

Oleksandra Matushenko

The research on political elites : steady vs. modern theories

The Copernicus Journal of Political Studies nr 2 (4), 07-105

2013

Artykuł został opracowany do udostępnienia w internecie przez Muzeum Historii Polski w ramach prac podejmowanych na rzecz zapewnienia otwartego, powszechnego i trwałego dostępu do polskiego dorobku naukowego i kulturalnego. Artykuł jest umieszczony w kolekcji cyfrowej bazhum.muzhp.pl, gromadzącej zawartość polskich czasopism humanistycznych i społecznych.

Tekst jest udostępniony do wykorzystania w ramach dozwolonego użytku.

he regarded states as organic and growing. The state together with its people, was an organism that is why – in his opinion – each state needs a territory to grow. It was regarded as a “political strength” (Ratzel), “power” (Haushofer), or “strategic value” (Cohen) for the country. Although geopolitics was a legitimate scholarly discipline incorporated into academic research in the United States, France after IWW, its strong association with Nazi German resulted in it being discredited after all⁸. A German geopolitician Karl Ernst Haushofer, wrote that “geopolitics is a science about political organisms in space and world structure”⁹. In 1923, he founded “The Geopolitical Magazine”, which became the central organ of German geopolitics but Karl Haushofer did not call for a war with Russia. In his opinion the strength of the nation comes from the culture, and strong enough culture can expand but not necessary by military meaning. Geopolitical ideas may have influenced Nazi’s expansionist strategies. Looking for “living space” in the Central and Eastern Europe they started World War II¹⁰. After the war everyone blamed geopolitics for “unleashing hell” by giving ideological foundations to violence. That was the reason to reject geopolitics as a potentially dangerous political doctrine¹¹. During the Cold War geopolitics was associated with the worst of Nazi expansionism. In USSR the word “geopolitics” was forbidden.

But the problems with “geopolitics” is not only about its history but also with definition and its place in different scientific disciplines¹². There is no single definition of geopolitics and it’s usually defined by prefix “geo” (terrain), for

⁸ B. Chapman, op.cit., p. 8.

⁹ C. Flint, op.cit., p. 38; L. Moczulski, *Geopolityka. Potęga w czasie i przestrzeni*, Warszawa 2010, p. 71; T. Kobzdej, *Mysł geopolityczna. Nauka czy ideologia?*, “Społeczeństwo i Polityka” 2005, No. 1, Vol. 2, pp. 147–148.

¹⁰ Z. Lach, J. Skrzyp, *Geopolityka i geostrategia*, Warszawa 2007, p. 13.

¹¹ R. Kuźniar, *Globalizacja geopolityki i polityka zagraniczna*, “Sprawy Międzynarodowe” 2000, No. 1, pp. 17–19, A. Wolf-Powęska, *Doktryna geopolityki w Niemczech*, Poznań 1979, pp. 112–113, R. Kuźniar, *Polityka i siła. Studia strategiczne – zarys problematyki*, Warszawa 2005, pp. 86–87.

¹² T. Klin, *Geopolityka: spór definicyjny we współczesnej Polsce*, “Geopolityka: Biuletyn naukowo-analityczny” 2008, No. 1, pp. 6–7; G. Cimek, *Znaczenie geopolityki w warunkach procesu globalizacji*, “Zeszyty Naukowe Akademii Marynarki Wojennej” 2009, No. 3, pp. 113–131; J. Macała, *Czym jest geopolityka? Spory wokół jej definicji* [in:] *Geopolityka. Elementy teorii, wybrane metody i badania*, Z. Lach, J. Wend (eds.), Częstochowa 2010, pp. 9–20; A. Dybczyński, *Teoria geopolityki* [in:] *Geopolityka*, A. Dybczyński (ed.), Warszawa 2013, pp. 32–33.

example: political geography, geopolitics, geostrategy, geohistory¹³, geoeconomy¹⁴, geoculture¹⁵.

Geopolitics can be seen like “unwanted child” of political science and geography, from which it originates¹⁶. Geographers criticize geopolitics for to close connections with politics, wars and expansion¹⁷. On the other hand, political researchers are blaming geopolitics for putting too much attentions on geography. For them, as well as for international relations observers, there are many factors which are important and influence on world politics, and the geography is only one of them, and not of major important¹⁸.

The first controversy concerns the differences between geopolitics and political geography. This was explored by Friedrich Ratzel since 1897. In literature there are three approaches to that question: 1) thinking about geopolitics as a part of political geography (which is common among the British and Americans researchers); 2) that they are completely different topics; 3) there is no differences between the two topics¹⁹. Polish researchers mostly accept the second approach. For them political geography deals with the influence of political organisms, like states, on geography and natural environment. So it is connected with the past and shows how human kinds shaped the space. Geopolitics examine completely different processes, how the geography determines the world politics and its concentrates on the future²⁰.

The second issue concerns the links between geopolitics and geostrategy. This term was used by Frederick L. Schuman in the article *Let Us Learn Our*

¹³ Term used by Fernand Braudel, referring to the past and exploring the historical background of contemporary geopolitical processes.

¹⁴ Geoeconomy is focused on economic expansion, as a part of politics, in the world, *Geoekonomia*, E. Halizak (ed.), Warszawa 2012. Confer R. Kuźniar, *Geoekonomia, czyli chybiona próba paradygmatu (w związku z książką pod redakcją Edwarda Halizaka, Geoekonomia)*, “Sprawy Międzynarodowe” 2012, No. 3, pp. 98–110.

¹⁵ It concentrates on sociological influence of urbanization.

¹⁶ Ibidem, pp. 32–33.

¹⁷ P. Bartosiewicz, *Geografia polityczna i geopolityka*, Lublin 2008, p. 27.

¹⁸ Jacek Czaputowicz is not convinced that it can be useful as a method in international relations science. J. Czaputowicz, *Teorie stosunków międzynarodowych*, Warszawa 2008, p. 90; R. Kuźniar, *Globalizacja...*, op.cit., pp. 22–23.

¹⁹ C. Flint, op.cit., p. 37.

²⁰ M.F. Gawrycki, op.cit., p. 35; W. Kazanecki, *Geopolityka krytyczna – skuteczna metoda wyjaśniania w XXI wieku [in:] Geopolityka. Elementy teorii, wybrane metody i badania*, Z. Lach, J. Wendt (eds.), Częstochowa 2010, p. 96; T. Kobzdej, op.cit., p. 156; J. Skrzyp, Z. Lach, op.cit., p. 13.

Geopolitics (1942). During the Cold War another author, Saul Bernard Cohen, divided the world on two strategic subregions, in which he identified geopolitical regions²¹. Saul Cohen claimed that, “geopolitics is about reasoning from relations between worldwide politics and geographical factors”²². Geostrategic regions were actually mirrors of two military blocs as rivals, NATO and the Warsaw Pact. For him the term “geopolitics” was connected to political process, and “geostrategic” for security issues²³. The renaissance of “geostrategy” fell between the 50th and 60th. During this period “geopolitics” was not popular and international relations were concentrated on security issues²⁴. This is why Carl Jean referred to “geostrategy” as the elder sister of “geopolitics”, which is concentrated merely on military issues (military geopolitics)²⁵. Roman Kuźniar disputes this opinion and rejects “geopolitics” in general²⁶.

1. Revival of geopolitics

Second World War’s experience marginalized the geopolitics as science, and political doctrine. The Post WWII international order had rejected the geographic determinism. Geopolitics was erased, forbidden and humiliated. At the same time, despite the general denial of geopolitics, it was used in practice by building two blocs and spheres of influence. In the East it was the “Brezhnev doctrine”, according to which the Soviet authorities tried to prevent establishing different systems of governance in the satellites states of the Soviet Union²⁷. In the West the resignation from geopolitical thinking was not very obvious. Common values like democracy, free market and respecting for human rights helped the US and Europe build geopolitical alliance, and later the dominance in the post-Soviet world order.

Rehabilitation of geopolitics faintly began from the researchers, and politicians. At the 70th Yves Lacoste started publishing the “Hérodote” journal, in which authors had been writing about geopolitics. Yves Lacoste noticed the

²¹ C. Jean, *op.cit.*, p. 33.

²² S.B. Cohen, *Geography of the Peace*, New York 1944, p. 5.

²³ M.F. Gawrycki, *op.cit.*, p. 33; L. Moczulski, *op.cit.*, p. 39.

²⁴ L. Moczulski, *op.cit.*, pp. 35–36.

²⁵ C. Jean, *op.cit.*, pp. 46–48.

²⁶ R. Kuźniar, *Polityka...*, *op.cit.*, p. 86.

²⁷ В.А. Колосов, Ф.Г. Агнелли, *Геополитическое положение России: представления и реальность*, Москва 2000, p. 20. In 1940, and 1941 Mahan’s works were translated into Russian. At the end of 70th G. Shahanazrow stated to talk about Soviet geopolitical concept.

differences between the German and French schools of geographic thought originating in the 19th century. He claimed that the concepts developed by German geographers in political geographical matters were strongly influenced by biopolitical theories inspired by Charles Darwin's *The Origin of Species*. A French school of geographical thought emerged later preserving it from this ideology, but also led to its rejection of politics and later on geopolitics. The journal "Hérodote" demonstrated how geographical reasoning incorporating political factors can be remarkably efficient²⁸. The second step was made by de Gaulle, Richard Nixon, Ronald Regan, but mostly because of Henry Kissinger²⁹ and Zbigniew Brzezinski, whose started to use "geopolitics" in their speeches as an instrument of foreign policy in the Cold War, justifying the need to maintain a balance of power between the USSR and the US. From the couloirs of diplomacy geopolitics went to the universities and started again to be an inspiration for the scholars. Slow rehabilitation of geopolitics was connected with appearing of the new group of theories such as poststructuralism and constructivism³⁰. First one raised the role of language in politics, social life and foreign politics. Second one claimed that significant aspects of international relations are historical and social constructed, rather than inevitable consequences of human nature or other essential characteristics of world politics. Both of them were undermined by the traditional theories of international relations like realism, liberalism and tried to warn the scholars about the possible manipulation of language by politicians and media. For some researchers geography or geographical knowledge started to be used as an instrument of manipulation.

Evolution of international relations changed the meaning of the geopolitics. Classical geopolitics based on geographical determinism which analyzed the relationship between geographic factors and political choices have disappeared. The research process consisted on drawing conclusions primarily on factors such as: terrain, distance from the sea, the size of the territory, climate and space etc. The biggest geopolitical concepts were related to a dispute between the maritime and mainland states (A.T. Mahan contra H. Mackinder). The situation changed with the development of military technology, especially nuclear weapons. Then "all the classical political factors – territorial, demographic, economic,

²⁸ Y. Lacoste, *La géographie, la géopolitique et le raisonnement géographique*, "Hérodote" 2008, No. 3, Vol. 130, pp. 17–42.

²⁹ M.F. Gawrycki, op.cit., p. 27.

³⁰ K. Szczerski, *Analiza neo-geopolityczna [in:] Podmiotowość geopolityczna. Studia nad polską polityką zagraniczną*, K. Szczerski (ed.), Warszawa 2009, p. 13.

cultural and civilization – lost, it had seemed to make any difference, since the fate, the existence of the world can be resolved in such a quick war. (...) Under those conditions, the space has not lost its relevance but it has been reduced to only two factors determine the optimal targets and move towards nuclear weapons”³¹. The development of technology, not just the military, contributed to the acceleration of the globalization process, in which the distance factor and all the territory ceased to be of such importance. Geographical factors were only one of the factors that influence international relations. For many researchers the process of globalization disarmed geopolitics and put attention mainly in the field of economics and transnational market cooperation. According to these concepts, globalization has “murdered the geopolitics”³².

But there were others researchers, for whom globalization had a different influence on geopolitics. Stanislaw Bieleń said once that geopolitics and globalization are “like the obverse and reverse of the same coin” and both are important in the explanation process of international relations³³. Geopolitics is about global balancing of forces, in which the most important are the actual or potential superpowers. Globalization instead reinforces the growing interdependence, cooperation and maturation processes of integration. Globalization reduces geopolitical rivalries, but do not eliminates them³⁴.

Geopolitics has expanded its research subjects and objects. First of all it gained a new look on the geographical factor, not only the territory but much more – all spaces, where the people are operating. Generally geopolitical thinking follow the human activities. When man was governing the land and the sea, geopolitics analyzed the physical geography, but when he gained the air technology, geopolitics started to follow the rivalry of the airpower (Alexander de Seversky). Currently man works in many spaces at once: on the ground, at sea, in the air and in outer space³⁵. A relatively new place to operate for a man has become a cyberspace. That is why new geopolitics can recognize the struggle between different players (powers) in the “virtual world”. Geopolitics started to analyze the intangible reality (cyberspace). According to same researchers, new

³¹ L. Moczulski, op.cit., p. 35.

³² E. Cziomer, L.W. Zyblikiewicz, *Zarys współczesnych stosunków międzynarodowych*, Warszawa 2005, p. 291.

³³ S. Bieleń, *Geopolityczne myślenie o ładzie międzynarodowym*, “Przegląd Geopolityczny” 2009, No. 1, pp. 34–35.

³⁴ Ibidem, p. 36.

³⁵ L. Łukaszuk, *Współpraca i rywalizacja w przestrzeni kosmicznej. Prawo – polityka – gospodarka*, Toruń 2012.

technology changed the nature of human activities, that is why geopolitics still matters today³⁶.

A new element in geopolitics is also the increased range of participants as objects of the research process. In the past, the classical geopolitical concepts were concentrated on powers, like Russia, Great Britain, Germany and US and were giving answers to the question: Who is going to rule in the world? For example in Harfold John Mackinder's view it has to be continental Russia because: "Who rules East Europe commands the Heartland; Who rules the Heartland commands the World Island; Who rules the World Island commands the World". On the contrary Nicolas J. Spykman was sure that, "Who controls the Rimland rules Eurasia; Who rules Eurasia controls the destinies of the world". The Rimland was an intermediate region, lying between the Heartland and the marginal sea powers. In others words geopolitics had a global view on international processes³⁷. New geopolitics started to recognize also regional and local levels of rivalry, disputes and interests.

Summarizing this, we can notice that contemporary geopolitics is trying to understand the relations between different players, including non-states players, who are rivals on the specific area/place/space. Researchers have given different names to new geopolitics, such as: modern geopolitics, neo-geopolitics (neo-geo)³⁸, alternative geopolitics and postmodern geopolitics³⁹, but generally new geopolitics is: 1) concentrated on place, which is defined wider than physical geography (virtual space, outer space); 2) taking into consideration different players of international relations, not only powers but also races, non-governmental organizations, terrorists, ethnic and religious minorities, the geopolitics is no longer states-centric; 3) not only concentrated on global scale of thinking but regional and local.

2. Critical geopolitics

An interesting addition to the new geopolitics gives its critical approach⁴⁰. This trend has developed in the West, from the late 70^{ts} last century, mainly in France,

³⁶ T. Gabiś, *Powrót geopolityki*, "Stańczyk" 1995, No. 1, p. 19.

³⁷ C. Jean, *op.cit.*, p. 37.

³⁸ K. Szczerski, *op.cit.*, p. 13.

³⁹ R. Jackson, G. Sørensen, *Wprowadzenie do stosunków międzynarodowych. Teorie i kierunki badawcze*, Kraków 2006, pp. 267–268.

⁴⁰ W. Kazanecki, *op.cit.*, p. 93.

the United Kingdom and the United States. The creator of this concept and its biggest promoter is Gearóid Ó Tuathail⁴¹. In the spirit of critical geopolitics also writes: Klaus Dodds, John Agnew, Simon Dalby, Timoty Like Leslie Hepple, Paul Routhledge, James Sidaway⁴², John O’Loughlin, Luiza Bialasiewicz and Alan Ingram. Critical geopolitics stems from two trunks: rehabilitation of geopolitics and deconstructionism (post-structuralism) thanks to works of Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault, strongly emphasizing the sociological aspects of international relations. “Critical geopolitics” challenges our common understanding of definitions, categories and relationships, by replacing them with, in some cases, utopian wishful thinking, by political commitment instead of an objective appreciation of the causes of conflict⁴³.

Critical geopolitics as presented by Ó Tuathail exposing the ‘natural’ and ‘objective’ science of geography and geopolitics. “Although often assumed to be innocent, the geography of the world is not a product of nature but the product of histories of struggle between competing authorities over the power to organize, occupy, and administer space”⁴⁴. According to him critical geography is variable due to political decisions and subjective, because it is ruled by man. Physical maps of the world had provided the necessary information to the European, who had conquest the world. With the increase of knowledge about the new territories, new civilizations, natural resources, raised the willingness to the territorial expansion. That is why, for critical geopolitics “geography was an essential tool of Western imperialism”, when the politics decided about geography, not geography on politics⁴⁵. Summarizing it, the critical geopolitics analyzes influence the knowledge about geography on world politics.

Critical geopolitical scholarship continues to engage critically with questions surrounding geopolitical discourses, geopolitical practice (i.e. foreign policy), and the history of geopolitics. Marcin Florian Gawrycki defines three methods of research in critical geopolitics:

- practical geopolitics – which deals with the activities of the state associated with the country’s foreign policy, explores how geography affects the process of decision-making in foreign policy. Critical geopolitics is concerned

⁴¹ Gerard Toal (Gearóid Ó Tuathail), <http://toal.org> [access: 23.08.2012].

⁴² M.F. Gawrycki, op.cit., pp. 43–44.

⁴³ J. Black, op.cit., p. 10.

⁴⁴ G. Ó Tuathail, *Critical Geopolitics. The Politics of Writing Global Space*, Minneapolis 1996, p. 1; W. Kazanecki, op.cit., p. 95.

⁴⁵ R. Kuźniar, *Geopolityka...*, op.cit., p. 53.

with geopolitics as discourse, studies of practical geopolitics pay attention both to geopolitical actions (for example, military deployment), but also to the discursive strategies used to narrativize these actions;

- formal geopolitics – the concepts, models and strategies for explaining and justifying the actions of practical geopolitics, presents what is normally regarded as “geopolitical thinking” or “geopolitical tradition”;
- popular geopolitics (folk) – which is formed under the influence of mass communication, theater and novels, journal (popular culture), which creating widespread awareness of the geopolitical imagination of citizens.

According to the first method, critical geopolitics does not differ from classical geopolitics. What can be considered as something new is the “geopolitical thinking” in the second and third method. Klaus Dodds is writing, that “Geopolitics provides ways of looking at the world and is highly visual as a consequence, readily embracing maps, tables, and photographs”⁴⁶.

Critical geopolitics are convinced that each of us has to be aware of what kind of message we receive from politicians⁴⁷. For example when the political elite start to make a war, puts strategy or concept which are based on existing stereotypes in the society. Colin Flint argues that “if enemies are to be fought, the basis of the animosity must be clear, and the necessity of the horrors of warfare must be justified. Enemies are portrayed as “barbaric” or “evil”, their politics “irrational” in the sense that they do not see the value of one’s own political position, and their stance “intractable”, meaning that war is the only recourse. (...) These representations are tailored for the immediate situation, but are based upon stories deposited in national myths that are easily accessible to the general public”⁴⁸. Critical geopolitics draws attention to the real motives of policy makers, which are often hidden under the ideology of nationalism, fundamentalism, democracy, protection of minorities, and humanitarianism. Geopolitics is close to a realistic paradigm that does not believe in the ideals, values and principles, considering it as a “useful suggestions” to broaden the influence countries in the world. That is why it is necessary to notice real motives of the country’s foreign policy.

