theory **three central concepts** emerged based on the work of *John Locke* and *Immanuel Kant* on the behavior and foreign policy of states, especially that of liberal democracies:

- the theory of liberal or **democratic peace**: *Kant* laid the foundations of the concept in his work entitled “Perpetual Peace”, which were improved by many in the 20<sup>th</sup> century – e.g. *Michael Doyle*. According to *Kant*'s basic concept, the natural condition between states is war, thus peace, especially lasting peace, must be created. He mentions the republican constitutional system and the democratic exercise of power, the (peace) alliance of states with these characteristics, and the evolution and emergence of world law and cosmopolitan law (essentially international law)

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<sup>1</sup> BAYER 2001, 291-293.

as conditions of achieving lasting peace. Following the Cold War, the theory of democratic peace based on the Kantian philosophy was having its renaissance, claiming that democratic states rarely engage in war with each other, thus the key to lasting peace is the democratic transformation and democratization of the countries of the world. Many politicians have chosen this concept to support their foreign policies, among which we shall highlight the American efforts to export a Western-type democracy (by *Bill Clinton* or *George W. Bush*). One of the reasons why democracies engage less in war with each other stems from the typical institutional and normative constraints of democracies, the most important element being the accountability of governments towards their voters. Since the voters bear all the costs and losses (financial expenditures and human life) of a possible war, it is less common that the majority would support starting a war. Another explanation is found in democratic political culture according to which democracies prefer peaceful, intrastate and orderly conflict management solutions among each other.<sup>2</sup>

- the imprudent **aggression** and **tendency for intervention** of liberal democracies towards illiberal democracies: the essence of the idea first articulated by *David Hume* is that while the relationship between democracies is characterized by lasting peace, democracies regularly engage in war with non-democratic states, what's more, not with defensive aims. The main reasons behind carelessness and imprudence are mostly the inadequate assessment of profits and losses of war, as well as the increasing distrust and misunderstanding between the states. Furthermore, we cannot ignore the interest-driven and typically expansive (not primarily in territorial but in ideological sense) motivations of democracies in connection with the war against non-democratic regimes. As László Kiss J. points out, the United States intervened in Third World countries between 1946 and 1976 more than twice as many times as the USSR did.<sup>3</sup>
- **the excessive, sometimes even indifferent leniency of liberal democracies against danger and aggressors**: the leniency and indifference formulated by *Hume* can basically take two forms, in the lack of support of the allies (for example the refusal of liberal democracies to support the republican forces in the Spanish civil war), on the one hand; or, on the other, in the lack of actions against the aggressor (see the policy against Mussolini and Hitler). While the imprudent aggression towards non-democratic systems is a feature of liberal democracies in hegemonic, great power status, the leniency is rather a particular foreign policy behavior of states with isolationist foreign policy (e.g. the United States between the world wars) or that of democracies with declining power (e.g. France and Great Britain after WWI).<sup>4</sup>

#### *Critics of the Concept of Democratic Peace*

The essence of the concept of democratic peace is that the greater the scale of political participation within a society, the less the violence within the society and in the external relations of the country. However, practical experiences only partially justify the concept. In democratic countries, the domestic use of force is smaller than in dictatorial regimes, and it is also true that democracies in their relations with each other are more peaceful. However, democratic states often engage in war with non-democracies – and not just in self-defence. Especially the young, yet unconsolidated democracies tend to be more aggressive.

Source: Kiss J. 2009, 295.

Liberalism, like classical realism, takes an anthropological approach to state behavior, i.e. it deduces it from human nature. However, contrary to realism, liberalism considers human nature fundamentally

<sup>2</sup> KŐVÁRINÉ IGNÁTH 2-4.

<sup>3</sup> KISS J. 2009, 294-295.

<sup>4</sup> KISS J. 2009, 298-300.

good, human beings rational, teachable and cooperative. Consequently, long-term cooperation between states and the elimination of war from international relations is also possible for liberals. Thus, international politics is not a zero-sum game – as the realist trend of international political theory states – in which a state can only acquire more power if it takes it from another state, but rather a positive-sum game in which all actors win due to their cooperation.