Colin Flint is comparing traditional geopolitics which has claimed to be able to paint neutral and complete pictures of “how the world works” with critical geopolitics which is post-modernistic, and do not recognize the possibilities of

⁴⁶ K. Dodds, *op.cit.*, p. 10.

⁴⁷ G. Ó Tuathail, *Understanding...*, *op.cit.*, pp. 108–109.

⁴⁸ C. Flint, *op.cit.*, p. 58.

understanding “how the world works”. The only thing we can do is to try to understand the mechanisms and geopolitical codes of the states. In his opinion each country has its own code which defines consisting of five main calculations:

1. Who are our current and potential allies;
2. Who are our current and potential enemies;
3. How can we maintain our allies and nurture potential allies;
4. How can we counter our current enemies and emerging threats;
5. How do we justify the four calculations above to our public, and to the global community.

In the Colin Flint’s opinion foreign policy of the country is more or less limited by the history of alliances and conflicts, which it had experienced. Critical geopolitics try to see political strategies of governments from this “alliance” perspective⁴⁹. He points out that the fifth element is important part the process of justifying our strategies to our voters as well as international community. And this is connected with third research method of critical geopolitics – the popular geopolitics which is concerned with the ways in which “lay” understandings of geopolitical issues are produced and reproduced through popular culture. Popular geopolitics studies are, therefore, premised on the idea of a recursive relationship between popular culture and popular conscience. Specifically, critical studies of newspapers, films, cartoons and magazines have all been published in leading peer-reviewed. In other words individuals and groups of people constantly mapping the world, region or even theirs own city. By mass-media, television, Internet, we are receiving the information about the others countries, people, civilizations, religions, etc. In popular conscience are formulating the ideas about the events, wars and revolutions which are far away from them. Thanks to “virtual space” we are involved in the military conflicts, peoples suffering and humanitarian catastrophes. On the other hand it can be considered as a manipulation, when politicians or media trying to give an incomplete picture of the situation. A good example of this was the Kosovo and Iraq conflicts, when the information about motives of those wars was covered. Internet and media makes the military conflicts “our business” when they discuss the subieject talk about in all the time. We can see the “virtual geography” when such conflicts in distant places on earth, thanks to the media, become close to us⁵⁰.

⁴⁹ C. Flint, op.cit., p. 32; R. Pain, S.J. Smith, *Fear: Critical Geopolitics and Everyday Life* [in:] *Fear: Critical Geopolitics and Everyday Life*, R. Pain, S.J. Smith (eds.), Ashgate 2008, pp. 1–25.

⁵⁰ J. Agnew, op.cit., p. 150.

With the “geopolitical imagination” is linked to the phenomenon of the perception of place, so called meta-geography, when people recognized the specific territory as very important for them. It can be the lost homeland during the military conflict, when groups of people were forced to leave or resettle. “Imaginary place” is an area that people either want to get/keep/recover or establish a zone of influence, for example Russians perception of the “near abroad” is connected to the collapse of the Soviet Union. The territories of new independent twelve states were called by minister of foreign affairs Andriej Kozyriew in 1992 as “near abroad”, where Russia has its special interests. This area is considered as a place of exclusive sphere of influences. For international security much more problematic was the imagination of “lost homeland” for the people who were forced to leave this territory. Changing the borders in last centuries for many minorities appeared unfair and did not cover with their “mental map” of the borders. Building their own identity they confirmed “historical rights” to the disputed territory, what can sometimes bring to military conflict like between Armenians and Azeris, Georgians and Ossetians, Abkhazians, Israelis and Palestinians, Serbs and Croats, Bosnians, Kosovars and many others.

3. The usefulness of the geopolitical paradigm

The new elements of geopolitics mentioned above lead us to the question: Can we consider it as a useful paradigm for scholars of social science, politics and international relations? According to Carl Jean geopolitics is good instrument for researching the world politics, because it gives primary methodology to follow the specific problems of place, territory, geography and spheres of influences. That is why it can be useful for researchers who are interested in security issues like military conflicts, rivalry, dominance, balance of power, military race and terrorism. Thomas Kuhn, who introduced the ‘paradigm’ to the science was convinced that it gives the ability to create theories and models, as well as specific language which can logically explain the processes⁵¹. Geopolitics can be a paradigm but we need to find a common approach to its definition which will be adequate to the contemporary global international order. We can give general definition that geopolitics is a research approach – a paradigm – which is concentrated on relations between powers (not only global but also regional or

⁵¹ T.S. Khun, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions: 50th Anniversary Edition*, Chicago 2012, p. 24.

local) on the specific area/place/territory⁵². But this definition can be adequate for classical geopolitics in which scholars have been considering the state power, its ability to maintain and develop its own territory, winning wars with others⁵³. Geopolitics gives the platform to explore the powers relations, components of the power, strength of influences on others etc. From that perspective geopolitics tried to answer to the question: How to ensure the future of the nation within the limits created by the state and the international system. But what about new geopolitics?

The revival of geopolitics has had an unexpected result. It became a key-word to explain many different international processes and issues. Journalist and scholars started to overuse this word, what actually has complicated the scientific perception. In 2010, Dominique Moïsi wrote a very interesting book *Geopolitics of Emotion*, in which he divided the world into the dominant emotion: hope (Asia), humiliation (the Islamic world) and a fear (Europe). Critical geopolitics put attention to popular geopolitics, others find something like “feminist geopolitics” and “geopolitics of sports”. The question arise again if it still geopolitics? When Colin Flint was arguing about geopolitical codes, and what kind of geographical approach he could offer? He was talking about alliances, not about place, territory or the spheres of influences. This doubts bring us to the final question: If the new geopolitics can be a usefulness paradigm? The answer is: it depends on what kind of process or events we are going to explore. Yes, when scholars are trying to find the ‘real’ motives of politicians, and how they explain their strategies to the people. Virtual geopolitics can show us the rivalry between disputing sides in cyberspace. During the Russia-Georgia war in 2008 we could observe the fight not only on battlefield but also in media, where either Moscow and Tbilisi had put their own “true story” and were looking for supporters. Thanks to critical geopolitics explorers can find the answers about the emotions linked with territory (perception of place), for example lost homeland, when different groups of people want to gain the same area. That makes difficult the resolving the conflict or dispute. In Nagorny Karabakh they do not have any resources or diamonds but both Armenians and Azeris have the ambition to control this territory. Imagination of place can be observe also in Russians attitude to “lost Imperium’s territory”, which they call “near abroad”. Russians knows that it is now area of nearly independent states like

⁵² C. Jean, op.cit., p. 11.

⁵³ Ibidem, p. 13.

Ukraine, Georgia, Kazakhstan but still they have special emotions about this area⁵⁴. Summarize, the new geopolitics can be seen as an interesting and inspiring research method but on some conditions. First, researcher subject should be concerned with place/territory/area. It can be only “imagination” of that place (metageography) but still it should be possible to locate it on a map. Otherwise we lost the prefix “geo” and argument that is somehow connected to geopolitics. Second, it is not a universal paradigm, and it has its own limitations. In security issues it can help but in the economy, not always. Third, we need to know what region we do explore, and what kind of vision of the world order people there have. In the post-Soviet area geopolitics is very popular but in Europe or even in Africa the approach to geopolitics is more skeptical of there if any relation to it. Not without reason, in 2012, Robert Kaplan, a recognized American scholar, published a book *Revenge of Geography* in which he was arguing that Americans have forgotten about the geography, which took revenge on them in Afghanistan and Iraq⁵⁵. The conclusion was made in Klaus Dodds’s book, that “It is smart to geopolitical”⁵⁶.

4. Conclusions

Classical geopolitics paid much attention to geography, which determined political decisions of the strongest centers of power. It was a state-centric concept in which researchers were focused on who is going to rule in the world. Definitely the territory, its shape, open access to the seas, neighborhood were very important elements in building power of the country. After World War II geopolitics has been forgotten. Scholars denied it because the territory did not play such an important role, as it was before. Despite these concerns in the West, mainly in France, in the United Kingdom and the United States researchers began to adapt geopolitics to the new international situation.

They began to emphasize a different understanding of the geographical factor, extending the meaning of the place. Geographical factor is not only understood as a physical territory, but also as a space in all dimensions of human activities: outer space, cyberspace (virtual geopolitics). Western’s scholars started to think also about perception of place, so called meta-geography. These are the maps that

⁵⁴ T. Klin, *op.cit.*, p. 12.

⁵⁵ R. Kaplan, *op.cit.*, pp. 33–36.

⁵⁶ K. Dodds, *op.cit.*, p. 10.

are in the minds and consciousness of different social groups all over the world. Everyone develops at a certain place that shapes his identity. Of how strong the social relationships associated with the place, territory and space depend on history, culture and traditions. For example, decisions on the outbreak of hostilities in defense of the place, and recover “lost ground”, identified with a “lost paradise”. In addition, the new element is to study the interactions between different centers of power, not only at the global level, but also at regional and local levels.

Michał Drgas

Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, Poland

THE LIMITS OF RATIONALIST EXPLANATIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY INSTITUTIONS

ABSTRACT

In this article I argue that rationalist explanations which aspire to demonstrate why international security institutions develop, do not qualify as fully satisfactory arguments. Their limits become apparent particularly if one attempts to account on their basis for the diversity of types of institutions such as balance of power, collective security, hegemony, etc.

The initial step in my analysis was to address the limitations of the three arguments which I referred to as materialist, functionalist, and evolutionist that individually make up either whole rationalist conceptions on the development of international security institutions or parts of them. Having done so, I also examined the possibilities to combine these arguments to explore whether the effort yields any extra explanatory power.

The main reasons for why these explanations and their combinations fail to convincingly account for the diversity of international security institutions are threefold. First, the functionalist, evolutionist, and the functionalist-evolutionist arguments do not attempt to address the issue directly and provide only a general assertion on the factors influencing the formation of institutions instead of tackling the problem with respect to their particular types. Second, the materialist argument advances a logic of state action that justifies the creation of certain types of institutions and, at the same time, rules out the development of others. Third, it proves also incompatible with the other two arguments. The implication of this is that states would have to choose between mutually exclusive logics of action and, thus, behave in a way for which none of the arguments provides any explanation.

Key words

rationalism, international security, international institutions

1. Introduction

Matters of international security are, and have always been, a key focus of international relations scholars. Particularly since Kenneth N. Waltz's seminal work, *Theory of International Politics*, where – among other things – he rebooted his earlier argument that the framework in which state action occurs, i.e. anarchy, is the underlining cause for war and insecurity in general¹, a large portion of the literature on the subject has been dedicated to the study of international security institutions, established to alter system-level conditions stemming from the lack of a world government, in order to restrain the self-help strategies of states. Above all, in subsequent years arguments regarding institutions became central to the critique of Waltz's assertion on the “root of all evil” and during what was later to be called the inter-paradigm debate in international relations, conducted throughout the 1980s and 1990s, gave birth to a strand of theory named either neoliberal institutionalism or institutional theory². Scholars who took part in it, however, were not the only ones interested in the workings of institutions and hence the dispute over their role by far exceeded the boundaries of the inter-paradigm debate.

Not surprisingly then, the literature on international relations abounds with both theoretical and empirical efforts concerned with various aspects of international security institutions (and institutions in general) such as: their development, mutual interaction; influence upon states' interests and behaviour, and adaptive processes that lead to institutional change. Nonetheless, among arguments dealing with the first issue, which is also the focus of this study, a certain pride is given to rationalist explanations, associated mostly with neorealism and neoliberal institutionalism. These arguments take a myriad of different forms, yet they all share two basic assumptions: first, international security institutions are real-world phenomena, and their distinctive types represent distinctive macro-level conditions in which states operate; second, these institutions develop as a result of objective circumstances present in a given time and place which influence the interests of states.

¹ K.N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, Reading 1979. The argument has been originally developed by Waltz in his 1954 *Man, the State and War*. See: idem, *Man, the State and War. A Theoretical Analysis*, New York 1954.

² Concerning the debate see: O. Wæver, *The Rise and Fall of the Inter-Paradigm Debate* [in:] *International Theory: Positivism and Beyond*, S. Smith, K. Booth, M. Zalewski (eds.), Cambridge–New York, pp. 149–185.

In this article I will argue that claims of this sort, while providing valuable insight into the development of international security institutions, also have their limits. These become apparent particularly if, on the basis of rationalist explanations, one attempts to account for the existing diversity of types of institutions, which – to list just a few – include balance of power, collective security, hegemony, and spheres of influence. The main reason for this failure is that rationalist arguments offer constitutive explanations rather than those regarding causality³ – they illustrate merely what factors influence the shape a given institution takes and not what directly causes its development. Hence, they do not tackle the problem of why existing circumstances give rise to a particular type of institution rather than some other.

To develop my argument I will first explain what I consider to be security institutions, what types of them I will deal with, and what are the differences between those types. Second, I will reconstruct three most common rationalist arguments for the development of security institutions and demonstrate why they fail to convincingly explain the diversity of the types I chose to deal with. Throughout the article I shall call them materialist, functionalist, and evolutionist explanations respectively. I should also make it clear that at this stage I will try to keep these arguments in their “pure” forms (purely materialist, purely functionalist etc.). In the literature, however, they often tend to be merged (and sometimes include some non-rationalist components). To address this issue and third, I will attempt to combine all three explanations and investigate the shortcomings associated with this integrated approach.

2. International security institutions and their types

Pursuant to a definition of international institutions offered by Robert O. Keohane, probably the most widely accepted in the field of international relations⁴, I shall use the term to designate “persistent and connected sets of rules (formal or informal) that prescribe behavioral roles, constrain activity, and shape expectations”⁵. Given this, an international security institution is to be regarded

³ Regarding the distinction between the two see: A. Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, Cambridge–New York–Melbourne 1999, pp. 77–88.

⁴ D.A. Lake, *Beyond Anarchy: The Importance of Security Institutions*, “International Security” 2001, No. 1, Vol. 26, p. 131.

⁵ R.O. Keohane, *Neoliberal Institutionalism: A Perspective on World Politics* [in:] *International Institutions and State Power. Essays in International Relations Theory*, R.O. Keohane (ed.), Boulder 1989, p. 3.

as a set of rules that ultimately “set a standard of conduct and states follow on a regular, repetitive basis” in order to guarantee or increase their own security⁶. One point needs to be taken here: the wording of this definition allows also for the inclusion of anarchy (or self-help), as described by Waltz, into the set of international security institutions⁷. Scholars representing rational strands of international relations theory, however, commonly acknowledge the ever-present nature of anarchy and its constitutive role for all international relations. According to this standpoint, it is therefore impossible to oppose anarchy with an equal counterpart (such as hierarchy) and, thus, deal with the divergence of institutions on this basic level of international relations. Hence, the problem of diversity that I am tackling applies to institutions which exist under the condition of anarchy and represent a certain degree of variety of it or – in other words – different strategies employed by states while they follow the self-help principle.

In my analysis I will take into account a total of six types of international security institutions whose existence either in contemporary or historical times is widely recognized by scholars representing rationalist strands of international relations theory. Four of them – great power concert, hegemony, collective security, and balance of power – constitute the main types, which I will sometimes refer to as second order institutions (with anarchy being the only first order institution).

The first of these institutions – a great power concert – designates an effort made by the great powers to jointly manage international affairs⁸. Historical cases commonly regarded as examples of this type of institution comprise only one incident, i.e. the Concert of Europe, which emerged in the aftermath of the Congress of Vienna of 1815 and collapsed in the mid-1850s, at the time of the Crimean War. Some scholars, however, also list other cases – Robert Jervis for example considers cooperation between the great powers immediately after the two world wars (1919–1920 and 1945–1946) to be such concerts⁹.

Hegemony may be understood in one of two different ways. According to the first, it represents merely a hierarchy in which one state surpasses all others

⁶ M. Drgas, *The Role of State Identity in the Development of International Security Structures: the Case of Post-Cold War Latin America* [in:] *Polityczne problemy Ameryki Łacińskiej* [Political Problems of Latin America], J. Knopek (ed.), Toruń 2012, p. 71.

⁷ Ibidem, pp. 71–72.

⁸ See for example: H. Bull, *The Anarchical Society. A Study of Order in World Politics*, New York–Chichester 2002, p. 218.

⁹ R. Jervis, *From Balance to Concert: A Study of International Security Cooperation*, “World Politics” 1985, No. 1, Vol. 38, p. 58.

in terms of power. This sort of hegemony is, however, nothing more than an exceptional instance of anarchy since the “persistent and connected sets of rules” on which it rests upon are exactly the same as in any other case of anarchy. The other approach, which I will adhere to, labelled as hegemonic stability theory, requires the unique position of the hegemonic power to take its source also from a certain degree of legitimacy stemming from the fact that it provides public goods (such as security) to itself as well as to other, non-hegemonic states. Therefore, this type of institution also needs to encompass a certain amount of cooperation between all sides involved¹⁰. The most prominent example of such a case is the one on the basis of which the whole hegemonic stability theory has been developed – the role played by the United States in the post-World War II international political economy¹¹.

The notion of collective security has been defined for the first time in the Covenant of the League of Nations, particularly in article 10, in which all states – signatories to the Covenant – pledged to protect one another against any aggression¹². Yet, what is also crucial to the understanding of collective security, is that since it was assumed that the League of Nations would one day become a universal organization, the collective effort in response to aggression on the basis of article 10 would have to be directed towards one of the organization’s members. This is a defining quality of collective security that distinguishes it from any other type of institution involving joint retaliation, such as for example an alliance¹³.

Balance of power is one the most frequently used terms in the study of international relations and, thus, can be understood in a variety of different ways.

¹⁰ Concerning the distinction see for example: I. Clark, *Towards an English School Theory of Hegemony*, “European Journal of International Relations” 2009, No. 2, Vol. 15, pp. 205–213.

¹¹ Hedley Bull gives also two other examples to draw attention to his similar concept of primacy. They include the role played by Great Britain in the Commonwealth prior to World War II and the position of the United States in NATO. H. Bull, *op.cit.*, p. 208.

¹² J.S. Nye Jr., *Understanding International Conflicts. An Introduction to Theory and History*, New York–San Francisco–Boston–London–Toronto–Sydney–Tokyo–Singapore–Madrid–Mexico City–Munich–Paris–Cape Town–Hong Kong–Montreal 2007, p. 89.

¹³ C.A. Wallander, R.O. Keohane, *Risk, Threat, and Security Institutions* [in:] *International Institutions...*, *op.cit.*, p. 92. Some scholars opt for a wider definition of collective security and include for example concerts as one of its forms. See for example: Ch.A. Kupchan, C.A. Kupchan, *The Promise of Collective Security*, “International Security” 1995, No. 1, Vol. 20, p. 53. It is not however clear what, according to these authors, separates collective security from any other cooperative (and for that matter collective) institutions.

Usually, however, it designates one of two things¹⁴. In the first sense it illustrates a distribution of power within any given system or between any two states¹⁵. Scholars nonetheless tend to limit this use of the concept only to specific types of distributions. First and foremost, they consistently apply it only to distributions between or among the great powers. Furthermore, many of them agree that a case in which a single state, given its power, dominates all others (unipolarity) cannot be considered to represent a balance of power¹⁶. This stems from a widely held belief that only a condition in which various opposing sides (whoever they may be) are roughly equal in terms of power constitutes a balance¹⁷. Hence, scholars of international relations restrict the usage of the term either to multipolar systems (preferably involving at least five great powers)¹⁸ or to multipolar (regardless of the number of poles) and bipolar systems¹⁹. In the second sense, the notion of balance of power means a particular kind of policy by which states strive to balance one another's capabilities to prevent the emergence of a single preponderant actor among themselves²⁰, something that Adam Watson called a "systematic practice of anti-hegemonialism"²¹. The latter definition is therefore more suitable if one is to regard balance of power as a security institution. Nevertheless, the functioning of the sort of policy it involves is also often considered to be correlated to the distribution of power among states.

Finally this leads us to the last two types of international security institutions, i.e. opposing alliances and spheres of influence. As both types represent distinctive and more sophisticated forms of balance of power they are third order institutions. Typically it is assumed that in multipolar systems states balance disparities by producing precisely two roughly equally powerful opposing alliances while under bipolar conditions they do so mainly by developing their

¹⁴ For a more elaborate classification of various uses of the term, both by politicians and scholars, see: E. B. Haas, *The Balance of Power: Prescription, Concept, or Propaganda*, "World Politics" 1953, No. 4, Vol. 5, pp. 442–477.

¹⁵ J.S. Nye Jr., op.cit., p. 64.

¹⁶ See for example: I. Clark, op.cit., p. 203; H. Bull, op.cit., p. 97; A. Watson, *European International Society and its Expansion* [in:] *The Expansion of International Society*, H. Bull, A. Watson (eds.), Oxford 1984, p. 24.

¹⁷ J.S. Nye Jr., op.cit., p. 64.

¹⁸ See for example: K. Mingst, *Essentials of International Relations*, New York–London 2003, pp. 88–89.

¹⁹ See for example: K.N. Waltz, *Theory...*, op.cit., pp. 168–169; D.A. Lake, op.cit., p. 158.

²⁰ J.S. Nye Jr., op.cit., p. 65.

²¹ A. Watson, op.cit., p. 24.

own capabilities, however, in this case, they also gather a group of weaker states around them to form spheres of their influence. I shall address these issues in some greater detail in the next section.

3. Rationalist explanations for the development of international security institutions

All rationalist explanations concerning any type of state action base their claims on an assumption that international actors choose strategies which will prove most beneficial given their interests. Hence, if we set aside arguments which involve the possibility of an error in judgment coming into play, the diversity of international security institutions can be justified only as a result of variation related to interests. Therefore, since states can always “choose” from a set of different institutions, to produce a complete argument one needs to provide an understanding of the linkages between their interests and preferences as regards to particular types of institutions.

3.1. The materialist explanation

The materialist explanation for the development of international security institutions is one of the key features defining realist and neorealist approaches in the study of international relations. Nonetheless, it constitutes also a part of several more “liberal” strands of theory. The principal argument here is that institutions are products of the system’s polarity, i.e. the number of great powers as well as the scale of inequality as regards to the distribution of power among them.

“Materialists” accept that the great powers, as any states, aspire to dominance over all others since only then – given the anarchic nature of their environment – they can ultimately guarantee their own survival. In other words, their actions are driven first and foremost by what Hans J. Morgenthau called “the lust for power”²². At the same time these states prefer to develop their capabilities through “internal” rather than “external” policies. This strategy, however, if it is to bring any success at all, requires time necessary for them to gain enough power to overcome all their rivals. Yet, during that period, they also need to deter other, more powerful actors which might try to make use of their temporary preponderance. Since states cannot gain power instantly by developing their capabilities “internally”, they have to resort to “external” actions and, thus, ally

²² H.J. Morgenthau, *Scientific Man vs. Power Politics*, London 1947, p. 167.

themselves with other actors that are also under threat. Only then, by joining capabilities, they can deter a common foe²³. This is how, according to this sort of logic, a balance of power works and alliances form in multipolar systems. As Waltz argues – following Alan Dowty’s observations – this type of policy is never a goal for states but a product of their desire to dominate²⁴. Balance of power therefore becomes a self-contained mechanism, “not so much imposed by statesmen on events as it is imposed by events on statesmen”²⁵. Given this, one would expect alliances not to form in multipolar systems only when capabilities are equally distributed among all of the great powers.

On the other hand, in bipolar systems setting up alliances that involve the great powers becomes impossible; here there are only two of them and they are the ones who pose the greatest threat to one another’s security. In this case a more difficult question to answer is why the great powers would establish spheres of influence around them. One plausible explanation is that, due to the lack of suitable allies for them, the non-great-power states somehow do matter and increase the ability to deter. Then, balancing takes place not only between the two great powers but also between the two spheres, which become alliance-like constructs. Some prominent “materialists”, such as Waltz, while offering nothing in return, dismiss this argument and hold that in bipolar systems only “internal” means are used for balancing²⁶. This would imply, however, that establishing spheres becomes utterly pointless and contradicts the rationalist assumption that states do only what is best for them. Nevertheless, the “all-states-do-matter” explanation also has its limits. First, it does not demonstrate why the great powers would want to constrain their “lust for power” and not try to completely subordinate other states that are parts of their respective spheres. Second, it fails to offer a logic on the basis of which both the great powers and other states would choose their particular allies.

Finally, according to “materialists”, since non-great-power states are not considered by the great powers to be fully-fledged alliance candidates, one would expect the latter always to prefer cooperation only among themselves and, hence, spheres of influence never to form in multipolar systems.

²³ Ibidem, p. 169.

²⁴ K.N. Waltz, *Theory...*, op.cit., pp. 119–120. See also: A. Dowty, *Conflict in War Potential Politics: An Approach to Historical Macroanalysis*, “Peace Research Society (International) Papers” 1969, Vol. 13, p. 95.

²⁵ K.N. Waltz, *Man...*, op.cit., p. 209.

²⁶ See for example: idem, *Theory...*, op.cit., p. 168.

As far as the materialist explanation can account for most of the features of balance of power as well as its specific forms, it has little to offer with respect to the other types of second order institutions. Regarding hegemony, it fails to demonstrate what mechanisms could persuade the hegemonic state and the other states to cooperate with each other when no common threats exists and, thus, on the one side, force the former to constrain its appetite for power to prevent it from “devouring” weaker states while simultaneously restraining any attempts to strip it of its privileged status on the other. With reference to great power concerts, the materialist explanation proves incapable of justifying the willingness of the great powers to cooperate, particularly if this strategy is to be a means employed in order to safeguard the *status quo* against attempts undertaken by weaker states, i.e. actors which – as “materialists” claim – do not matter polarity-wise. Finally, concerning collective security, the argument offered by “materialists” cannot account for cooperation taking place among states, since this type of institution requires them to act regardless of any premises related to the distribution of capabilities as well as the existence or non-existence of a common foe.

3.2. The functionalist explanation

As we have seen, materialist explanations for the development of international security institutions are centered around two basic arguments, according to which: security-oriented strategies employed by states are determined entirely by their fear for their own survival; and security institutions are imposed on states rather than chosen by them. Functionalist explanations, developed mainly by neoliberal institutionalists, utilize the potential stemming from the possibility of “loosening” the former of those assumptions as well as hold that institutions are deliberately designed by states on the basis of their “rational anticipation (...) in order to maximize the net benefits that they receive”²⁷, as Robert O. Keohane, probably the most prominent representative of this approach, once wrote. Given this, “functionalists” argue that the development of specific types of security institutions is driven by the demand for solving specific security-related problems.

In spite of offering a theoretically consistent general explanation that potentially could account for the diversity of international security institutions, scholars representing this standpoint fail, however, to comprehensively demonstrate the ties between particular types of institutions and particular issues with

²⁷ R.O. Keohane, *Governance in a Partially Globalized World* [in:] *International Institutions...*, op.cit., p. 251. See also: D.A. Lake, op.cit., p. 136.

which they are meant to deal. Usually, the main reason for this is that they use functional claims only to determine differences between a limited number of institutions (most often two)²⁸ and, thus, leave a large part of the whole spectrum, both in terms of institutions as well their functions, untouched.

An attempt to link institutions with their specific functions using a different approach has been made by Celeste A. Wallander and Keohane, who proposed a distinction between two categories of security problems – threats and risks. They claimed that: “Threats pertain when there are actors that have the capabilities to harm the security of others and that are perceived by their potential targets as having intentions to do so. When no such threat exists, either because states do not have the intention or the capability to harm the security of others, states may nevertheless face a security risk”²⁹. Next, they also identified two types of “security arrangements” corresponding with those two types of security problems. Threats – as they argued – are dealt with better by alliances and alignments (a less institutionalized form of alliances), i.e. institutions which “have rules, norms, and procedures to enable the members to identify threats and retaliate effectively against them”³⁰. On the other hand, when it comes to risks, Wallander and Keohane suggested that diplomatic conferences, what they called “security management institutions”, and out-of-area coalitions tend to be more effective as they “have rules, norms, and procedures to enable the members to provide and obtain information and to manage disputes in order to avoid generating security dilemmas”³¹.

An important limitation of this argument as a complete explanation for the diversity of international security institution is that the typology of institutions it contains includes only two functionally distinct types – threat- and risk-oriented institutions – and fails to account, on the basis of functional claims, for the variety of their particular forms (alliances, diplomatic conferences, etc.). Therefore, it is not entirely clear how these could relate to institutions such as hegemony, great power concert and other. Wallander and Keohane attempt to demonstrate only certain such relationships. Their effort leads, however, to conclusions that are not always consistent with their argument on the links between

²⁸ See for example: H. Bull, *op.cit.*, pp. 102–107, 199–220; D.A. Lake, *op.cit.*, pp. 129–160.

²⁹ C.A. Wallander, R.O. Keohane, *op.cit.*, p. 91.

³⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 92.

³¹ *Ibidem*, p. 92. For a similar method of distinguishing between types of institutions see: M. Drgas, *op.cit.*, p. 72–73.

security-related problems and types of institutions. For instance, they regard collective security as an example of an alliance³². This is because it involves rules, norms, and procedures to enable states to identify threats (or whatever they might be called) and retaliate. Yet, one of its key features – as it had been already noted – is that it is not intended to deter a specific actor that has the capabilities to harm others and is perceived by them as having also the will to do so. Thus, given the definitions constructed by Wallander and Keohane, collective security may be viewed as an example of an alliance, but only an alliance meant not to address threats but risks.

3.3. The evolutionist explanation

In the study of international relations, “rationalist” scholars often tend to adhere to a static model of world politics based on a presumption that the ever-present condition of anarchy prohibits any significant transformation of national interests and, thus, the behaviour of states. Within this approach, evolutionary theorizing in general and evolutionary conceptions of international security in particular are rather unpopular and highly underdeveloped³³. As a result, there is no comprehensive evolutionary theory of the development of international security institutions. There is, however, some indication of evolutionary thinking among “rationalists”, especially those using the game-theoretic approach to the study of cooperation³⁴.

As opposed to the materialist and functionalist explanations, the evolutionist argument is based on a claim that institutionalization of cooperation is dynamic and should be viewed as a process in which institutions do not develop out of nothing or fall apart into nothing. As Keohane once wrote on a similar concept of international regimes, they: “rarely emerge from chaos; on the contrary, they are built on one another”³⁵. Hence, according to this approach, distinct types of institutions should represent different stages or phases of a single process of institutionalization that is driven by evolutionary learning, i.e. the ability of actors to gather new information about other actors and use it to change their own behaviour in order to maximize their gains.

³² See: C.A. Wallander, R.O. Keohane, op.cit., p. 93.

³³ G. Modelski, *Is World Politics Evolutionary Learning?*, “International Organization” 1990, No. 1, Vol. 44, pp. 1–2.

³⁴ George Modelski also regards Immanuel Kant’s perpetual peace as an example of an evolutionary process. See for example: Ibidem, pp. 2–6.

³⁵ R.O. Keohane, *After Hegemony. Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy*, Princeton 1984, p. 79.

Using game theory scholars usually represent security interactions among states as a case of the Prisoners' Dilemma³⁶. In this game, if both sides cooperate, they both receive a reward; if they both defect, they both get punished; if one side defects and the other chooses to cooperate, the former receives the largest payoff possible in the game while the latter is left only with a benefit that is much smaller than the one it would get if both of them decided to cooperate (sometimes called the "sucker payoff"³⁷). Since both players lack information about the other's intentions and fear the other side always might decide to defect, they face commitment problems and – it is argued – are reluctant to cooperate. However, if iterated games are played, the players will learn each other's strategies and modify their behaviour. An experiment conducted by Robert Axelrod has shown that in the long run the most successful strategy when playing the Prisoners' Dilemma is to follow the tit-for-tat rule³⁸. Hence, if both sides of the game have the ability to learn, they will sooner or later overcome their commitment problems and, after a number of games have been played, adhere to this rule.

The evolutionist approach implies that two somewhat related factors that stem from the amount of information that states have influence the mechanism by which international security institutions (and institutions in general) develop. The first is associated with commitment to cooperate – as actors become more and more confident about the intentions of one another, they may decide to establish institutions that, in order to exist, require from them ever greater commitment; on the other hand, if this confidence is undermined, they will deinstitutionalize their cooperation, i.e. turn an institution that demands for more commitment into a one that requires less of it. Scholars, however, have not yet attempted to comprehensively rank institutions on the basis of their commitment requirements, which is a serious shortfall if the evolutionist argument is to convincingly explain the diversity of security institutions on the basis of this factor having any significance. Robert Jervis, for example, does this with only two types of institutions and claims that a great power concert to develop

³⁶ See for example: Ibidem, pp. 67–104; C.A. Wallander, R.O. Keohane, op.cit., pp. 91, 127; A. Stein, *Coordination and Collaboration: Regimes in an Anarchic World* [in:] *International Regimes*, S.D. Krasner (ed.), Ithaca–London 1983, pp. 115–140; R. Jervis, *Security Regimes* [in:] *International Regimes...*, op.cit., pp. 174–176; D. Snidal, *The Game Theory of International Politics*, "World Politics" 1985, No. 1, Vol. 38, pp. 25–57; G.H. Snyder, P. Diesing, *Conflict among Nations: Bargaining, Decision Making, and System Structure in International Crises*, Princeton 1977.

³⁷ See: R.O. Keohane, op.cit., p. 68.

³⁸ R. Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation*, New York 1984, pp. 27–54.

demands more incentives to cooperate being present than a balance of power involving opposing alliances³⁹. One might also argue that two important elements that are connected with commitment requirements and, thus, play a role in the evolution of institutions are – to use Wallander’s and Keohane’s terms⁴⁰ – their commonality (the number of actors involved) and specificity (the degree to which specific rules that constitute the institution exist). Given this, more common institutions as well as those whose rules are more specific should be more difficult to establish. These issues, however, are not directly linked to the kind of rules which particular types of institutions entail. More importantly though, there is no reason why states would set up institutions that have greater requirements as regards to this factor provided that no other circumstances change. This is because if an ongoing cooperation is rewarding enough, the sole possibility to deepen commitment does not pose a sufficient incentive to do so. The commitment factor alone might therefore influence states only to deinstitutionalize their cooperation.

By contrast, the role of commitment might prove crucial regardless of the direction of its change in conjunction with the second factor whose importance stems from the evolutionist explanation, i.e. the performance of various strategies (institutions) chosen by states. As it already had been noted, while actors cooperate, they not only alter their confidence in the willingness of others to cooperate as well, but they also strive to find a strategy that suits best their interests, which in the case of Axelrod’s experiment was the tit-for-tat rule. However, before they can accomplish this, they need to test different strategies in order to assess their value in terms of the benefits they yield. The “better” ones might nevertheless demand also an adequate level of commitment to develop. Unfortunately, since according to the evolutionist explanation actors can only gain more information, the process of institutionalization ought to be a one-way linear sequence of changes, which it is not if one examines the development of security institutions in international relations. This is because their types tend to recur rather than alter their forms and never go back to the previous ones.

In addition, the evolutionist explanation also does not directly demonstrate the relationships existing between commitment requirements as well as benefits on the one hand and institutions such as for instance balance of power or collective security on the other.

³⁹ R. Jervis, *From...*, op.cit., pp. 60–62.

⁴⁰ See: C.A. Wallander, R.O. Keohane, op.cit., p. 90.

3.4. The integrated rationalist approach

As I have argued, none of the three “pure” rationalist explanations constitutes a complete account of the development of international security institutions as neither of them fully justifies the existence of their various types. An integrated rationalist argument, in order to “do better” and compensate for all the deficiencies of those explanations, should make use of arguments related with one or two of them to patch up all the holes in the third. Some of these explanations, however, are not compatible with each other. This is the case if an attempt is made to supplement the materialist explanation with arguments taken from either of the other two (or vice-versa). The reason for this is that while the former is based on a claim that power-related considerations are the only significant factor, the latter hold precisely that they are not. Thus, they offer two completely different logics of action, and whilst both of them might prove to be equally important to the development of institutions, none of the three explanations offers an argument that would illustrate why and how states choose between these contradictory logics; for instance, neither of them shows why states might decide to set all their power-related considerations aside and engage themselves in collective security, an institution in which all parties are treated on an equal footing in spite of the disparities in terms of their capabilities⁴¹.

In contrast, the functionalist and evolutionist explanations are perfectly compatible with each other and, thus, no obstacles to their merger seem to occur. This is because both of these arguments hold that institutions are chosen on the basis of the same criterion, i.e. their relative efficiency. What distinguishes one from the other is their view of security – either as one- or multi-dimensional – as well as the attitude towards information available to states, since the latter is a bounded rationality explanation⁴², whilst the former a full rationality one. The combination of the two therefore allows for an explanation that would see institutions as issue-specific constructs that might be established also on the basis of limited information. On the one hand, this might account for the divergence regarding institutions intended to solve the same security-related problems, such as for instance the threat- and risk-oriented institutions distinguished by

⁴¹ A non-rationalist explanation for this has been given particularly by Alexander Wendt. See: A. Wendt, *Anarchy is what States Make of it: The Social Construction of Power Politics*, “International Organization” 1992, No. 2, Vol. 46, pp. 391–425; Idem, *Social...*, pp. 246–312.

⁴² On the notion of bounded rationality see: H.A. Simon, *A Behavioral Model of Rational Choice*, “Quarterly Journal of Economics” 1955, No. 1, Vol. 69, pp. 99–118.

Wallander and Keohane, which would now represent the most effective strategies achievable given a particular amount of information being available to states. On the other hand, a combined functionalist-evolutionist argument might also justify the recurrence of certain institutions, a phenomenon that would be associated with the appearance and disappearance of distinct security issues.

Nonetheless, the merger of the two explanations fails to compensate for other limitations that apply to both its component arguments. The reason for this is that – similarly to the functionalist and evolutionist accounts – it offers merely a general idea as regards to the factors that matter to the development of international security institutions and allow to differentiate between their types. Thus, it does not show in what way particular types of institutions – balance of power, spheres of influence etc. – differ in terms of commitment requirements, their efficiency, and issue-specificity. The only insight the combined argument yields regarding the development of these institutions is therefore that conditions by which it is influenced are somehow unique in terms of some or all of the three factors just listed.

4. Conclusion

In this study I argued that rationalist explanations which aspire to demonstrate why international security institutions develop, do not qualify as fully satisfactory arguments. To display their limits, I attempted to show on their basis why in given circumstances a particular type of security institution would form instead of some other and, by doing so, justify the existence of a variety of such types. Differences between institutions might be related to a multitude of their features and, thus, institutions may be distinguished by scholars according to various criteria. To prove my point, I used only a few of such types that have a firm place in the literature on international relations and the study of which is considered to be vital to the whole discipline. These, among others, included balance of power, collective security, or hegemony.

The initial step in my analysis was to address the limitations of the three rationalist arguments which I referred to as materialist, functionalist, and evolutionist explanations respectively that individually make up either whole rationalist conceptions on the development of international security institutions or at least parts of them. Having done so, I also examined the possibilities to combine these arguments to explore whether the effort yields any extra explanatory power with respect to the issue in question.