For liberals, however, the state is not the only significant actor of international relations. The individual also emerges as a formative of international relations, while the examination of public opinion is also relevant to liberal foreign policy analysis. For liberals, individuals capable of acting in the international system are primarily the members of political or foreign policy elite who can influence and shape international politics, depending on certain external circumstances as well as their personal characteristics and habits. According to *Karen A. Mingst*, the following external factors shall be highlighted that have a positive impact on the individual actions of political leaders:

- in case of the instability of new political institutions, or the crisis of existing political institutions and of economy, political leaders can have a strong impact on state foreign policy and thus on international politics as well. *George Washington* in the United States, *Mahatma Gandhi* in India, *Václav Havel* in the Czech Republic all managed to have a great personal influence on the foreign policy of their state because the political institutional system and procedures had not yet been sufficiently consolidated. The impact of *Mikhail Gorbachev* could become so emphatic because of the economic and political crisis of the USSR.
- the lack of institutional and social control and accountability in non-democratic regimes also favors dictators in shaping their foreign policy without constraints.
- an atypical situation, a crisis or a less central, more specific topic, where well-established institutions and procedures cannot be applied or where there is insufficient and confusing information, also increases the personal influence of a political leader on foreign policy. For instance, during the Cuban Missile Crisis, the factors inherent in *John F. Kennedy*'s personality (e.g. openness to various alternatives) largely contributed to the peaceful resolution of the crisis.<sup>5</sup>

Apart from political leaders and members of the political elite, private individuals can also play an important role in international relations who might end up in a position of influence primarily by circumstance, particularity, knowledge or means. See the impacts on international affairs of *Bill Gates* and his wife through spreading vaccines and supporting AIDS programs,<sup>6</sup> *George Soros* through his Open Society Foundation, and *Lady Diana* through programs against landmines.

### *Background Diplomacy*

The essence of background diplomacy is to invoke persons outside of the government to help resolve conflicts, which might be successful. One of the examples of high-level background diplomacy is the series of informal meetings terminating the conflicts between Ethiopia and Eritrea which became independent from Ethiopia. These meetings were mediated by *Jimmy Carter*, former President of the United States and the *Carter Center's International Negotiation Network*.

Another example of background diplomacy was provided by *Armand Hammer*, American businessman who mediated between the USA and the USSR in the years of the Cold War through his communication channels based on his business interests and friendships in the USSR. After the catastrophic Chernobyl nuclear accident in 1986, he could convince *Mikhail Gorbachev* to accept the assistance of American doctors and experts.

Source: MINGST, 2011, 166-167.

<sup>5</sup> MINGST 2011, 155-156.

<sup>6</sup> MINGST 2011, 166.

### 1.1.2. REALIST APPROACHES OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

The theses of the realist theory of international relations are rooted in *Thucydides*' historiography and in the political philosophies of *Thomas Hobbes* and *Niccolo Machiavelli*, while modern realism emerged after the Second World War out of disappointment in liberalism and became the dominant trend within the discipline for a time. As *László Kiss J.* notes "[...] for most laymen, but for a considerable part of experts and politicians, it is still such a starting point, which serves as the most convincing explanation for the operation of international politics [...]".<sup>7</sup>

The realist trend of international political theory is not a unified trend either. *Hans Joachim Morgenthau* is usually mentioned as the father of the so-called **classical realism** of the post-WWII period, who laid down the foundations of classical realism in his elementary 1948 work *Politics among Nations*. From the 1970s, many trends of **neorealism** emerged, among which *Kenneth Waltz* represents **structural realism** (*Theory of International Politics* – 1979), while *John Gilpin* and *Robert Modelski* represent **economic realism**.