Albeit all of the three individual explanations illustrate the diversity of international security institutions in terms of the interests of states, they also highlight different mechanisms that give rise to these interest. The materialist explanation stresses the importance of fear for survival as the driving force and the distribution of power as the boundary condition which limits options to select from. The functionalist explanation points to the fact that institutions are specialized constructs and get chosen by states on the basis of the utility they yield with respect to particular security-related problems. Finally, according to the evolutionist explanation, a key role in selecting the best option is played by the amount of information that is available to states. This is because institutions differ in their complexity and, thus, their existence is conditioned upon certain requirements related to the will of states to cooperate being met. At the same time, institutions vary in terms of their effectiveness, in this case, however – as opposed to the functionalist explanation – it is maintained that these benefits are not-issue specific.

The main reasons for why these three explanations as well as their combinations fail to convincingly account for the diversity of international security institutions are threefold. First, the functionalist, evolutionist, and the combined functionalist-evolutionist arguments do not attempt to address the issue directly and provide only a general assertion on the factors influencing the formation of institutions instead of tackling the problem with respect to their particular types. Second, the materialist argument advances a logic of state action that justifies the creation of certain types of institutions and, at the same time, rules out the development of others. Third, it proves also incompatible with the other two arguments. The implication of this is that states would have to choose between mutually exclusive logics of action and, thus, behave in a way for which none of the arguments provides any explanation. This is not to say, however, that rationalist explanations are inherently flawed and ought to be utterly discarded. Perhaps, to eradicate the problems and limitations they experience, simply some additional rationalist theorizing is required. On the other hand, the combination of these arguments with non-rationalist ones might bring even more extra value to the “theory” of the development of international security institutions.

Lucyna Czechowska

Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, Poland

THE CONCEPT OF STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP AS AN INPUT IN THE MODERN ALLIANCE THEORY

ABSTRACT

The article is devoted to a new institution of the international political relations – the strategic partnership. The author analysis the realities of the foreign policy conducted in the first decade of the 21st century and takes a side in the discussion between the neoliberals and the neorealists on the states' natural tendency to rivalry or cooperation. Settling her concept in the framework of the realists theory of alliances, the author describes the condition of research on the issue and differentiates between the *sensu stricte* and *sensu largo* alliance, moving closer the wider understanding of the term. The core of the essay, though, is the presentation of a perfect model of the researched institution. Therefore, the author presents and justifies her own definition and sets constitutive features of the material strategic partnership.

Key words

strategic partnership, special relations, alliance theory, alliance, cooperation, rivalry

1. The Realities of the Foreign Policy Conduct in the First Decade of the 21st Century

We live in a period of transition. That is a fact that no researcher or practitioner of international relations doubts. The last decade of the previous century ended the cold war rivalry, which had been in the centre of international affairs for almost 50 years. The countries, that were closely adherent to one of the two blocks, got back the capability of unconstrained choice of potential allies and conducting politics according to their self-made out interests. The fact that the

Soviet Union's collapse marked a change of the international affairs polarity is nothing when it comes to the changes determined by the globalisation. This is the first time in centuries, when the Westphalian system of sovereign and national states has been questioned. An overwhelming co-dependencies redefined the classic term of security and emphasized new chances and threats for the survival and harmonious development of societies. Politicians and political scientists all over the world ask themselves a question, how the world will look like in the 21st century and how changes of international politics will influence the capabilities of conducting the politics by the governments? Are we, according to some predictions, experiencing the "end of history"? Or maybe we are sinking in a conflict-creating chaos? The eternal argument between the liberals and realists about state's natural tendency to cooperation or confrontation returned with a new power.

The author of the below essay leans towards the thesis, that as human being has a potential to do right and wrong, each state, due to the situation, can choose one of the above as well. "The international relations are not a constant state of war and anarchy, because the contradictions of national interest come with convergences and dependencies between states. If there were only contradictions, no cooperation would be possible; if contradictions had not appear at all, no relations between states, known as alliances, would be needed; alliances, that are basic cells of international order, of various and changeable framework of purpose, extension, cohesion, and constancy"¹. Therefore, as establishing coalitions between major political powers is crucial in the internal politics, it is the capability of entering into suitable alliances and networks is often the most important in foreign policy.

Each era shaped institutions in the international environment characteristic for its times. The 19th century was named as "conference diplomacy", the 20th century – "the era of international organizations", and the 21st century has been described as the "summit diplomacy". A strategic partnership – a new type of bilateral relations, that combines a flexibility and deep rapprochement has become a supplement for the multilateral negotiations on the global pressing issues. The extraordinary closeness of the subjects comes from the mutual share of common strategic goals, and belief that a long-term cooperation effectively facilitates its implementation. This way, apart from being an independent and sovereign actors in the international environment, a relation between them

¹ J. Stefanowicz, *Anatomia polityki międzynarodowej* [Anatomy of International Politics], Toruń 2000, p. 126.

is formed. The relation that surpasses an ordinary intensity of relations and preference towards other states.

Even though, the first special relations were concluded in the first part of the 20th century (between Great Britain and the United States), the 90s of the previous century brought a peak of its popularity. Nevertheless, no academic interest followed this practice. As a result, the term of special relations, is currently understood and used intuitively, which causes a lot of misunderstanding. Moreover, as a result of expansion in the number of subjects in the international environment, the strategic partnerships are established not only between states, but also between states and international and supranational organizations, federal parts of states and even between continents. The below article is an answer to the above *status quo* and is to serve as a proposal to cohesive definition and constitutive features of the term on the ground of political science. It will result in the perfect model of strategic partnership concluded between two² sovereign³ states⁴.

2. Cooperation vs. Rivalry – the Theoretical Perspective

Due to the fact that the aim of this essay is to enrich the theory of international relations with tools facilitating the description and understanding of modern international environment, the deliberation will start with the positioning of the research in the particular theoretical stream. Due to the understood time limits, the arguments on definition of the theories of international relations and its classification will be beyond our interest. Our attention will be focused on the traditional discussion between realists and liberals, so on the issue of state's tendencies to cooperation or rivalry. As it can be noticed in the chart below, the essay is written with a theoretical distance towards the aforementioned schools of thought, in a particular spirit of the "neo-neo synthesis" with an inconsiderable dominance of neorealism.

² The assumption was made that in a world of overlapping convergences and contradictions, and also, which is particularly true for all societies, a network of preferences and sympathies, each multilateral structure is indeed a set of many bilateral relations.

³ The starting point is a voluntary cooperation of subjects that are individual and independent in decision-making.

⁴ The assumption was made that states remain the only actors on the international scene; actors conducting foreign politics. Therefore, concluded partnerships will differ from relations, in which at least one partner does not possess legal international subjectivity.

Chart 1. The critic of the neorealist and neoliberal thought in the context of the debate on the natural tendency of states to rivalry or cooperation

Issue	Realism/ Neorealism	Liberalism/ Neoliberalism	The author's stand
Basic motivation of state	<p>Fear and desire to control – The states are guided exclusively by their egoistic interests, they conduct the policy of power and, according to the zero-sum game, aim at gaining the supremacy over the competition.</p>	<p>Rationality – States are by instinct aiming at compromises that are favourable for everybody, because are bound by the harmony of interests.</p>	<p>States did not stop to aspire to their egoistic goals. Nevertheless, the majority of governments realised that in joining forces in coalitions, they have bigger chances for its implementation.</p>
Progression of IR	<p>There is no possibility of progress in the relations between states, similar to the one that took place in interpersonal relations after abandoning the archaic <i>status quo</i>.</p>	<p>Since the environment and the most important features of the state evolve, therefore patterns of their behaviour also change. Thanks to education and learning process humans can build institutions, that would extract their best features.</p>	<p>States are under political development and are capable of creating a supranational community (i.e. EU), but it is not a dominant tendency in the modern world.</p>
Natural State of the IR	<p>The lack of trust and confrontation seems to be the natural state of international relations.</p>	<p>Cooperation is a natural state of international relations.</p>	<p>There is no single determining tendency – with regard to the situation, states can decide to cooperate or confront each other.</p>
Inevitability of war	<p>In politics there is no space for indication of morality, but for efficient and responsible governing. Between states inevitably comes to arguments, that take a form of an armed conflict.</p>	<p>War and conflict are not inevitable.</p>	<p>Today the war has not declined, but in some parts of the globe (the northern hemisphere), it was transferred to a more subtle ground. States do not fight over territories or natural resources, but over access to information, qualified labour force, and high technology.</p>

Chart. 1

Issue	Realism/ Neorealism	Liberalism/ Neoliberalism	The author's stand
Actors in IR	The state-centric model of international system is sustained.	The role of a non-state members of IR and supranational relations between the units increases.	States are still the only actors in IR that possess full legal subjectivity. Therefore they conduct foreign policy.
Sovereignty and autonomy	From the state's perspective, sovereignty is one of the two most crucial values.	State's sovereignty stopped being a superior value. Gradually the social loyalty is being transferred to the supranational level.	The effective politics is the ability to balance between efficient and independent management , that gives the actors a maximum security and possibilities for development, with the acceptable level of dependency.
Security	In the presence of the anarchy in the international environment, each state has to provide security for itself. Possible cooperation is hard to achieve, difficult to maintain and depends on the power of states.	The world full of networks of different connections becomes less stable. The biggest enemy of many states are not other states but the asymmetric threats. Therefore, between those states, a community of security is being established.	What took place in the Northern states was an expansion of the framework of the definition of security and a shift of focus from the survival and development of the states to the quality of life of its citizens. The sense that approaching threats are not only common, but also exceeds the capabilities of units, forced on states long-term actions.
Reasons for the conflicts to cease	1. Rational instrumental thinking assumes some benefits come from cooperation, especially in the era of nuclear weapons. 2. The concept of bargaining assumes the possibility of using extortion instead of brutal force.	1. The achieved level of co-dependency , mainly economic, makes violent conflict unprofitable. 2. "Cooperative" role of international institutions ⁵ that provide the circulation of information and space for negotiation. 3. Peaceful disposition of liberal democracies.	What the humanity did not manage to learn from its own experience, can be found within reach of the multidimensional globalisation, creating a network of codependencies and strengthening unpredictability of the international surroundings.

⁵ Understood both as intergovernmental organizations and regimes – sets of states' rules of conduct in particular fields e.i. in aviation.

Chart. 1

Issue	Realism/ Neorealism	Liberalism/ Neoliberalism	The author's stand
Significance and scope of cooperation	Cooperational behaviour is possible only in particular circumstances. Each concluded alliance is short-term and superficial. There is still a distinct division between the internal and foreign policy.	To solve common problems (often of trans-border nature), indispensable is the transnational cooperation, which if initiated in one field, will be transferred to other.	A progressive modernization constantly expands the need and framework of cooperation beyond the state's borders. Cooperative behaviour is a decisive factor in the state's capabilities to develop . The division to foreign and internal policy is artificial and non-functional .

Source: author's own work based on the theoretical approach presented in books: *Stosunki międzynarodowe: uczestnicy – ich miejsce i rola w systemie międzynarodowym*⁶, *Wprowadzenie do stosunków międzynarodowych. Teorie i kierunki badawcze*⁷, *Globalizacja polityki światowej. Wprowadzenie do stosunków międzynarodowych*⁸, *Podstawy stosunków międzynarodowych*⁹, *Środowisko międzynarodowe a zachowania państw*¹⁰, *Wstęp do teorii stosunków międzynarodowych*¹¹, *Teorie stosunków międzynarodowych: krytyka i systematyzacja*¹².

⁶ R. Zenderowski, *Stosunki międzynarodowe: uczestnicy – ich miejsce i rola w systemie międzynarodowym* [International Relations: Actors – Their Place and Role in the International System], Warsaw 2005, pp. 130–132.

⁷ R. Jackson, G. Sørensen, *Wprowadzenie do stosunków międzynarodowych. Teorie i kierunki badawcze* [Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches, Oxford 2003], Cracow 2006, pp. 70–95, 112–131.

⁸ T. Dunne, *Liberalizm [Liberalism]* [in:] *Globalizacja polityki światowej. Wprowadzenie do stosunków międzynarodowych [The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations*, Oxford 2008], S. Smith, J. Baylis (eds.), Cracow 2008, pp. 226–244; T. Dunne, B. Schmidt, *Realizm [Realism]* [in:] *Globalizacja polityki światowej. Wprowadzenie do stosunków międzynarodowych [The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations*, Oxford 2008], S. Smith, J. Baylis (eds.), Cracow 2008, pp. 196–201, 203–216.

⁹ K. Mingst, *Podstawy stosunków międzynarodowych [Essentials of International Relations*, New York 2003], Warsaw 2006, pp. 64–73.

¹⁰ A. Dybczyński, *Środowisko międzynarodowe a zachowania państw* [International Environment and State Behaviour], Wrocław 2006, pp. 46–47.

¹¹ T. Łoś-Nowak, *Wstęp do teorii stosunków międzynarodowych* [Introduction to the Theory of International Relations], Poznań 1999, p. 45.

¹² J. Czaputowicz, *Teorie stosunków międzynarodowych: krytyka i systematyzacja* [Theories of International Relations: Critique and Systematisation], Warsaw 2007, p. 334.

The strategic partnership itself, as a foreign policy tool, can serve to those in power who are faithful to both liberal and realists approach. Its essence lays in cooperation between the subjects that share the same goals. Those goals can stem from the preferences of the main lobbying groups within the subject (priorities ancillary to welfare/social development) or be determined by the structure of the external environment (priorities ancillary to the states' security). A crucial and a common for both theoretical approaches issue is the parallel maintenance of institutional flexibility and long-term exceptionally close relation between partners. Once can say that strategic alliances bring together the elements of the realist alliances and the liberal integration theories.

On the one hand, just a mere possibility of cooperation which may have its source not only in fear of the third party, confirms the idealistic conviction of the progressive nature of international relations. On the other hand, it does not have to come along, or be a result of, the institutional development of a particular relation. Quite the contrary, the appearance of the special relations might be a response to the developed mechanisms of international cooperation in a form of international and supranational organizations that in the conditions of changeable environment of state's functionality are rather slowing down than initiating the actions. The reason why strategic partnerships are established and maintained is therefore not the cooperation-driven role of institutions, but emphasized by the realists, concurrence of the troubling issues. From this essay's perspective, it is crucial to notice that, even though states did not give up on implementation of their own national interests for the common good, more often it is the cooperation that they perceive to be the best way to reach their goals. Moreover, even though a long-term cooperation undoubtedly strengthens the dependencies between partners that are caused by the globalization, the base for alliances is still the legal autonomy of the subjects. Therefore, since a strategic partnership is an intergovernmental institution, the integration theories that are focused on explaining why states decide to give up part of their sovereignty for the supranational subjects, cannot give much input here. Given some accurate liberal argument, the definition of strategic partnership was set within the framework of the alliance theory.

3. Alliance Theory – Research Condition

The theory of alliances is one of the most neglected fields in the international relations theories. Conservative researchers usually treat its subject in auxiliary

way to describe other political science categories, like: balance of power¹³, or structure of a system. Researchers who are dealing with statistic methods are usually focusing on the correlation between some fixed sets, i.e. the number of alliances and the frequency of conflicts¹⁴, but not on political processes of creation and maintenance of alliances¹⁵. And even though some valuable analysis on particular aspects of international cooperation were created, only a few researchers decided to take up the challenge and create a coherent and holistic theory of alliances. There were attempts to make use of the theories that were created on the basis of related scientific fields, including the game theory or the public good theory. Definitely more frequently the particular alliances, from the historical perspective¹⁶, were studied and usually accompanied with some scarce theoretical content¹⁷. "Taking into consideration the number of research and development centres working on the alliances, number of scientists that work on those issues, and generally acknowledged literature in the subject – one can assume that within the framework of international relations science, there is a science on alliances, or widely understood theory of alliances"¹⁸.

A forerunner of research on the process of establishing and managing the alliances was Georg Liska, who, in 1962, published his monograph entitled *Nations in Alliance: the Limits of the Interdependence*¹⁹. According to his own words,

¹³ Realists wrote about the issue in a wider way, especially their American representatives. As an example can serve *Politics among nations* written by Hans Morgenthau and published in 1948, and *Alliances and balance of power. A search for conceptual clarity* by Mumulla Naidu published in 1974.

¹⁴ E.g. *Theory of international politics* by Kenneth Waltz published in 1979.

¹⁵ See G. Snyder, *Alliance theory: a neorealist first cut* [in:] *The evolution of theory in international relations*, R. Rothstein (ed.), Columbia 1991, p. 83.

¹⁶ The description of this approach is presented in the book from 1976 entitled *Collective security and defence organizations in the changing world coalitions* by Ümit Bayülken.

¹⁷ As an example – in the book from 1968 by Robert Osgood *Alliances and American Foreign Policy* there is a chapter entitled *The nature of Alliances*. On the other hand, the work by Bruce Don *Allies and Adversaries: Policy Insights Into Strategic Defense Relationship* from 1986, while describing internal relations of NATO, and those between North Atlantic Treaty and Warsaw Pact, introduces a definition of allies, opponents, and also inter-alliance and intra-alliance models.

¹⁸ B. Balcerowicz, *Sojusz a obrona narodowa* [Alliance and National Defense], Warsaw 1999, p. 39.

¹⁹ *Nations in Alliance: The Limits of Interdependence* includes two main parts that describe the issues of the reasons of aligning and reorganization of alliances, cohesion of alliances, and their effectiveness (*Patterns and Principles*), as well as the arrangement of alliances, non-alignment and neutrality, and the future of alliances (*Trends and Policies*).

“the result is not a system, but exclusively a kind of systematised discussion, it’s not a theory, but only theoretizing on what has been, is or might be”²⁰. Without a doubt, a very important set of theoretical analysis on alliances is a book *Alliance in International Politics* published in 1970, in which all the previous crucial studies on the issue were bound, including those by G. Liska²¹, H. Morgenthau²², K. Holsti²³, Karl Deutsch, and Morton Kaplan²⁴ together with some texts created at that time, including the chapters by Julian Friedman²⁵, Christopher Bladen²⁶ or Steven Rosen²⁷. The study *Unity and Disintegration in International Alliances: Comparative Studies* from 1973 edited by Ole Holsti, P. Terrence Hopmann, and Johna Sullivan²⁸ should also be mentioned. The discussed issues appear also, but in a limited scope, in part of the academic books on the theory of international relations²⁹. Among the Polish researchers, the theoretical side of alliances between the subjects of international relations was not widely covered in the academic publication on international relations theory. Nevertheless, a position worth mentioning is a book published in 2000 by Janusz Stefanowicz *Anatomia*

²⁰ G. Liska, *Nations in Alliance. The Limits of Interdependence*, Baltimore 1962, p. vii.

²¹ The article *Alignments and Realignment*s is devoted to factors that determine entry into alliance or withdrawal due to an establishment of a new covenant.

²² The essay *Alliances* looks into alliances in the context of the balance of power.

²³ The chapter entitled *Diplomatic Coalitions and Military Alliances* takes up on the reasons for establishing alliances and tensions that lead to their disruptions.

²⁴ The study *The Limits of International Coalitions* describes the reality of alliances in the bipolar era, including the role of the non-aligned states, optimum number of members within the structure, and also the process of “bargaining” between the blocs.

²⁵ The article *Alliance in International Politics* is dedicated to the issue of choosing allies and alliance solidarity, and also to the goals of alignment and the function of alliances in the international relations.

²⁶ The text *Alliance and Integration* concentrates on the question whether a durable alliance leads to integration of partners.

²⁷ The study *A Model of War and Alliance* is dedicated to the functioning of relations established during an armed conflict.

²⁸ In the field of interest of the authors of *Unity and Disintegration in International Alliances: Comparative Studies* are, among others: up to date theoretical explanations related to creation, disruption, functioning, and result of alliances (Chapter I), as well as the empirical research dedicated to the creation of alliances and the inter and intra-alliance relations during the Napoleonic wars, II World War, and the Cold War confrontations (Chapters from II to VI).

²⁹ See M. Nicholson, *Formal Theories in International Relations*, Cambridge 1990; J. Goldstein, *International Relations*, New York 1994; M. Donelan, *Elements of International Political Theory*, Oxford 1990.

polityki międzynarodowej (The Anatomy of International Politics) where one of the chapters is entitled *Systemy sojusznicze* (Alliance Systems)³⁰.

4. Alliances *sensu stricte* and *sensu largo*

“The modern literature on political science provides many definitions of alliances; those definitions vary, but are not contradictory. Two groups among those should be differentiated, one is more strict and classical, the other one is wider, modern, and perhaps more of the future”³¹. Through the *sensu stricte*, alliances we understand as “relations of two or more states based on the allied agreement, established to combine the military, political and economic forces and to settle a common action in predicting a threat (aggression) from the third party (third parties)”³². The military character of the relations between subjects is crucial, and therefore this category of alliances includes: non-aggression pacts, defence pacts, unilateral guarantees and collective security pacts”. On the other hand, the *sensu largo* alliance is “a coalition of states that coordinate their actions, to implement a goal”³³. Combination of solidary efforts can have peaceful reasons and be based on the common or complimentary political aims of the allies. According to the wider definition of alliances, this category binds practically every form of international cooperation of states, including, next to the aforementioned military alliances, also diplomatic coalitions, friendship and cooperation pacts, federations and confederations, personal and real unions, intergovernmental international organizations, supranational organizations, and strategic partnerships. A common denominator for both mentioned approaches is definitely the cooperational character of the relations between the subjects, and also, a response to the actual or potential challenge that surpasses the independent capabilities of each of them. States decide to undertake the international commitments only when they are not able to face the problems by culminating its own potential³⁴,

³⁰ Among the issues presented in this part of the essay, the most important seem to be: the introduction of the definitions of alliances, their function and typology.

³¹ J. Stefanowicz, op.cit., p. 127.

³² *Sojusze międzynarodowe* [International Relations] [in:] *Mały słownik stosunków międzynarodowych* [Small Dictionary of International Relations], G. Michałowska (ed.), Warsaw 1996, p. 221.

³³ J. Goldstein, op.cit., p. 80.

³⁴ B. Don, *Allies and Adversaries: Policy Insights into Strategic Defense Relationship*, Santa Monica 1986, p. 18.

and the power of coalition surpasses the simple sum of the resources of each of the allies³⁵. Therefore, in the below essay, the *sensu largo* definition will be used.

5. Definition of Strategic Partnership in the Political Science

The strategic partnership, despite of its popularity in the practice of modern diplomacy and in mass media, has not yet been given a reliable theoretical analysis. The majority of available studies focus on the description of the particular special relation in the historical perspective. Its authors, either are limiting themselves to a very shortened theoretical introduction³⁶, or to the approached issue as to as generally known category and do not give its understanding *expresis verbis*. What is characteristic, pursued research showed only two encyclopaedic positions that include the issue³⁷, and moreover, the only Polish language study dedicated to the above mentioned subject numbers only several pages³⁸. A little more light was cast by the Ukrainian research centres' studies³⁹, but also there,

³⁵ M. Nicholson, *op.cit.*, 123.

³⁶ See R. Stemplowski, *Następny krok w strategicznym partnerstwie polsko-litewskim* [The Next Step in the Strategic Polish-Lithuanian Partnership], "Polski Przegląd Dyplomatyczny" [Polish Diplomatic Review] 2001, No. 2; S. Burant, *Stosunki polsko-ukraińskie a idea strategicznego partnerstwa* [Polish-Ukrainian Relations and the Idea of Strategic Partnership], Warsaw 2000; I. Гуцуляк, *Еволюція польсько-українського стратегічного партнерства*, "Zeszyty Naukowe Doktorantów. Litwa-Rosja-Ukraina-Polska" [Doctoral Research Papers. Lithuania-Russia-Ukraine-Poland] 2007, No. 1; L. Osieńska, *Polskie a ukraińskie pojmowanie partnerstwa strategicznego między Warszawą a Kijowem* [Polish and Ukrainian Understanding of Strategic Partnership between Warsaw and Kiev], "Dialogi polityczne" [Political Dialogues] 2007, No. 8.

³⁷ See G. Berridge, A. James, *A Dictionary of Diplomacy*, Basingstoke 2003, p. 251; J. Sutor, *Leksykon dyplomatyczny* [Lexicon of Diplomacy], Warsaw 2010, p. 411.

³⁸ See K. Bałon, *Co to jest partnerstwo strategiczne?* [What is Strategic Partnership?], "Biuletyn Polskiego Instytutu Spraw Międzynarodowych" [Bulletin of the Polish Institute of International Affairs] 2001, No. 34, pp. 411–419.

³⁹ The complex research, together with the public opinion, polls, and the round table meeting between the politicians of all the parties of the Ukrainian parliament was conducted in 2000 by the Ukrainian Centre for Economic & Political Studies named after Olexander Razumkov. It concluded with a definition of the issue together with the conditions that must exist for the tool to be applied and the rules of its use. See *Strategic Partners of Ukraine: Declarations and Realities*, "National Security & Defence" 2000, No. 12, http://www.razumkov.org.ua/eng/files/category_journal/NSD12_eng.pdf [Access date: 28.02.2011]. Also worth mentioning are: 3. Щербара, *Концептуальні засади стратегічного партнерства*, <http://mev.lac.lviv.ua/downloads/vyklad/scherb/stat/3.pdf> [Access date: 22.03.2011];

the issue that predominates the general subject, is the analysis of the tools in the foreign policy perspective.

In reference to the aforementioned, in order to create the theoretical category of strategic partnership, the output of a related scientific discipline – economics⁴⁰ – was mainly used. A common denominator that was set based on the existing theoretical studies of political scientists and economists, was confronted with a semantic meaning of the words creating the name of the institution and empirical examples of generally acknowledged special relations. This way, the definition of special relations on the ground of political studies was created: strategic partnership is a bilateral relation, characterized by simultaneously the institutional flexibility⁴¹ and exceptional closeness, and intensiveness of relations between subjects that keep their legal sovereignty⁴², that are convinced about

Ю. Седляр, *Теоретичні засади стратегічного партнерства*, http://www.nbuv.gov.ua/portal/Soc_Gum/Npchdu/Politology/2002_12/12-28 [Access date: 22.03.2011]; І. Жовква, *Стратегічне партнерство у зовнішній політиці України: Автореф. дис. канд. політ. наук*, <http://disser.com.ua/contents/17880.html> [Access date: 22.03.2011]; Б. Тарасюк, *Практика стратегічного партнерства випереджає теорію*, http://www.ieac.org.ua/index.php?id=4&ch_id=32&ar_id=270&as=0 [Access date: 22.03.2011]; М. Пашков, *Реалії та перспективи стратегічного партнерства*, “Дзеркало тижня” 2000, http://www.razumkov.org.ua/ukr/article.php?news_id=106 [Access date: 22.03.2011]; О. Знахоренко, *Стратегічне партнерство в українсько-польських відносинах: Автореф. дис. канд. політ. наук*, <http://disser.com.ua/content/44577.html> [Access date: 22.03.2011].

⁴⁰ In the conduct of the research, taken into consideration were: special relations of states (political science), public-private partnership (management), civil partnership (social science, psychology), strategic alliances of enterprises (economy), but only the last one has sufficient number of similarities to conduct the analogy.

⁴¹ The basis for strategic partnership is usually a non-binding declaration (but even this is not necessary), that gives both subject facility of entering and withdrawing from the abovementioned pacts or of their temporal suspension. After each of the joint actions, the subjects can continue, disengage, suspend or cease cooperation without any consequences to their legal personality and capability to function in the international environment.

⁴² Even though the parties have close relations, each of the subjects is inevitably influencing the other, even though they try to preserve as much autonomy as possible. The potential common bodies do not become a subject of mutual competences which are connected with executive sovereign powers. Cooperation on the fields described in the agreement does not negate freedom, nor competition in other fields. While resigning from full rivalry for cooperation, states choose the middle option, which is neither full dependency, nor full autonomy.

the integrity of their strategic goals, and therefore decide to cooperate on the long-term basis⁴³ to implement them.

In the article, a distinction between the formal and the material aspect⁴⁴ of strategic partnership, which was formed by Krzysztof Bałon, was taken. “In the formal approach, the strategic partnerships equals the relations between subjects, that are named this way by their representatives. It includes all types of declarations issued during the official meetings, declarations included in the signed agreements, statements issued during the interviews, in TV, radio, press, etc”⁴⁵. Material special relations are relations between partners that, in spite of issued statements, fulfil some objective premises – it acquires constitutive features that differentiate it from other forms of international cooperation.

In the literature on the issue, the most often used interchangeable terms are: strategic partnership, strategic alliance, strategic cooperation, close partnership, special relations/particular relations. Because of the fact that their mutual relation has not been adjudicated, all those terms are treated as synonymous in the below essay.

6. The Constitutive Features of the Strategic Partnerships in Political Studies

To mark out the constitutive features of the issue, the definitions and considerations existing in the political science literature on the strategic partnership were used, together with a more general category of alliances, and also available texts of declarations establishing special relations between states. Moreover, the analogies to economic alliances were used.

As a result of the research, four sufficient conditions were distinguished that combined prove the existence of the material strategic partnership between states.

⁴³ The condition of long-term relations is connected with the nature of the long-term strategic goals. Cooperation lasting for many years positively influences the creation of other attributes of the strategic partnership: common understanding and mutual trust.

⁴⁴ An alternative differentiation was created by the Ukrainian researcher Julia Sedliar, who proposed a distinction between theoretical and practical dimension of the issue. According to her: “The theoretical dimension includes a conceptual evolution of the theoretical basis of partnership; practical – study on the effective mechanism for its fulfilment [translated by the author]”. Седляр, *Теоретичні засади стратегічного партнерства*, p. 157.

⁴⁵ K. Bałon, op.cit., p. 413.

First of all, as a result of the semantic meaning of the researched issue, relations between subjects should possess a partner character. Unfortunately, the literature on the subjects does not give a single generally accepted indicator of the equal position of partners. Some scientists highlight the bilateral voluntary character of the established agreement⁴⁶, whereas others the mutual dependency, in which each of the subject has an advantage over the other in some fields of cooperation⁴⁷, or the differences between the potentials do not surpass the level that could inevitably lead to the unilateral supremacy⁴⁸. Nevertheless, none of the above propositions meet the condition of measurement. The risk of dependency, as a result of the asymmetric potentials, can not serve as an indicator, because, there is no set pattern measuring the potential of a state. On the other hand, the voluntary entrance into the strategic alliance can be proved only on the official level – through the lack of the openly stated ultimatum, but that also seem like an unsatisfactory solution. Because of the above, the equality of the subjects is identified with the mutual respect⁴⁹, that is expressed in the consideration of the opinions and interests of the other side. Finally, being conscious of the partiality of this assumption, the indicator for the partnership character of the relations is the performance of constant and crisis/occasional high level consultancies – between heads of: states, governments and diplomacies.

The crucial understanding of material special relations possesses the convergence of strategic goals⁵⁰ of states, that can be sought for in the official documents on foreign and security policy, like prime minister's expose, the state's national security strategies or landmark parliament's resolutions. Usually, the allies take up the cooperation with different proportion of goals a) equal; b) different but compatible⁵¹; c) different but non-excluding and d) utterly contradictory.

⁴⁶ See *Strategic partners of Ukraine*, p. 21.

⁴⁷ See Знахоренко, *Стратегічне партнерство в українсько-польських відносинах*.

⁴⁸ See Гуиуляк, *Еволюція польсько-українського стратегічного партнерства*, p. 164.

⁴⁹ See A. Зленко, *Стратегічне партнерство – не кліш*, “День” 2000, <http://www.day.kiev.ua/290619?idsource=49157&mainlang=ukr> [Access date: 22.03.2011].

⁵⁰ Understood, for the first time, as goals coming from the clearly formulated strategy of national development, therefore, it included the most important national documents. Secondly, in reference to the distinction proposed by Glenn Snyder between the innate, strategic and reputation interests as instrumental values, where relevance is attributed not to the fulfilment level, but to the input in implementation of its goals. See A. Dybczyński, *op.cit.*, pp. 60–65.

⁵¹ Some of compatible priorities can evolve into more general, common goals.

To establish a strategic cooperation, it is enough to find one priority, that is expressed by subjects in an equal or similar way. No less important for the parties is not to have interests that are utterly contradictory, especially such interest that are crucial from the partners' perspective⁵².

Convergent strategic goals are without a doubt a starting point to form special relations. It is inevitable for both partners to possess a conviction that combining the efforts and cooperation increases the chance of implementing those goals⁵³. An evidence of existence of this conviction is an act of signing the declaration establishing a strategic partnership between parties. A recognition of a particular relation as a strategic⁵⁴, is manifested in a mutual designation of bilateral relations by "special name" in the aforementioned, the most important states documents and devoting in it more space to the second party in comparison to what is reserved for the other partners.

The last and equally important condition sufficient to call a relation a strategic partnership is the presence of authentic and long-term cooperation between the parties. Assuming that only a high level of specific provisions demonstrate that strategic partnership really functions, it is inevitable to have a document signed by states. A document that will operationalise the declarations and compliment it in the main fields of cooperation and close specific actions. On the other hand, a long-term relation is achieved through a recurrence and deepening of the close cooperation, therefore through establishing successive operational plans.

The perfect model of special relations provides for the existence of the three necessary conditions.

In the first place, partner's relations should demonstrate a privilege and intensity that surpasses the typical for both subjects level of enclosed relations with the third parties. This uniqueness should be apparent mainly in the impressive amount of high level meetings⁵⁵. Equally important is the preference in economic

⁵² Even the interests that are contradictory in the beginning, can become convergent through cooperation (through the establishment of common ground or ignoring the differences), particularly when they take different positions in the hierarchy of importance (the issue that is crucial for one party, has a marginal meaning to the other). Nevertheless, to make it possible, the quantity and importance of common goals has to surpass it.

⁵³ Two factors influence a decision of establishing a strategic cooperation: possession of knowledge about common goals, and recognition that the partner's resources and assets are highly helpful in their achievement.

⁵⁴ It poses crucial meaning (strategic consequences) from the subject's perspective.

⁵⁵ The comparison should concern only "face to face" talks that take place during a bilateral meeting or on the side of a multilateral forum (if those were clearly marked).

relations, and that includes: high trade, significant investment cooperation and no boundaries in the access to the partner's national market.

In the second place, there should be an advanced institutionalization of mutual relations between partners, both on interstate and inter-human level. What proves the highly developed infrastructure that provides continuity of relation and facilitates seeking for both long term, and temporary convergent positions, renders: establishing common bodies⁵⁶, and military units settlement of regular consultancy mechanisms, but also cooperation between local units, cultural cooperation and youth and academic exchange.

Third necessary condition is the nationwide sympathies that lead to the creation of relations similar to human friendship, which is based on trust and loyalty. It was assumed that the beneficial atmosphere of bilateral relations is formed by positive experiences within the last 100 years⁵⁷ and good practice in solving the contemporary conflicts. Issues in the bilateral relations should, first of all, not be transferred into the interstate relations⁵⁸, therefore should be solved currently and on the technical level (of the embassies and particular chancelleries, common for institutions). Secondly, should not refer to cases, that at least one of the party considered to be priority (including this issue in the official documents on the foreign and security policy).

As the results, seven constitutive features of the researched issue were set below: 1. partnership character of the relation, 2: convergence of strategic goals of parties, 3. mutual conviction that combining the efforts increases the probability of implementing cohesive strategic goals, 4. authentic and long-term cooperation in order to fulfil the common goals, 5. preference and intensity of contacts that surpasses the ordinary level (for those states) of closeness with other partners, 6. highly developed infrastructure of relations, 7. positive atmosphere of bilateral relations.

To sum up, strategic partnership, responding to the condition of the international scene (forced by the globalization and the end of the Cold War) is a tool of foreign policy of states, that combines both durability and flexibility.

⁵⁶ Such as: interstate councils (commissions) under the leadership of the head of states or governments, interstate bodies preparing decisions in the main fields of the partnership, and bilateral work groups of experts.

⁵⁷ Includes mainly examples of waging war and establishing alliance treaties.

⁵⁸ Should not be a subject of the official summit talks.

Maria Pobóg-Lenartowicz, Karolina Rojek

Opole University, Poland

DISINTEGRATION TENDENCIES IN THE CONTEMPORARY INTERNATIONAL ORDER. SEPARATISM, SECESSION, REVOLUTION

ABSTRACT

The processes of separation and unification of states and state systems are permanent elements in international relations. Alongside national development, the ethnic factor became another cause for both integration, as well as fragmentation of states. Nowadays, in Europe and in the world both tendencies appear. We are dealing with aspirations to unify, to focus on shared values, and parallel – to emphasise separateness and separate identity in external relations and inside multinational states. This article concentrates on the disintegration tendencies in the contemporary international order: separatisms, secessions and revolutions.

Key words

international order, globalisation, revolution, secession, separatism

1. Introduction

“People rebel not when there the system is the most repressive, but when the situation improves. It is the moment when a question arises: If the situation may be somewhat better, why can’t it be a lot better?”¹ – this thought, expressed by Edward Wnuk-Lipiński in a conversation devoted to the issue of revolution, may constitute a cause for deliberations on the nature, causes, and diverse aspects of contemporary processes and events, which affect the shape of the contemporary international order. On the one hand, in spite of frequent conflicts scattered

¹ K. Janowska, P. Mucharski, *Rozmowy na koniec wieku III* [Discussions at the End of Century III], Cracow 1999.

across the entire world, we are in the habit of saying, in Europe at least, that we live in the age of peace – in the world of the UN and the EU, during a period of stability, durable international solutions that uphold it, and peaceful cooperation between nations, in the age, when essential human rights, including minority rights, are the standard. However, since things are so well, then why in the recent years successive regions of the world are shaken by more and more violent riots, why are analysts sounding the alarm, announcing further threats and forecasting new disruptions of the world order, and why does the feeling of social unrest and continuous uncertainty, which has been announced by Anthony Giddens as one of main indicators of the age of “late modernity”², affect the residents of larger and larger number of countries? After all, equally true is the statement that the contemporary times bring about not only the economic crisis, but also an increase in instability on the international arena, and the “clash of civilizations”, long ago heralded by Huntington, takes much more extensive and multifaceted dimensions.

In what way then do various conditions and events affect the development of the international order, the international political arena, and the global economic world order? To what extent does the continuous tendency to “rebel” in societies arise from an aspiration to “better things,” and to what extent is it a fight for the bare minimum, necessary for survival? What triggers more or less peaceful public demonstrations that crop up around the world? What character do they take? And, most of all, what are the occurrences that disturb the international order in this context and how can we characterise them? Generally speaking, what are we dealing with? These are the questions that we will try to address in this study by presenting different theoretical positions and views.