Classical realism, the first in chronological order, laid down some of the foundations of realism that were also recognized by the representatives of later trends. These can be summarized as follows:

- the international system is characterized by **anarchy**, i.e. there is no supranational entity in the international system that would have the monopoly of use of force and could make states follow the rules, thus guaranteeing security. Several concepts central to realism arise from the above thesis. One of them is the notion of **self-help**, meaning that primarily the countries themselves are to maintain and maximize their own security. During this they are faced with the so-called **security dilemma**, i.e. the choice between two available alternatives:
  1. either to start arming up in order to maximize their security and thus trigger the concern of other states, spurring them to arm up, thus launching an **armament spiral** and increasing the risk of armed conflicts;
  2. or to give up on the acquisition of weapons and equipment expected to ensure their security, thus becoming more vulnerable to aggression.
- the point of international politics is the **fight for power**: this assertion is closely linked to the previous one, since states shall deal with the anarchic international system themselves, thus the more power they have, the safer they can feel.
- the most important actors of the international system are the **states (statism)**: although realists do not deny the *raison d'être* of other, non-state actors, they definitely consider the states the central actors of international relations.
- the functional **similarity** of states: states should be considered homogenous, functionally identical actors of the international system that try to maximize their profit and power, in their international interactions, regardless of their territory, population, economic and military power.
- **the role of morality is marginal** in international relations: states and their leaders are not bound by universal ethical, moral norms or commands, thus states do not have to be fair in dealing with each other, according to realists. The most important thing for the state is to guarantee its own existence and security during which essentially any instrument is allowed.

**Classical realism** is characterized by an **anthropological approach** regarding the fundamental motives and behavior of states, for it traces back its origins to the essentially negative human nature. Since the most important features of human nature are egoism and the unwavering desire for power (*animus dominandi*), conflicts between human beings are inevitable.<sup>8</sup> Thus, this explains, through tracing state behavior back to human nature, that – for realists – armed conflicts between states and wars are inherent in international politics and whose elimination is an impossible mission.

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<sup>7</sup> Kiss J. 2009, 220.

<sup>8</sup> Kiss J. 2009, 226.

**Structural neoliberalism** diverts from the anthropological approach of classical realism. According to *Kenneth Waltz*, its best-known representative, not human nature, rather **the international system determines the interactions of states**, thus if we want to understand international politics, we shall focus on the international system (*system-level analysis*).<sup>9</sup>

According to the neorealist view, states' interactions are basically defined by the distribution of power in the international system. A state's position of power is determined, on the one hand, by the extent of benefits from resources available in the international system and on the other hand, by the polarisation of the international system.<sup>10</sup> **The polarization of the international system** influences the states' positions of power by that the number of polarizing great powers in the system determines the course of action and ability to maneuver for each state.<sup>11</sup>

From the point of view of power poles, we can talk about uni-, bi- and multipolar international systems. **Unipolar international system** can usually occur by the dominance of an imperial size great power (e.g. the system established and ruled by the Roman Empire in antiquity), which does its best endeavours to monopolise military and economic power and is able and willing to maintain order in the international system, punishing the offender countries. **The bipolar international system** is based on two polarising great powers of almost equal weight which basically determine the positions and interactions of states within the international system. An important feature of the bipolar international system is the tight ideological bound of countries belonging to the same side which means a serious cohesion force between them (see the ideological bounds of the Eastern and Western bloc countries in the decades of the Cold War). Finally, in **the multipolar international system** (e.g. the current international system) it emerges more than two power blocks among which the competition is much less tense than in the bipolar system, especially due to the lack of tight ideological bound, however which factor in the same time results less cohesion within each block.<sup>12</sup>

In the same time, the international system's number of poles not only determines states' position of power, but it is also the determinant of stability and instability of the international system. However, there is a dispute among Neorealists about which international system is considered more stable. According to *Waltz*, the bipolar system is considered the most stable structure in the long term because both parties can counterbalance and mitigate the violent aspirations of the other, thus preventing the system's destabilization. In a bipolar system, the two poles are clearly and unequivocally separated, it is knowable from each state to which pole is linked or rather is not linked to either. The leading powers of both poles can act almost exclusively watching the other and try to calculate the other's actions or possible responses. By maintaining balance of power, thus the parties strive to protect themselves and the bipolar international system. *John Mearsheimer* also argued for the stability of the bipolar system and said that by the end of the Cold War, the international system would lose its former stability and predictability, the number of conflicts and thus the chance of wars rockets. Regulation/control of multipolar systems is theoretically easier than the bipolar system's. There are many relations and interactions between the political units which reduce the extent of hostility but also make the establishment of long-lasting and high-level cohesive alliance harder. The supporters of the unipolar system (for instance *Paul Kennedy*, *Robert O. Keohane*) often argue that this is the most manageable and thus the most stable system, since the hegemonic power has the will to pay, even unilaterally, but to enforce the norms regulating the international system, if it is necessary to maintain the system. And when the power of the hegemon starts to decrease, the stability of the system also wavers.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> WALTZ 1979, 65.