As a starting point for analysis, we shall characterise the notion of the international order, its understanding in the past and today, the factors that influence it, as well as the shape it assumes in the political science discourse. Thus we shall establish the main framework to describe the international order, historical events that shaped it, and the laws that guarantee it. We will also discuss the threats which may cause a destabilisation of the international order.

Next, we will proceed to discuss particular kinds of threats, which are connected with popular riots against the existing order, and which may result in the disruption of the social order, not only in a given region, but also worldwide. We will concentrate on the two main directions – firstly, on separatist and

² A. Giddens, *Nowoczesność i tożsamość* [*Modernity and Self-identity*, Stanford 1991], Warsaw 2010.

secessionist aspirations, which are present among nations and ethnic groups, and secondly, on the issues of revolution.

In the course of the study, we shall devote some thought to the nature of secessionism and separatism, making a distinction between these two notions and describing their most important features. We will determine what place separatism and secessionism occupies in the contemporary international law and in state policies. Finally, we shall discuss different causes of separatist and secessionist aspirations, trying to find those which dominate in the contemporary separatisms.

A polar opposite to separatist and secessionist movements, in terms of intensity of the social movement, are revolutions. We will consider the nature of this type of popular riots, its essence, diverse causes, kinds and possible courses. We will present various definitions of a revolution and the theoretical views on the analysis of this phenomenon. Finally, we shall ponder whether revolutions cause only disintegration in the world order, or whether perhaps they can also have some positive aspects.

It is worthwhile to consider (although it is a topic for a different study) to what extent the transformations and phenomena which we observe presently cause disintegration in the contemporary world order. This is because, in many cases, it seems that this kind of sine wave is also a permanent element of the geopolitical reality. Because of that, we will try to consider to what extent can these processes distort the shape of the international political arena, and to what extent they are permanently set in the social reality. Although it sounds like a paradox, one thing is certain – the contemporary international order is more and more characterised by instability, liquidity, and unpredictability. However, in this context it is all the more worthwhile to seek frameworks and grounds to create basic notional and definitional outlines for this changeable social reality.

2. The Issue of the International Order

The notion of “order” was introduced when man started to seek the meaning of the world history. For centuries, numerous thinkers and philosophers substantiated human dreams and longing for the ideals of goodness, beauty, and truth. While creating their philosophical systems, they sought confirmation in the existing order, in social life on a smaller or larger scale.

Confucius stated that only proceeding in accordance with the divine right may ensure eternal peace in the country. Thus, one was obliged to learn about the world in order to improve himself, his family, and his state. In the 13th century,

St Thomas of Aquin explained the need for living in harmony with nature by achieving individual prosperity through aspiring for the prosperity of a community. In times of the Enlightenment, English philosopher John Locke explained that the social order and all laws are based on reason and a social contract³.

Immanuel Kant in his work *Perpetual Peace* based the universal order on a moral imperative called the “categorical imperative”. According to this theory, man is a being that thinks in practical categories and it is possible to achieve the state of “perpetual peace” only by awakening conscience both in single individuals, as well as in entire nations and state leaders. According to this moral law, one should avoid, or straight-out eliminate, contradictions in words and actions. However, the condition of accomplishing this goal was to apply a specific code of moral and legal norms in relation to state actions. Among these norms Kant included: rejecting secret clauses in peace treaties, non-disturbance of the existence of “any independent state”, a ban on borrowing money for waging wars with other states, unlawfulness of imposing political systems on states, and, finally, following the “conditions of universal hospitality”⁴.

Apart from the abovementioned ideas, there were many other philosophers and thinkers, who considered various aspects of the social order. Most generally, they defined “order” mostly as the opposite of chaos, anarchy, disorder, egoism, violence, and destruction. In the positive sense, they identified order with internal cohesion and balance between particular parts of a given system⁵.

The history of international relations provides many examples of order and chaos. From time immemorial, an aspiration to overcome chaos is a natural aspiration of the international community, which strives to establish international order in the form of a political order. Building order based on the authority, power, and prestige was attempted by combing ideas with legal norms and codes of conduct, and by creating institutions and frameworks for political activity.

As a result of World War II and the escalation of threats connected with weapons of mass destruction, the concept of the right to peace was developed in the field of law and politics. In this respect, the Charter of the United Nations and numerous other resolutions and declarations of the UN were quoted.

³ J. Kukułka, *Wstęp do nauki o stosunkach międzynarodowych* [Introduction to the Study of International Relations], Warsaw 2003, pp. 225–226.

⁴ I. Kant, *O wiecznym pokoju* [*Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch*, 1795], Wrocław 1995.

⁵ *Ład międzynarodowy* [International Order], *Stosunki Międzynarodowe*, <http://stosunki-miedzynarodowe.pl/sloownik/59-2011-01-28-16-50-11/592-lad-miedzynarodowy> [Access date: 30.06.2013].

Theoreticians also started to talk and write about different types of international order – political, legal, economic, cultural, ecological, informational, and others. One should emphasize that in the UNESCO, which has been the entity most interested in that topic, international order is mainly understood as the “organised system of international relations” or also as “a system of set relations between the participants of the international life”. Additionally, international order is seen as a “specific system of values accepted by the community of states”⁶.

According to Józef Kukułka, “international order is based on the international law and the international system. In turn, political order means the balance of certain relations on the global scale, balancing and concurrence of positions of states, as well as a state of organisation of the international co-existence”⁷.

At the basis of comprehending international order there was a belief that the contemporary international order includes diverse realities, interests, and aspirations, which are mutually interdependent in influencing the changeability and dynamics of a given order. Hence one may conclude that all types of international order that are possible to distinguish are interdependent and are mutually conditioning themselves in their existence and functioning.

The Westphalian order was regarded as the first document on international order in the modern times. The Peace of Westphalia of 1648 which ended the Thirty Years’ War, initiated new order in Europe, based on principles of political equilibrium and was confirmed in all treaties until the Great French Revolution. A subsequent new order, stabilising international relations in Europe, was established in 1815 at the Congress of Vienna. A trio of powers, “the Holy Alliance”, safeguarded that order. A distinctive feature of that period were the alternating periods of stability and turbulence. International cooperation was disturbed by contradictory interests, crises, and armed conflicts⁸.

At the Versailles Conference after World War I, global powers formulated the principles of the new international order by sanctioning the *status quo*. They created a system of collective security that restricted the right to engage in war,

⁶ W. Malendowski, *Nowy ład międzynarodowy* [New International Order] [in:] *Stosunki międzynarodowe* [International Relations], W. Malendowski, Cz. Mojsiewicz (eds.), Wrocław 2004, p. 230.

⁷ J. Kukułka, *Historia współczesna stosunków międzynarodowych 1945–2000* [The Modern History of International Relations 1945–2000], Warsaw 2001, p. 35.

⁸ R. Fontaine, D.M. Kliman, *International Order and Global Swing States*, Center for Strategic & International Studies, http://csis.org/files/publication/TWQ_13Winter_FontaineKliman.pdf [Access date: 15.06.2013].

compelled to peacefully solve international disputes, and applied sanctions against states that commit acts of aggression. The League of Nations, established in 1919, was supposed to oversee the undisturbed functioning of the new order. However, the system proved to be ineffective, which was one of the reasons for its collapse⁹.

After World War II, the international order was a consequence of the binary division into two systems: socialism (the East) and capitalism (the West). In spite of significant differences between the East and the West, both sub-systems were built and functioned in a similar manner. Both the East, as well as the West, were “constructed” around one superpower with a group of satellite states interconnected politically, economically, and militarily. A fundament of this order was the dominance and rivalry between the two powers: the United States and the Soviet Union. An additional component securing the balance of power between the two blocs was a huge disproportion in military and economic strength between the superpowers and their allies. This difference was the reason why any changes or shifts in the sub-systems did not exert any significant impact on the balance of forces in the global scale.

Apart from intra-bloc structures (the NATO, the COMECON, the Warsaw Pact) the superpowers created institutions that governed relations between individual subsystems. In this context, the United Nations established in 1945 was particularly important. It became one of the most important platforms for political settling and resolving conflicts between the East and the West, and, in a later period, also between the North and the South. Parallel to actions taken within the framework of the UN, both powers supplemented the Yalta order with additional elements that reduced the risk of global confrontation. Most of all, they strived to reduce the threat of using nuclear weapons. The USSR and the USA, as well as other countries possessing such weaponry, signed a series of agreements and treaties for that purpose including: Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (1968), Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water (1963), and the Agreement on the Prevention of Nuclear War (1973). Admittedly, the international order created after World War II saved mankind from a global confrontation with the use of

⁹ S. Lechner, *Equality, Authority, and the Locus of International Order*, Webpapers on Constitutionalism & Governance beyond the State, https://www.wiso.uni-hamburg.de/fileadmin/sowi/politik/governance/ConWeb_Papers/conweb1-2007.pdf [Access date: 15.06.2013].

nuclear weapons, however, it did not resolve mutual antagonisms and rivalry between the East and the West¹⁰.

This multilevel rivalry went down in history as the Cold War. It was defined “as the state of permanent hostility and mistrust and a struggle predominantly characterised by tension and confrontation between the two political and economic systems”¹¹. The Cold War ended with the breakdown of the bipolar system, which was preceded by the crisis and destruction of worldwide communism. It triggered a chain reaction, which resulted in the disintegration of the structures of the real socialism, the Autumn of Nations, and the German reunification. COMECON and the Warsaw Pact were disbanded (on May 23, 1991 and July 1, 1991, respectively). The progressing disintegration of state structures of the Soviet Union in the years 1990–1991 caused its formal collapse (December 26, 1991). One of the two poles of the bipolar system ceased to function. The end of the Cold War was simultaneously the end of a certain period in history of international relations connected with the Yalta order.

“With the end of the Cold War, the elegant simplicity of a bipolar world disappeared. A disarray of nations surfaced from the Yalta order. The rules and regularities disappeared. International institutions faced a crisis and were forced to adapt their role to a new situation. The new world order disappeared even before any real action was taken in order to establish it. Globalization and interdependence faced fragmentation of states and the Balkanization of the world. (...) International politics appears to be dominated by a conviction that old demons will once again start dancing on their graves”¹² – this quote from Carlo Jean very well describes the reality after the Cold War. Entering the 21st century, we stand before a world with a very complex system of relations between various regions, societies, organizations, and movements, which guard their interests both through rivalry and cooperation. In addition, a characteristic feature of our times is the extremely fast pace of events that imposes the need for exceptional flexibility in accommodating oneself to new developments. It is necessary, if one wants to exert at least some degree of control over the course of events. At this point a question emerges: how to describe the contemporary international order

¹⁰ A. Nowak, *Międzynarodowy ład pokojowy po II wojnie światowej* [International Peacetime Order after World War II] [in:] *Współczesne stosunki międzynarodowe* [Modern International Relations], T. Łoś-Nowak (ed.), Wrocław 1993, pp. 157–162.

¹¹ *International Order and the Future of World Politics*, T. Paul, J. Hall (eds.), Cambridge 1999, p. 101.

¹² C. Jean, *Geopolityka* [Geopolitics], Wrocław 2003, p. 24.

and whether the possibility of building an alternative model actually exists. Of course, in such uncontrollably changing international environment, “creating models” may be considered only hypothetically – they are only theoretical structures.

Initially, the disintegration of the Eastern bloc created a situation that seemed like a monopole of the United States. Therefore, the first of the considered models is the hegemonic system. It was connected with perceiving the US as the only superpower which survived and is able to establish a world order. Until now, in history, we did not deal with a full monopoly that would encompass the entire world, although such a role was played by the Roman empire and China in their respective parts of the world. While constructing this model, it was assumed that in the surrounding of the United States some states would be awarded a special status and their role and relations with the hegemonic leader would have a different, privileged character. The European Union, Russia, Japan, and China would belong to that group¹³. However, due to a constant evolution of the international order, monopolistic aspirations met resistance around the world. Numerous politicians accused and are accusing the United States of hegemonism and not respecting the rules of democracy and partnership in international relations. After commencing the invasion on Iraq without the UN approval (called a “preventive war” by the Washington), many analysts and politicians accuse the USA of unilateralism and impiety towards multilateral international commitments, which were, after all, established due to American initiatives. It is possible to notice the American unilateralism also in its abandonments, e.g. in the withdrawal from the treaty establishing the International Criminal Court. This makes it impossible to call to account and punish the American soldiers who participate in missions outside the borders of the United States. Another example is the withdrawal from the Kyoto Protocol. The American industry does not need to incur the costs of industry modernization, even though it is one of the biggest producers of greenhouse gasses in the world. The United States still remain a global leader, but their dominance is not as absolute as it may have seemed just a few years ago.

Contemporary world divided itself. Every now and then we hear about the outbreaks of new conflicts, and new players have entered the scene of international relations – transnational corporations, which are able to significantly alter

¹³ E. Stadtmüller, *Międzynarodowy ład polityczny* [International Political Order] [in:] *Problemy polityczne współczesnego świata* [Political Problems of the Contemporary World], Z. Cesarz, E. Stadtmüller (eds.), Wrocław 2000, p. 37.

the shape of reality. The contemporary international order became multipolar, that is, full of disquiet and uncertainty. The United States must take into account other states aspiring for the role of a superpower – Brazil, Russia, India, and China (unofficially called the BRIC countries). These states already play the role of economic centres of the world, but they want to improve their political potential. The current reality is manifold and changeable. On the international arena it is hard to find the balance between competition and maintaining national cohesion. The world faces new challenges and numerous threats – new, or previously existing. They include:

1. Threats of the destruction of mankind in the event of a nuclear war;
2. Inadequate protection of the natural environment;
3. Fast population growth on the global scale;
4. Problem with feeding mankind;
5. Growing differences between the economically developed countries and developing countries;
6. Increase in the pace of depleting of finite resources;
7. International terrorism¹⁴.

These are the global problems. In terms of globalisation processes, one may speak of the “butterfly effect”, according to which, even slight modifications of economic processes or the state of environment, comparable to a movement of butterfly wings, may bring global consequences. Moreover, the everyday life of local communities is more and more conditioned by global events. Globalisation appeared gradually, but with extreme impact, especially in such fields, as economics, politics, religion, art, architecture, and sociology¹⁵. At present, attention is paid mostly to the interest of particular states; there is no place for idealistic thinking. The states do not engage into actions that may in any way harm their national interests.

Nowadays, the competition between states has an economic, rather than military, character. The rich “North” does not want to help the poor “South” anymore, stating that development in those regions is obstructed with political instability, corruption, baby boom, and bureaucratic ineptitude. Yet, the poor “South” continues to ask for help in the sake of solidarity (“the white man’s

¹⁴ Cz. Mojsiewicz, *Problemy globalne ludzkości* [Global Problems of Humanity] [in:] *Stosunki międzynarodowe* [International relations], W. Malendowski, Cz. Mojsiewicz (eds.), Wrocław 2004, p. 228.

¹⁵ A. Zieliński, *O globalizacji sceptycznie* [Sceptically on Globalisation], “Przegląd Europejski” [European Review] 2001, No. 2, p. 151.

burden”)¹⁶. However, the assistance from the International Monetary Fund or the World Bank deepens the dependence of those states on the highly industrialised donors. Poor and backward states are subject to disintegration. The states that are rich and integrated with the world economy seek maximum independence and do not wish to be burdened with the weight of national solidarity.

It appears that we are still in the middle of a certain transitional phase. The international order continues to evolve, it is unusually dynamic, and it is hard to predict what will happen next. George Friedman in his book *The Next 100 Years. A Forecast for the 21st Century* thinks, that “The twenty-first century will be like all other centuries. There will be wars, there will be poverty, there will be triumphs and defeats. There will be tragedy and good luck. People will go to work, make money, have children, fall in love, and come to hate. That is the one thing that is not cyclical. It is the permanent human condition. But the twenty-first century will be extraordinary in two senses: it will be the beginning of a new age, and it will see a new global power astride the world. That doesn’t happen very often”¹⁷. According to this forecast, we have an unusually difficult, but nevertheless interesting period before us. However, it is only a forecast and it does not necessarily have to be reflected in the future events.

3. Separatism, Secession – Definition

Because they influence the specific parameters of the geopolitical arena and the limits of movement of its players, separatist and secessionist aspirations are among the most characteristic transformations in the international order. Due to their character and consequences, among which the most important one is – whether or not particular aims are regarded as justified – the violation of a state’s territorial integrity, which, naturally, causes conflict. Those aspirations are a tinderbox both in the history of international relations and in the current relations between states and societies. Although it would seem that in the contemporary world – with disappearing political, economic, and cultural borders, with a stabilized political and legal situation on the international arena, normalised by numerous legal documents under the aegis of the UN (not exclusively), which are signed by a majority of states – the threat associated with separatist aims was weakened, this impression is, in fact, incorrect. European

¹⁶ C. Jean, *op.cit.*, p. 247.

¹⁷ G. Friedman, *Następne 100 lat. Prognoza na XXI wiek [The Next 100 Years: A Forecast for the 21st Century]*, New York 2007] Warsaw 2009, p. 28.

separatisms – most of which, at least, do not use terrorist methods anymore, are therefore less noticeable – presently go through rapid development of their ideas, as it is the case, with the Catalan separatism or the Flemish-Walloon relations in Belgium, for example. Next, whereas African or Asian separatisms, which often go unnoticed, being in the shadow of other problems of states on these continents, are a dozing volcano – several dozen of African states encompass hundreds of ethnic groups, and an attempt at secession by any of them, or an impression of dominance of particular groups may end as tragically as it was the case of the conflict in Rwanda almost twenty years ago.

In the paragraph above, we interchangeably used the concept of separatism and secession when referring to disintegration tendencies and actions aimed at assuring self-determination for dependent nations as a whole. However, at this point it is necessary to introduce a distinction between these two notions. Even though both notions have similar origins, there is a difference between them that is seemingly slight, but with far-reaching consequences when these aims are realised.

Separatism (from Latin *separatio* – dividing) denotes an aspiration to emerge from the whole, to highlight the separatness of one group from the others. Separatism may have cultural, religious, or any other character; however, it is most often identified with ethnic or national separatism. Thus, we shall define national separatism as an aspiration of a given national or ethnic group to independently decide their fate¹⁸. Very often separatism is defined in similar terms to secession – as an “aspiration of a given territory to separate from the state and create a separate state structure or join a neighbouring country”¹⁹. This aspiration, however, does not necessarily have to entail creating a separate state – for less radical separatists, achieving an appropriately vast autonomy is enough. This is exactly the main difference between separatism and secession. The second difference is the fact that even in a situation, in which separatists aspire to detach themselves from an existing state, they may at the same time aspire to join another, already existing state.

¹⁸ K. Czubocho, *Separatyzm etniczny w dobie praw człowieka – nowe wyzwanie dla państwa narodowego i społeczności międzynarodowej* [Ethnic Separatism in the Age of Human Rights – New Challenges for the National State and the International Community], Toruń 2012, p. 18.

¹⁹ T. Jerzak, *Separatyzm i terroryzm o podłożu etnicznym w Europie Zachodniej* [Ethnically-Based Separatism and Terrorism in the Western Europe], Portal Spraw Zagranicznych, <http://www.psz.pl/tekst-1132/Tadeusz-Jerzak-Separatyzm-i-terroryzm-o-podlozu-etnicznym-w-Europie-Zachodniej> [Access date: 3.07.2013].

Simultaneously, as it shows in the very name, ethnic/national separatism should be strongly connected with a social foundation, which bases aspirations of separateness on an existing population that we may describe as an ethnic group or a nation. This is the reason why separatism will be strongly connected with nationalism and its premises. Ethnic/national separatism should arise from an aspiration of the population to respect and maintain their tongue, culture (also political culture), tradition, and historical achievements. It will be significant when we shall later on discuss political and legal premises for justifying separatist aims.