<sup>10</sup> KISS J. 2009, 235-236.

<sup>11</sup> KISS J. 2009, 241.

<sup>12</sup> EGEDY 2007, 53-57.

<sup>13</sup> MINGST 2011, 99-101.

### *The Theory of Balance of Power*

The theory of balance of power is an approach derived from the anarchic nature of the international system, meaning that in the anarchic international environment, any state can resort to violence in the interests of its foreign policy and of maximising its power. Hence, the most likely reaction of other states will be to prevent – if necessary by cooperating with each other – the given state’s power-maximalisation and hegemonic aspirations. The system of balance of power presupposes the existence of two or more great powers capable of controlling and counterbalancing each other’s power.

The representatives of realism and neorealism distinguish two crucial obstacles of inter-state cooperation, on the one hand the fear of cheating, i.e. the fear that the other state in the cooperation breaks the cooperation, on the other hand the problem of relative profit.<sup>14</sup> Since the principal purpose of state is not to maximize its own absolute profit, as later discussed liberal institutionalism says, but to ensure its position in the anarchic international system and by this its survival,<sup>15</sup> therefore the state does its best endeavors to prevent the relative profit deriving from the other states’ cooperation.

Realism has often been criticized for the fact that besides ‘high politics’ (which essentially means military security) does not pay enough attention to economic processes in course of interpreting international relations. **Economic realism** fills this hiatus in the realist approach of international political theory, its emergence was closely related to the discourse on the relative decline of the United States’ power and its impact on the international system in the 1970s and 1980s. Besides military security and its most threatening rival, the USSR, economic realists regarded economic processes to be of central significance, stressing that for the United States Japan is – in economic terms – such a serious competitor as is the USSR in military terms.

*Robert Gilpin* explained the decline of the United States with the **hegemonic cyclicality** theory, according to which each hegemony is necessarily ephemeral in international relations on the one hand because their running expenses increase faster than the resources available to them, and on the other hand, because none of the leading states can prevent the spread of their economic knowledge and technologies in the world.<sup>16</sup>

### *The Theory of International Public Goods*

The theory of international public goods is closely related to the concept of hegemony cycles. Its starting point is that as the state has to provide national public goods (infrastructure, legal certainty, public safety), the operability of the international system also requires a hegemonic power undertaking to guarantee the availability of international public goods (international financial, economic system, international security, freedom of trade). This is not done, however, by the hegemon out of selflessness but because it benefits the most this way from the existing international system. Other states typically accept the situation because they can take part in international relations like a free rider, without contributing to the maintenance of the international system. This happened essentially after 1945, when the United States played a hegemonic role regarding the West through constructing and maintaining the Bretton Woods system of monetary management and in assuring security.

Source: Kiss J. 2003, 26.

<sup>14</sup> GRIECO 1988, 487.

<sup>15</sup> WALTZ 1979, 126.

<sup>16</sup> GALLÓ 2000, 64.

### 1.1.3. THE FUNDAMENTS OF NEOLIBERAL INSTITUTIONALISM

The neoliberal institutionalism that emerged in the 1960s and 1970s, besides that it agrees realist, neorealist approaches that the international system has anarchic nature and that the central actor of international relations is the state, it put **interdependence**, **international institutions** and **long-term cooperation** into the focus of its analysis.

The economic interdependence of states was placed at the center of analysis by the oil crises of the 1970s and the crisis of Bretton Woods system of monetary management based on the convertibility of gold-dollar, while the security policy interdependence is linked to the development of intercontinental missiles and the relativization of geographical distances.<sup>17</sup> These events shed light on that global and regional economic or rather political crises can have many unforeseeable consequences for the majority of countries, as effect of globalization cross-border, economic, financial and political processes have started which shaped interdependence among states.