Conversely, secession (from Latin *secessio* – withdrawal), according to James Crawford, will denote a process, in which a specific group is trying to separate from a state to which they belong and to create a new state²⁰. The author emphasises that it usually takes place as a result of the use of violence (or threats thereof), without consent of the state that previously owned that territory or governed that particular group. However, A. Pavković, emphasizing that secession may also occur peacefully, defines it as creating a new state by isolating a specific territory and its population, both of which were previously part of an existing state²¹. In every case, secession means the creation of a new, independent state, which goes beyond autonomy or connecting a territory to another state.

Moreover, secession, which, in general at least, is connected with pro-independence aims, in theory does not have to be connected with any nationalist move or an ethnic group. Causes of secession may be also economic or purely pragmatic. These aspects of the phenomenon will be discussed later.

4. Separatism and Secession in the Contemporary International Law

Separatist and secessionist aspirations usually meet with concern and negative attitude on the part of the players of the global political arena, as destabilizing the international order and disturbing the territorial integrity of existing states, and, quite often, peace. Newly established states must prepare for a long fight for gaining recognition from (even *de facto*) other states and international organizations. An exception to this is a situation, where the division takes place

²⁰ J. Crawford, *State Practice and International Law in Relations to Secession*, “British Yearbook of International Law” 1998, No. 1, pp. 85–117.

²¹ *Creating New States: Theory and Practice of Secession*, A. Pavković (ed.), Aldershot 2007, p. 5.

with the approval of the parent state or on the basis of treaties; however, this is remarkably rare. The abovementioned premises show that separatist and secessionist aims are viewed as a negative phenomenon in the international political and legal order.

Meanwhile, the contemporary international law does not forbid secession directly, and all the more, it does not formulate accusations towards separatist aspirations. On the contrary, it would seem – international acts emphasise the principle of the self-determination of nations as one of the fundamental rules that shape the contemporary world order. The Charter of the United Nations, as one of the aims of the UN, stipulates: “To develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples”²². The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights goes even further by saying in the very first article that “all peoples have the right of self-determination” and that “by virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development”²³.

This last regulation allows to state that all national groups are entitled not only to self-determination, understood as deciding their fate, ensuring potential for development potential and shaping political and social reality, but also to choose the form this reality is to assume in the formal and legal meaning. The widely understood “self-determination” can be considered in terms of autonomy and its scope within the framework of an already existing state. However, the last regulation on the freedom of determination of political status could point to the option of choosing a political and legal form, thus also enabling secession in the purpose of creating an independent state.

In practice, the interpretation of regulations of the international law does not go that far. The rights of nations of self-determination were created after World War II and in the age of decolonization; the contemporary political discourse influenced their ultimate meaning. Therefore, it became customary to interpret the regulations concerning self-determination of nations exclusively

²² Karta Narodów Zjednoczonych z dn. 25.06.1945 r., art. 2 [The Charter of the United Nations of June 25, 1945] Art. 2, UN Information Centre in Warsaw, http://www.unic.un.org.pl/dokumenty/karta_onz.php [Access date: 3.07.2013].

²³ Międzynarodowy Pakt Praw Obywatelskich i Politycznych z dn. 16.12.1966 r. [International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of December 16, 1966], Art. 1, Internetowy System Aktów Prawnych, <http://isap.sejm.gov.pl/DetailsServlet?id=WDU19770380167> [Access date: 5.07.2013].

in the context of the post-colonial peoples – particularly since decolonization already became a fact, and since limiting this principle only to that instance was and is in the interest of many states, often multiethnic, including the chief actors of the international political arena. Another limitation on that regulation was the assumption that entitled to secession are only these nations, who in the existing state suffer from violation of human rights, including the rights of national minorities, and in cases when a given community cannot carry out in basic manner the right of self-determination²⁴. In practice, this is the main ground for justifying separatist aspirations (in this case, the abovementioned ethnic and nationalist separatism).

Formally, however, there are no restrictions in this respect, and the principle of self-determination of nations refers to all national groups without exception. All the more so, international law does not have any directly formulated prohibition of secession. Only infringing territorial integrity of one state by another state is prohibited – including the principle of self-determination of nations²⁵. Continuing this thought, from the formal and legal point of view, a secession of territory, which is inhabited by a national group that do not have their own state, is legal; however, there is no possibility of incorporating a given territory into an another state without consent of the state which the territory in question belonged to up to that point (such incorporation would require support from the state which a given community wants to join – as simple as, for instance, through giving consent to incorporation – and this practice may be recognised as an action infringing upon the territorial integrity of another country). Additionally, on the other hand, the majority of the constitutions of contemporary states treats the principle of territorial integrity as one of the major ones, and actions infringing it as one of the most frequent crimes against the state. These constitutional regulations are not regarded as contrary to the international law, but rather as referring to different situations and conditions (since, as we mentioned, the principle of self-determination was usually considered in a rather limited scope). Thus, although separatist and secessionist aspirations are not formally rejected

²⁴ M. Missala, *Geneza i współczesne dylematy samostanowienia narodów* [Genesis and Contemporary Dilemmas of Self-Determination of Nations] [in:] *Dylematy państwowości* [Statehood Dilemmas], K. Trzcziński (ed.), p. 45.

²⁵ Deklaracja Zasad Prawa Międzynarodowego z dn. 24.10.1970 r. [Declaration On Principles of International Law of October 24, 1970], *Stosunki Międzynarodowe*, http://www.stosunkimiedzynarodowe.info/dokument,8,Deklaracja_zasad_prawa_miedzynarodowego_24_X_1970.html [Access date: 27.06.2013].

by the international law, they may be difficult to fulfil in practice and individual domestic and international legal acts are plainly contradictory in this respect.

Similarly to legal documents, we may notice a division in the views on legality of secession amongst theoreticians of international relations and international law; however, in most cases they are in favour of limiting admissibility of secession only to exceptional cases. W. Multan and J. Symonides argue that the principle of self-determination should be narrowed only to nations subjected to external violence and exploitation, because otherwise it might lead to excessive dividing of state organisms²⁶. Simultaneously, however, the majority of analysts and law theoreticians calls for admissibility of secession if human rights are violated, the possibility to realise the rights is threatened, or when there is a threat of annihilation of a given national community. However, this point of view eliminates chances for self-determination of the majority of contemporary separatisms – at least European ones – even in the form of a widened autonomy beyond the will of a given state.

Not being able to support our thesis on the international law alone, we need to turn to the international political and legal practice with the question of admissibility of separatist and secessionist aspirations. For a state to function in the geopolitical reality it is not enough that it is able to separate itself from the existing state – it still must be recognised on the international arena. In the political doctrine we may find two theories of recognition: constitutive and declarative. The first, coming from the classical positivist school of international law, says that we can speak about functioning on the international arena only when a state is recognized by other states and international organizations. However, in accordance with the declarative theory, the state comes into existence in the moment it meets the criteria of statehood – it has its own territory, permanent population, state bodies able to govern effectively, and it is able to cooperate with other states²⁷. If this is the case, recognition has an exclusively declarative character, that is to say, it confirms the state's actual functioning. Nowadays, in the

²⁶ See K. Czubochoa, *Pojęcie państwa i procesy państwowotwórcze we współczesnym prawie międzynarodowym* [The Notion of State and State-Building Processes in the Contemporary International Law], Toruń 2012, p. 172.

²⁷ C. Ryngaert, S. Sobrie, *Recognition of States: International Law or Realpolitik? The Practice of Recognition in the Wake of Kosovo, South Ossetia, and Abkhazia*, "Leiden Journal of International Law" 2011, No. 24, pp. 467–490, <http://igitur-archive.library.uu.nl/law/2012-0601-200500/Ryngaert%20-%20Recognition%20of%20states2011.pdf> [Access date: 27.06.2013].

discourse on statehood the latter theory is dominant. However, when analysing separatisms, which in recent times led to the emergence of new state organisms, we may notice that these elements are interpenetrating and the issue of a formal recognition by the actors on the international stage is equally valid to the practical aspects of functioning of a given state. As an example we may give the case of Kosovo, which, in spite of a factual separation from Serbia, a confirmation on the lack of illegality of this secession by the International Court of Justice in Hague, and a gradually growing recognition in the majority states of world, is formally still not recognised as a state by the international civil service of the UN.

Therefore, we can see that the issue of recognition (in the event of secession), or the opinion of chief actors of the international political landscape (in the event of separatist aspirations) is exceptionally significant. On this basis we may state that, in principle, secession and separatism are not recognised on the geopolitical arena. Separatism is often connected with terrorism in the public discourse – even though, actually, only a small percentage of separatists resorts to terrorist practices, all actions of this type are treated as attempts at violating the territorial, social, or cultural integrity of states, “spreading anxieties,” and building divisions. Moreover, in the popular view, secessionist aspirations bring a threat of destabilization of the international order, since, in creating new state entities, they quite naturally cause a shift of the geopolitical balance in the region or in the world. Because of that, the international community, and also the United Nations Organization, have a negative approach towards secession, or a neutral one at best. A secession has chances for surviving and confirming its legality, if it proves to be effective, and, in addition, when it does not drastically infringe upon any rights of groups inhabiting a given territory²⁸. A certain premise for acknowledging either a secession or separatist aspirations (to create an autonomy, for instance) as justified or legal, may be caused by the infringement (especially a drastic infringement) of the rights of a given population, related not only to maintaining separate identity, but to basic human rights in general, on the account of membership of a given nationalist group. This element in the political and legal discourse is indicated as the main factor that is the practical condition for the right of self-determination of nations. However, as the case of the Kurdish minority shows, that is not a factor sufficient to provide the aspirations of a given group with explicit, although perhaps declarative, support on the part of the international community.

²⁸ K. Czubochoa, *Pojęcie państwa...*, op.cit., pp. 181–182.

5. Causes of Separatist and Secessionist Aspirations

In the above part we discussed the nature of separatism and secession and the place of separatist and secessionist aspirations in the international political and legal order. However, while considering to what extent these aspirations may lead to disintegration of the international order, it is worthwhile to consider what the causes of these phenomena are, and, therefore, what they may lead to in the contemporary global political and social conditions.

Looking from the theoretical perspective, we may distinguish a few main motives substantiating the right to secession. Aleksandar Pavković distinguishes five primary sources, on which we may base our belief on the legality of secessionist actions²⁹:

1. Anarcho-capitalist approach – assumes that the right to secession results from the freedom of an individual, which leads to the right to create political associations and secession in order to create a political order with other people sharing similar views;
2. Democratic secessionism – derives the right to secession from the right of self-determination, which allows a given territorial community to aspire to leave an existing state and separate the territory with the consent of the majority;
3. Communitarian secessionism – assumes that a given group with strong feelings of identity, concentrated on a specific territory, aspires to strengthen the political position of its members, in order to create a *prima facie* impression of the right to succession;
4. Cultural secessionism – maintains that every group, which was previously in the minority, has the right to be protected and to develop their identity, also by separating themselves and creating their own state;
5. Secessionism of endangered cultures – according to this approach, if a minority culture is endangered by a state that has its own, dominating culture, this minority needs the right to create their own state in order to protect their own culture.

Therefore, as we can see above, we may seek justifications for separatism and secession in self-identification and the identity of individuals, groups, cultures,

²⁹ A. Pavković, *Secession, Majority Rule And Equal Rights: A Few Questions*, “Macquarie University Law Journal” 2003, <http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/journals/MqLJ/2003/5.html> [Access date: 4.07.2013].

or in the feeling of endangerment. Now let us see how these theoretical assumptions fit into the actual contemporary separatist and secessionist aspirations.

“Protests are the language of the unheard,” said Martin Luther King. Following this train of thought, one should say that at the basis of separatist aspirations, especially those which assume the most radical forms, lies negligence – mostly on the part of the governing authorities and the entire central state apparatus, which are unable to provide the minorities with modes of functioning within the state and with the living conditions suitable to their expectations. However, it seems that such a statement would be a huge oversimplification, even more so, if we analyse the current conditions of the autonomies functioning in Europe, for instance, in the Spanish state – it would be impossible to talk about negligence. However, separatisms are far more complex phenomena, which are the outcome of various factors – historical, political, economic, and cultural. Only through examining this mosaic of causes, it is possible to make an attempt to comprehend the separatist aims of particular groups and nations.

As a rule, separatists aspirations are accompanied by a conglomeration of the factors indicated above – a feeling of separateness is rooted in history, but it is visible in the cultural context, and the economic factors are not negligible. However, what causes this feeling of separateness to make ethnic groups and nations take concrete actions in order to separate themselves from the current state, often in a violent manner? What are the factors that constitute the border beyond which an autonomy (which is often quite vast) is not enough, and having a state of their own becomes the main goal? Certainly, a high level of national awareness is of considerable importance. In a well-educated society, cultivating their own tongue, tradition, and culture, as well as being aware of the history of their nation and caring about extensive and regular education in this respect, the aspiration to recover the possibility of deciding about themselves no longer seems to be only a “tradition” (which remains the domain of traditions that are “from times immemorial”, rooted in the community and folk culture), but rather a logical next step, a natural right, and even an entitlement. Hence, as we can see on the example of Catalonia and the Basque Country, in modern societies (but not only) there is a correlation between actions of popularising national traditions and tongue, and the revival of national identity with the support and lobbying for the independence by wider and wider (and more and more educated) circles of the society. However, it is rare that the level of national awareness and identity is high enough to be an exclusive and sufficient factor. At the foundation of many separatisms lie many other causes. One of the characteristic stimulus for

an increase in separatist aspirations of nations and ethnic groups is the feeling of endangerment³⁰ – be that political, economic, or cultural. It is not without reason that a considerable increase of separatist aspirations of Catalonia and Basque Country grew noticeably in the times, when General Francisco Franco exercised authority in Spain. Franco's attempts to make Spain ethnically homogenous had to meet with the protest of the Catalonians and the Basque, particularly when bans and repressions were imposed on cultivating their own culture and using their native tongues. In attempt to maintain political and cultural identity, the response to these years-long actions bearing the hallmarks of terror, was an increase of separatist tendencies, which in the case of the Basque Country led all the way to the creation of ETA. A similar development (although repressions were on a much smaller scale) is taking place in the case of the Kurds or the Chechens.

Economic factors also have a significant influence on the growth of independence aspirations³¹. The abovementioned Catalonia and the Basque Country are among the most affluent regions of Spain. And although the Basque Country managed in advance to gain and maintain economic and fiscal independence, so that financial factor is not the main determinant of the Basque actions, in the case of the Catalonians economic arguments are very often put forward – the rich Catalonia simply does not want “to support” the poorer (and, in the view of the Catalonians, lazier) regions of Spain. A similar situation is taking place in Italy. Activists of the North League argue that a secession from the rest of the state would allow a rapid development of the region (a country by then?), which would not be encumbered with economic problems of the poor South.

To sum up, we may distinguish three main factors that influence the growth of separatist aspirations in contemporary ethnic groups and nations deprived of their own state³². A fundamental condition is an appropriately advanced national awareness of a given group, a sense of identity, and inhabiting a possibly compact territory. Another factor is an insufficient reaction of the central authorities to the aspirations to self-reliance of a given group. Both those factors combined bond the group and increase their feeling of endangerment.

Simultaneously, it is worthwhile to emphasise that in the contemporary times this feeling of endangerment may have not only a political or cultural character, but also a more and more economic background. Particularly, we may observe

³⁰ Ibidem.

³¹ J. Stefanowicz, *Bunt mniejszości* [Minority Rebellion], Warsaw 1977.

³² T. Jerzak, op.cit.

this regularity on the example of European separatisms. In the Western Europe, where democratic canons and fundamental human rights, including the protection of the rights of minorities, long ago became an indisputable standard of political life, it is hard to talk about violating the rights of national or ethnic minorities to cultivate their identity, culture, or even to maintain political autonomy. In these conditions, nations without their own state have proper conditions for development – thus, the theory on the feeling of endangerment has little application as an element enhancing separatist aspirations. What is more, contrary to what we would expect in regards to that theory, in contemporary Europe pro-national movements propagating separatist aspirations are blooming, and, in the process, they are gradually expanding their expectations.

Simultaneously, a shift in the geopolitical order, which, on the one hand, was caused by integration (mostly European), and on the other hand, by globalisation, as well as the current conditions of the global political scene cause both separatist and secessionist aspirations, as well as the results that they exert on the international community, to undergo change in the course of years. For many years, secession was rejected in the discourse because it caused destabilization and a shift of power balance on the international arena. Meanwhile, in the times of disappearing borders, it seems that those shifts of balance are less meaningful, and in the times of promoting multiculturalism and regionalism, supporting a growing autonomy of individual regions is nothing controversial. Separatist and secessionist movements, instead of disturbing the international order, strive to fit into it. This is shown on the example of Catalonia, which aspires to make the Catalan language one of the official languages of the European Union – that is, to officially enter into the structures of European Community. As a result, at present, we are dealing with certain changes of the discourse on the definition and the role of the state and the issues of autonomy and self-determination. In the age of increasing stress put upon respecting human rights and extending their catalogue, separatist aspirations of national minorities are starting to be more and more appreciated, and this does not need to necessarily have a destabilizing character – at least up to a point, in which separatism starts to turn into a secession, and other factors come into the picture.

Thus, factors other than political and cultural are the ones which are more capable to threaten political stability in Europe and in the world. As it was mentioned earlier, one of the main factors which influence the growth of separatist aspirations in the societies of such regions as North Italy, Catalonia, or the Basque Country, are the anxiety that in the times of an economic crisis the inhabitants of these regions will be marginalised and their economic development

will be impaired by less developed regions. At present, we can see this clearly in Catalonia, which for years (and even centuries) has been the richest region of Spain, and currently contends with an economic collapse; the residents of that region blame the Spanish state for that situation, which strengthens the demands for separating from the Spanish state. Moreover, also the riots in Africa and the Middle East are more and more influenced by economic factors, which shape the attitudes of the population to a greater extent than the pre-existing political reasons. Even though they have different sources, those demonstrations take a more and more radical character. As a result, these new movements, even though they not always have separatist aspirations at their foundations, end up reaching for them, and, recently, revolutions are becoming one of the main elements destabilising the international order.

6. The Nature of Revolution

When we hear the word “revolution”, we associate it with the Great French Revolution of 1789, with violence, terror, and chaos. In the popular understanding, it is mostly similar to war, or civil war. However, in our deliberations we may not rely on popular associations.

The word “revolution” comes from Latin *revolutio* and means a “coup”, “return”, or “rolling backwards”. In 1390, it appeared in English and originally was used in connection with the heavenly bodies. This word obtained a new meaning in reference to the work of Nicolaus Copernicus *De revolutionibus orbium coelestium* (*On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres*) from 1543. At the time, this publication transformed scholarship and the contemporary world view, hence the term revolution gained new, subversive, and political connotations. For the first time this word was used in the political sense in 1660 after the fall of Oliver Cromwell’s governments and the restoration of monarchy in England. In the same meaning it was used in 1688, when the Stuart dynasty was overthrown and the crown was passed to William III of Orange. However, that event, known as the “Glorious Revolution,” was not aimed at introducing a new order, but rather at restoring the monarchy in its former shape and glory³³.