In their complex interdependence theory, *Robert O. Keohane* and *Joseph Nye* posit that interdependence always has costs as it limits the autonomy of the state and requires adequate resources for adaptation. Depending on the scale of costs, we can talk about states' **sensitivity (to) interdependence** and **vulnerability (to) interdependence**. In the first case, additional costs are incurred for the state when it reacts to a change in another country, but it is unnecessary to take countermeasures or modify the affected policy. In contrast, in the case of vulnerability interdependence, the costs of the state are so excessive that it shall take political countermeasures, or if is unable to do so or unsuccessful, then it might find itself in a critical situation (e.g., a country in need of import is either able to manage the rise of the world market price of crude oil or it has to change its energy policy by modifying oil-pricing or by providing alternative energy resources).<sup>18</sup>

Referring to interdependence, neoliberals assert that the long-term cooperation between states is not only possible (as classic liberalism claims), but it is necessary for countries to regain control over cross-border economic, political, social processes. The framework of long-term cooperation consists of **international institutions**, in other words **regimes** which on the one hand reduce the costs of cooperation between states through permanent structures and procedures; on the other hand, they can increase the bargaining power of weaker and smaller states. It is important to note that the term 'regime' used in international relations' theory is not the same as in political sciences, which indicates the different political systems. The regime-concept of international political theory means all international institutions which serve as a framework for long-term cooperation between states and thus also become actors that shape international relations (although neoliberal institutionalists are not unified in dealing with international institutions as autonomous actors or merely as tools of states). International institutions, regimes include not only international organizations with permanent structures and competences but also rules of international law, international agreements and judicial fora, conferences and congresses.

## 1.2. ALTERNATIVE, CRITICAL THEORIES OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Over the last two or three decades, numerous new alternative theories were born within international relations' theory, which have a strong criticism of the principles of traditional trends in common. The fact that the traditional theories were not able to predict and explain the collapse of the USSR (and

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<sup>17</sup> Kiss J. 2009, 305.

<sup>18</sup> Kiss J. 2009, 307-308.

with this the end of the Cold War and the bipolar world order) largely contributed to the spread and strengthening of alternative theories.

### *1.2.1. THE (SOCIAL) CONSTRUCTIVIST TREND OF INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL THEORY*

Constructivist authors acknowledge and consider the **facts of the social world**, besides the facts objectively given by the natural world, saying that these are created, i.e. constituted by ideas, values, norms, theories accepted by individuals and by agreements based on these facts. The social world and some of its phenomena, institutions, concepts and within them the basic assumptions related to international relations – such as anarchic characteristics of international environment, security dilemma, clash of civilizations or state interest – are existing phenomena, therefore not objectively given but socially constructed, so they can be changed. Therefore, constructivism breaks with the deterministic (thus narrow) interpretation of international relations.

The notion ‘socially constructed’ also refers to the fact that the objects of our knowledge are not independent of our interpretation and language, i.e. we attribute a different collective meaning to the material world around us.<sup>19</sup> The act of a Muslim suicide terrorist, for instance, is a seriously reprehensible act committed against life according to Western values, while, in the Muslim world, this is a self-sacrificing behavior, what’s more requirement, in the spirit of Jihad.

Consequently, according to constructivists, the state’s behavior and interests are not determined by the power or its distribution in the international system, but by the persuasions, identities and social norms of the given political community. One of the best-known representatives of constructivism, *Alexander Wendt* recognizes that in the international relations’ theory states compose the most important unit of analysis, but the relations between states are not created by objective factors (such as the anarchic nature of the international system) but they are socially constructed, therefore they are constantly changing.<sup>20</sup>

Although, for constructivists, power is not a central notion, they deal with its nature and significance. However, while realist trends and neoliberal institutionalism use ‘power’ primarily in a material sense (military, economic, political), constructivists rather talk about immaterial power, rooted in ideas, culture or language.<sup>21</sup>

Similarly to neoliberal institutionalism, constructivism also addresses the role of norms, highlighting their central importance. However, we should distinguish between **regulatory norms** and **constitutive norms**. As a matter of fact, neoliberals recognize norms as purely regulatory, saying that norms/regimes regulate the behavior of states and facilitate their cooperation by promising different advantages. Conversely, constructivism talks about constitutive norms which not only regulate the behavior of states, but they are the determinants thereof through the definition of state identity and state-interest.<sup>22</sup>

The trend’s central questions are how the norms are established and how do the norms determine and influence the behavior of states and non-state actors. The **stage model** can answer to these questions which differentiates three phases of norms’ life-cycle: **emergence**, **cascade** and **internalization**. In the phase of the emergence, birth of the norm, the central actors are the so-called norm-activists, i.e. for example human rights or environmentalist groups and NGOs seeking to influence governments, politicians and parliaments with the help of, among others, mass-communication to reach and protect

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<sup>19</sup> Kiss J. 2009, 359.

<sup>20</sup> Kiss J. 2003, 62.

<sup>21</sup> MINGST 2011, 86.

<sup>22</sup> Kiss J. 2003, 61.



important values, objectives. At the same time, norm-activists seek the support of the broadest masses of society through campaigns, demonstrations, various actions. In case they can convince the critical mass of states to appreciate the importance of a given norm, then we move to the second phase of the norm cycle, cascade, where the central actors are no longer the norm-activists, but the so-called normative leading states or rather international organizations (in many cases the UN or its specialized agencies), which can have an indirect or direct pressure on other states in order to adapt the given norm. For example, the decisions of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) or the international agreements containing the given norm play an important role in dissemination of norms. Finally, the third phase of the life cycle of norms is their internalization, in which state bureaucracies, competent experts and lawyers have a central role tasked with shaping state institutions, procedures and society according to the given norm.<sup>23</sup>

### *1.2.2. THE RADICAL THEORIES OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: MARXISM AND NEOMARXISM, THEORIES OF THE WORLD-SYSTEM AND WORLD-SOCIETY*

Radical theories of international political theory are usually based on **Marxist foundations**. Marxist and Neo-Marxist authors, in their analyses, principally emphasize economic inequalities and the unilateral dependence of undeveloped countries from developed ones. The essence of their materialist approach to history is that historical turning points can be interpreted essentially as responses to economic processes and the changes in international relations are of economic origins as well.

The **world-system theory** of *Immanuel Wallerstein* is also based on Marxist foundations. Its point of departure is that the analysis of international relations should not originate from nation-states, but from world-system, this must be the basic unit of international relations. Historically, he differentiated two forms of the world-system based on the way of decision-making on resource allocation: world empire and world economy. A centralized organization allocates resources among the respective actors in the world empire, while in world economy there is no centralized political actor, but numerous power centers compete for the resources.<sup>24</sup>

World economy essentially started to emerge after the Age of Discovery and started to become structured due to the unequal distribution of resources – a feature of capitalism. Thus the groups of core countries, periphery and semi-periphery countries have been created. Core countries are developed ones, characterized by international capital concentrating here, they possess the most advanced economy and technology. The countries of the periphery are the poor, developing (third world) countries which have difficulties engaging in global economic processes due to the lack of adequate capital, technology and highly qualified workforce, typically being exposed to core countries. The semi-periphery is the in-between category, in which countries also depend on the core – although not to such a great extent.

The advantage of economic development is also reflected in political power relations, as the world-system, i.e. the world economy encompasses the interstate political system (international system), which is thus characterized by unequal power relations and action possibilities, in which the element of national sovereignty formally relevant to every state essentially correlates to the different degrees to which states are limited.<sup>25</sup>

One of the best-known authors of the world-society theory, *John W. Burton* who broke with the concept of a state-centered international system based primarily on the process of globalization and

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<sup>23</sup> KISS J. 2003, 64-65.

<sup>24</sup> EGEDY 2007, 40.

<sup>25</sup> GALLÓ 2000, 114-115.

in this context on the so-called multiplication of **non-state actors**. He describes the emergence of a spider-web-like world-society in his book '*World Society*'.

The functionally interconnected transnational, i.e. cross-border systems (economy, science, culture, sport, certain groups of people or individuals, etc.) are – as a result of globalization – directly linked to each other permanently, primarily due to modern communication technologies and easier and cheaper travel and transportation.<sup>26</sup> These transnational networks, alongside intergovernmental relations, are also architects of international politics and members of the world-society in which power loses its former significance and communication becomes the principal organizing force of international processes. In this system states do not disappear but their borders blur, lose part of their former significance.<sup>27</sup>

### 1.2.3. THE FEMINIST TREND OF INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL THEORY

Like all **feminist** scientific trends, the feminist approach of international relations is also very closely linked to the second wave-feminism of the 1960-70s. Many feminists, however, originate their interest in international relations from the peace movements of the Cold War. In 1988, *Millenium* was the first journal dealing with international relations that dedicated a special issue to the topic of women and international relations. In that issue, *Fred Halliday* stated that the exclusion of women and their experiences from the discipline led to a partial, masculine interpretation of international relations despite the dominant theories claiming that they explain the reality of world politics.<sup>28</sup>

The end of the Cold War and the bipolar world order gave a serious boost to the theory, because the traditional approaches failed to predict and explain the end of the bipolar world order. The International Feminist Journal of Politics launched in 1999 specifically intended to serve as a permanent forum for the feminist approach in international relations and politics, to ensure a platform for the representatives of the trend in addition to the columns of special issues.<sup>29</sup>

The most important theses and criticisms of feminism can be summarized as follows:

- it approaches “**making women more visible**”<sup>30</sup> – i.e. the detection and elimination of discrimination, abuse, political and economic under-representation of women – as a moral obligation;
- it distinguishes between sex and **gender**, stating that the latter consists of socially constructed stereotypes and roles that have an impact on the states’ foreign policy and international politics, making them state- and sovereignty-centered, and power- and war-centered;<sup>31</sup>
- realists overestimate the importance of states in international relations, without paying attention to political and social relations within the states which, feminists claim, are determinants of state foreign policy. The lack of attention paid to individuals (not members of the political elite, but ordinary persons) is mentioned as another important hiatus, because for realists security almost exclusively means the security of the state, while for feminists it refers to the security of individuals, i.e. **human security**.

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<sup>26</sup> FEJES 2012, 22.

<sup>27</sup> GALLÓ 2000, 75-76.

<sup>28</sup> Cited by TRUE 2017, 3.

<sup>29</sup> TRUE 2017, 4.

<sup>30</sup> SMITH 2018

<sup>31</sup> SMITH 2018

As feminist international relations experts have pointed out: violence against women (sexual or domestic violence, forced prostitution) not only continues but occasionally increases in post-conflict periods – when the reorganisation and assurance of state functions (including state monopoly of violence, re-establishment of public safety and public services) is usually done by peacekeeping troops. One of the reasons for this is that peace between the former combatants and the assurance of public safety are primary considerations for the peacekeepers and thus the various forms of violence against women get lost in the uncertain security environment.

Another aspect of the situation of women in post-conflict periods is that women are typically excluded from power positions and thus from political decision-making processes, as well as from access to economic and social resources (workplace, education, elementary food, housing).

Finally, women's participation in peacekeeping operations is extremely under-represented. In 1993, women composed just 1 percent of the deployed military peacekeepers and by 2014 their ratio only increased to 3 percent.

Source: SMITH 2018

UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women and peace and security targeted remedying the above issues, encouraging the MS – among others – to ensure greater representation of women at all decision-making levels, in national, regional and international institutions and in the field of conflict prevention, management and resolution. The document also encourages the Secretary General to prepare a study on the impact of armed conflicts on women and children and the role of women in peace-building as well as on the different roles of gender in peace processes.

Source: UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000)

## QUESTIONS FOR SELF-CHECK

1. When was the birth of the discipline of international relations' theory and the beginning of its institutionalization?
2. What do we mean by the concept of liberal or democratic peace?
3. What are the external factors increasing the influence of individuals (mainly political leaders) and their ability to act in international politics?
4. Enumerate the fundamental theses of realism.
5. What types of international systems can be distinguished from the point of view of power poles?
6. What do we mean by interdependence?
7. What are international regimes and what is their function in international relations?
8. What role does constructivism attribute to norms?
9. Briefly summarize the World-system Theory.
10. Describe the important theses of the feminist theory of international relations.

## RECOMMENDED LITERATURE

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*Useful webpages:*

E-International Relations <http://www.e-ir.info/>

Grotius <http://www.grotius.hu>