³³ W. Wrzosek, *Losy jednej metafory: “rewolucja”* [The Fate of One Metaphor: ‘Revolution’] [in:] *Historia. Kultura. Metafora. Narodziny nieklasycznej historiografii* [History. Culture. Metaphor. The Birth of the Non-Classical Historiography], W. Wrzosek (ed.), Wrocław 1995, pp. 13–45. “The Glorious Revolution” is called also the bloodless revolution. In 1688 the English Parliament decided to deal with King James II of England.

As Hannah Arendt writes “The revolutions of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which to us appear to show all evidence of a new spirit, the spirit of the modern age, were intended to be restorations”³⁴ and thus they were not aimed at introducing a new quality. The modern understanding of the term “revolution” appeared in the last years of the eighteenth century, that is along with the French Revolution and the American Revolution. It was the first time when the participants of the revolution realized that returning to the old times was impossible, and that, quoting Arendt, “a new beginning could be... the result of what men had done and what they could consciously set out to do. From then on... novelty was no longer the proud and, at the same time, frightening possession of the few. When newness had reached the market-place, it became the beginning of a new story”³⁵.

Jeff Goodwin gives two definitions of “revolution”:

- According to a broader definition, it “refers to any and all instances in which a state or a political regime is overthrown and thereby transformed by a popular movement in an irregular, extraconstitutional, and/or violent fashion”;
- According to a narrower definition, “revolutions entail not only mass mobilization and regime change, but also more or less rapid and fundamental social, economic, and/or cultural change during or soon after the struggle for state power”³⁶.

However, Jan Baszkiewicz points to the following uses of the word “revolution”:

- As a political shake-up connected with the use of violence;
- As a global transformation of the society in all of its parameters;
- As a crisis of a political entity³⁷.

It was related to the manner of ruling of James II, who was in favour of absolutism and was trying to introduce it to England. The English, attached to their parliamentary traditions, would not have it. The goal of the revolution were met in 1689, when William III announced the Bill of Rights that for good banished the specter of absolutism from England.

³⁴ H. Arendt, *O rewolucji* [*On Revolution*, London 1964], Warsaw 1991, p. 42.

³⁵ Ibidem, pp. 45–46.

³⁶ J. Goodwin, *No Other Way Out: States and Revolutionary Movements 1945–1991*, Cambridge 2001, p. 5.

³⁷ J. Baszkiewicz, *Państwo, rewolucja, kultura polityczna* [State, Revolution, Political Culture], Poznań 2009, p. 799.

Nevertheless, neither of these definitions managed to present the full meaning of the term. It is a fact that “revolution” means change, but it does not always need be sudden. The goal of a revolution is to introduce a new order in various aspects of political, economic, or social life. However, most of all, revolution is connected with regaining freedom. Freedom may be understood in a lot of ways: freedom from oppression, freedom from poverty, freedom of speech, etc. This struggle may be fought with weapons and violence, or on the intellectual plain, by staging a revolution in the way individuals think. That goal of reaching freedom is exactly what distinguishes revolutions from wars. Both may be violent, and, moreover, both may entail the use of armed forces. Wars feed on violence and, as a rule, it stops there, wreaking havoc and corrupting societies. Truth be told, countless wars were started in the name of regaining independence, but it was often a mask, a regular propaganda gimmick, aimed at hiding the actual interests of the fighting sides. Furthermore, wars are deliberate expressions of the human will. Warfare is carefully planned and carried out, because every mistake may result in defeat. It is often hard to see its internal logic, or sequences of well-thought acts. We may, however, notice a few stages of the birth of a revolution.

Firstly, there needs to be a certain change which creates a new situation, and, thus, a chance for the birth of a revolution (e.g. imposing new taxes, or a war). As a rule, this change causes the worsening of the public feeling and an increase in dissatisfaction. It may be an entire sequence of such changes, extended over the course of many years and achieving the climax at some point. Secondly, there occurs an event that has not been in the past a hotbed of revolution (e.g. a public scuffle, suicide, or riot). If the authorities are conscious of the threat, they may prevent the revolution (e.g. by carrying out reforms, or applying repressions).

In social science, as well as in literature, there are many typologies of revolution. Alexis de Tocqueville distinguishes:

- Political revolutions, aimed at changing the government and political institutions;
- Revolutions as shake-ups, e.g. The french revolution of 1789, the results of which are not limited to government change, but also include social changes. (Tocqueville pays particular attention to the brutality of methods and to terror.) Revolutions of this type are bottom-up, that is they begin in the lowest social classes;
- Long lasting revolutions, which may result in replacing the aristocratic principle with the democratic principle, but also in the transformations of the fundamental spheres of the social life: religion, educational system,

economy, and the status of women. As an example of a revolution of this kind, Tocqueville mentions the American Revolution³⁸.

Charles Tilly in his typology lists: coup d'état, top-down takeover, civil war, revolutions and the so-called "great revolutions" (those, which result in a transformation of the social, economic, and political structures, such as the French Revolution)³⁹.

Of course the term "revolution" is also used to describe changes outside the political sphere. This may mean changes in technology, culture, or philosophy. Revolutions of this type may have a global character, or may appear only within the borders of a given country. As an example we may mention:

- The Neolithic Revolution (about 10 thousand years ago) which provided the foundations for the development of civilization;
- The Industrial Revolution (at the turn of the 18th and 19th century), which started on the British Isles and spread to the entire world;
- The Cultural Revolution (1966–1976), which took place in China and revolved around a power struggle within the Communist Party of China;
- The Digital Revolution, connected with the development of communication technologies and computerisation; it continues from the second half of the 20th century until today.

It is possible to list many such "revolutions," however, they are not the objective of this study.

Since the dawn of time, states were characterised by transformations, systemic changes, and shifts in the way their citizens thought. States have always been involved in conflicts, both internal and external. However, not every change had a revolutionary character. Revolution, is not an "ordinary" change, it is not "slow," but at the same time it does not have to be "rapid." One should remember that the main purpose of a revolution is to introduce a new order, a new quality that encompasses political, social, and economic spheres. In addition, revolution is always connected with a desire for freedom. In the course of revolutionary fights, main goals may often degenerate, break into a number of indirect goals serving the interests of one man or one social group. Finally, a revolution may lose its ideals, weaken, die down, and fall. However, as history demonstrates, some aspects of revolutions may bring long-lasting and desired changes.

³⁸ R. Boeshe, *Tocqueville's Road Map: Methodology, Liberalism, Revolution, and Despotism*, Plymouth 2006, p. 86.

³⁹ C. Tilly, *European Revolutions 1492–1992*, York 1995, p. 16.

7. Summary

The values of a given nation influence the internal policy of their state, and hence – since it is a participant of international relations – also the international reality. Integrating elements, such as, for example, national and cultural awareness must be taken into consideration in political relations. Participants of international relations strive to satisfy their needs of living, surviving, equalling others, recognition, and prestige. Therefore, various state aspirations meet and cooperate, compete, or fight one another, in the last case causing head-on confrontation and international conflicts. A lack or a limitation of prospects of realisation of those aspirational needs causes that the participants of international relations reach for more radical measures of influencing the international environment, causing its destabilization.

The disintegration of the Eastern Bloc and the end of the Cold War changed the attitudes of regional leaders. A threat of a global armed conflict was reduced, and the economic and environmental issues became more important. Problems connected with them surpass the abilities of individual states; however, on the other hand, social problems are more effectively solved by regional authorities than by the central bureaucracy. Such regularities cause fragmentation of democratic societies, particularly of the ones divided politically and ethnically.

At present, we observe as the fight with the economic crisis turns into a fight for internal stability. The crisis stimulates separatisms, which are often illusory dreams, because secession from their states could bring the regions subsequent challenges and much graver financial problems than the ones with which they are struggling at present. The only feasible way for those regions seems to be redefining their relation with their states and extending their autonomy, while maintaining national unity to their benefit.

Social and economic problems are also a catalyst for revolutionary moods. For the last two years we have been witnessing how incensed and dissatisfied societies of the Arab countries fought for better life conditions. Social transformations disturbed the political order that functioned for several dozen years and made the Arab countries seem very stable internally (in spite of a difficult geopolitical situation of the region). Almost in every state (perhaps with the exception of Lebanon) it was known who will be ruling and what will be the political line. In many states, societies have seen the rule of one and same family or person. The Arab Spring broke that rule and thus shook the regional geopolitical order.

As the French proverb says “in demanding vast independence and freedoms, one goes into an even greater captivity.” It appears that this opinion accurately refers both to secession and separatist aspirations, as well as to revolution. Nations and ethnic groups sometimes become engrossed in their own goals so much that they do not give due consideration to the effects and costs of their actions. In case of revolutions, their effects are difficult to predict, therefore evolutions seems to be a much safer option. As for the multinational states, perhaps it is worthwhile to build unity in multitude, instead of centralism and separatism?

Jeroen Van den Bosch

Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Poland

POLITICAL REGIME THEORY: IDENTIFYING AND DEFINING THREE ARCHETYPES

ABSTRACT

This article aims to clear the field of proliferated terminology by clearly defining what constitutes a political regime and what does not. After a clear definition, the article will advocate a dichotomous and trichotomous division for political regimes. Further it will analyze the defining aspects of democratic, authoritarian and totalitarian regimes and draw clear divisions between these archetypes. Finally the paper proposes some well outlined definitions for each regime type.

Key words

political regime, regime type, typology, democracy, authoritarianism, totalitarianism, anocracy, chaocracy, definition

1. Introduction: Defining a Political Regime

In the last four decades the difference between state and regime has become commonly accepted in political science. This turn has proven very useful to differentiate between the temporary nature of regimes and the more lasting structure of states. As Robert Fishman stated in one of the first attempts to distinguish the concepts:

A regime may be thought of as the formal and informal organization of the center of political power, and of its relations with the broader society. A regime determines who has access to political power, and how those who are in power deal with those who are not. (...) Regimes are more permanent forms of political organization than specific governments, but they are typically less permanent than the state. The state, by contrast, is a (normally) more permanent structure

of domination and coordination including a coercive apparatus and the means to administer a society and extract resources from it.¹

The concept of the state is probably one of the oldest in political sciences and its various definitions have been compared, improved and reassessed at regular intervals. In the shadow of the state, regimes (as a political concept) have been implicitly recognized and used by scholars since the time of Aristotle. From the 1970s, however, attempts have been made to treat them as autonomous objects of analysis. The concept is commonly accepted, but still there exist very few works that have compared definitions with the aim to improve them. The work of Svend-Erik Skaaning,² which will be addressed later, is a noteworthy exception.

This article aims to identify, select and define the most useful basic concepts that can be used in political regime theories. This article consists of four parts: In the first step, based on Skaaning's comparative work, I shall define political regimes in relation to the state and government. In the second, I shall define the most common typological differences between political regimes and drop those concepts that duplicate others or are too narrow in meaning. The appearance of 'hybrid regimes' in the scientific literature at the end of the Cold War has raised the need to go deeper and create a clear division between the different types. In step 3, I will analyze my selection of regime types in light of the defining aspects of a political regime as worked out by Skaaning. In the conclusion, I shall formulate some minimalist definitions of each archetype.

Skaaning starts his analysis by referring to Ruth and David Collier, who argue that "regime(s) should not be confused with particular incumbents of higher state or governmental positions or the political coalition supporting these persons."³ Regimes are linked to institutions and rules, while being a constellation of actors at the same time. Two governments succeeding each other under the same institutional arrangement can represent identical interests in some cases, but often do not. This institutional view links the concept of regime with rules and thus with behaviour. Rules can be formal (written laws) or informal. Equalling political regimes exclusively with the former would be a flagrant error and obstacle in their operationalization. On the other hand, the lack of correspondence

¹ R. Fishman, *Rethinking State and Regime: Southern Europe's Transition to Democracy*, "World Politics" 1990, No. 3, p. 428.

² S. Skaaning, *Political Regimes and Their Changes: A Conceptual Framework*, "CDDRL Working Papers" 2006, No. 55.

³ R. Collier, D. Collier, *Shaping the Political Arena: Critical Junctures, the Labor Movement, and Regime Dynamics in Latin America*, Princeton 1991.

between formal rules and the observed behaviour is not enough to omit this approach.⁴ Some scholars, like Gretchen Helmke and Steven Levitsky, concur that many outcomes cannot be explained by formal institutional design alone.⁵ Roeder goes even further by stating that informal constraints more often shape actor's incentives in systemic and robust ways than formal rules.⁶

On the importance of actors as an element of regimes it is worth quoting Skaaning at length:

The regime concept also covers a behavioural dimension because of the political actors' undeniable importance. In other words, the actors' significance has to be emphasized at the same time as we take the many political actions affected by the structural frame constituted by institutionalized rules into account. The acceptance of institutions as a significant contextual factor forming, limiting and enabling the actions of political actors consequently does not mean that it makes sense to exclude the actors from the analyses. In contrast, the behavioural dimension accentuates that certain rules are only important if they are observed by the actors; due to the fact that the institutional setting is constructed by actors. Moreover, actors have to decide how to structure their choices and interaction according to these rules and, finally, the reproduction of the operative rules continuously depends on the actions taken by the actors.⁷

His next step is to identify four defining properties of different regimes types. By comparing ten definitions of regimes, Skaaning points out that any definition of political regimes should encompass their access to political power, the way they structure the interaction in the political power centre (horizontal relation: the relationship between the executive, legislative and judicative powers) and its relations with the broader society (vertical relation: method of access to the principal political posts). Finally a fourth element is the character of the ruler(s), which allows us to differentiate between autocratic and democratic regimes and their behaviour.⁸

Combining all above elements in one definition, Skaaning summarizes: a political regime designates the institutionalized set of fundamental formal and informal rules identifying the political power holders (*character of the possessor(s)*)

⁴ S. Skaaning, *Political Regimes and Their Changes: A Conceptual Framework*, "CDDRL Working Papers" 2006, No. 55, pp. 7–8.

⁵ G. Helmke, S. Levitsky, *Informal Institutions and Comparative Politics: A Research Agenda*, "Perspectives on Politics" 2004, No. 4, pp. 725–740.

⁶ F. Roeder, *Red Sunset. The Failure of Soviet Politics*, Princeton 1993.

⁷ S. Skaaning, *op.cit.*, pp. 9–10.

⁸ *Ibidem*, pp. 13–14.

of *ultimate decisional sovereignty*) and it also regulates the appointments to the main political posts (*extension and character of political rights*) as well as the vertical limitations (*extension and character of civil liberties*) and horizontal limitations on the exercise of political power (*extension and character of division of powers – control and autonomy*).⁹

In contrast, a government only constitutes a part of the regime and has narrower definition as a

public organization consisting of the small group of decision-makers who control and coordinate the execution of authoritative political decisions.¹⁰ So regimes structure the forming and decision-making of governments as well as their execution of state power. As different government can succeed each other within the same regime (by accepting the rules constituting an established regime to exercise state power), regimes have a similar relations vis-à-vis the state: Regimes might change, while the state endures as a rather permanent set of public administrative, enforcing and judging organizations claiming, and generally, possessing a monopoly on the authority to make binding decisions for a specific territory.¹¹

2. Classifying Political Regimes: Dichotomy or Trichotomy?

The field of comparative politics has been flooded with various terms and concepts to describe state organization, some referring to regimes, some to political systems and other to its leadership. This part takes a closer look at different conceptual divisions and proposes some new conventions. The term democracy has received most attention and counts many definitions, but it is its opposite that has often been carelessly conceptualized under different labels as autocracy, dictatorship, despotism, authoritarianism, patrimonial regime, personalist regime, fascism, totalitarianism, etc. Moreover, with the fall of the Berlin wall, democracy became (normatively) the only game in town as there was no longer a communist alternative to challenge it. This led to a proliferation of new regimes, which quickly disappointed and were classified as anocracies or hybrid regimes, or as democracies with adjectives: unfinished, stalled, halted,

⁹ Ibidem, p. 15.

¹⁰ Ibidem, p. 16.

¹¹ Ibidem, pp. 16–17; M. Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft* [Economy and society], Köln 1964, p. 1043; R. Fishman, *Rethinking State and Regime: Southern Europe's Transition to Democracy*, "World Politics" 1990, No. 3, p. 428.

transitional, frozen, weak and fragile ‘democracies,’ all lacking a clear definition and division.

In this article I therefore propose to select some clearly defined archetypes, which researchers can subdivide when necessary. If the need presents itself to divide a group of countries between democracies non-democracies and further make no distinction, I personally prefer the term “autocracy.” Derived from the ancient Greek *autokrateia*, its meaning in time came to refer to the “autonomy” of the rulers to create their own norms in opposition to “heteronomy” where the people create the norms by which rulers have to abide. Its original meaning means self-rule and leans closer to terms like dictatorship, despotism and personalism. While these classifications are perfectly suitable for governments they cannot be applied to regimes. They put the emphasis on the leader and the concentration of power in the hands of this person. In this situation only the broad meaning of autocracy (as autonomous power, but not *by* the people) is suitable for political regimes. Within a dichotomous juxtaposition to democracy, the term autocracy is interchangeable with “authoritarian regime.”

One of many examples of flawed terminology (not scholarly research!) would be *Classifying Political Regimes* by Mike Alvarez, José Antonio Cheibub, Fernando Limongi and Adam Przeworski from 1996. In their introduction they write: “Our purpose is to classify political regimes observed in each country during each year either as democracies or as dictatorships, a term we use interchangeable with ‘authoritarian regimes.’”¹² Labeling all authoritarian regimes or autocracies as personalist or despotic, on the other hand, leads to a different methodological error. While in some regimes the leadership possesses a disproportional amount of power vis-à-vis other state organs and interest groups, it would be wrong to characterize all autocracies this way, as the nature of one-party or multiparty regimes for instance demands differentiation due to their diversity in stability, behaviour, robustness, etc.

Too often autocracies have been labelled in juxtaposition to democracy, which in the field of democratization studies has led to the trend to label some of them as incomplete democracies or hybrid regimes. Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way have brought this issue under attention in 2002. After the Cold War the democratic political system was no longer normatively challenged as communist one-party systems one by one were discredited and collapsed throughout Eurasia. As this trend diffused to other continents, global optimism in the late 1980s and 1990s

¹² M. Alvarez, J. Cheibub, F. Limongi, A. Przeworski, *Classifying Political Regimes*, “Studies in Comparative International Development” 1996, No. 2, pp. 3–36.

led to a belief that all these transitions would lead to new democracies. A certain intellectual stubbornness ingrained this teleology in scientific literature, hence the proliferation of terms to classify these new non-democratic regimes as incomplete democratic transitions, and not as autocracies, which they were and often still are.¹³

I agree with Levitsky and Way that such a classification is misleading, as there exist no empirical foundations to assume that all these transitions will end in democratic regimes, or move in that direction at all. The fact that many of these regimes acquired the formal architecture of democracy – particularly multiparty elections – does not necessarily turn them into post-authoritarian and certainly not into incomplete democratic regimes.¹⁴ Elections do not equal democracy.

The zenith of confusion in existing classifications is the construct of anocracies. The term has been used to catalogue regimes between democracies and autocracies by attributing special characteristics like instability and opposition mobilization. Hegre et al. place them in opposition to “institutionally consistent democracies and stark autocracies” and states that these “semi democracies” are “partly open yet somewhat repressive.”¹⁵ Fearon and Laitin add the element of state weakness: “politically weak central governments,” which are unable to maintain their monopoly on violence.¹⁶ Anocracy (as a term) was created to label the middle field between democracies and autocracies in the Polity IV Index of Marshall and Gurr.¹⁷ Through its operational definition in the index the term was promoted as a separate regime type in the literature, mostly to analyze its relations with civil war and intrastate violence.¹⁸

Regan and Bell adequately describe the term’s conception:

Anocracy, moreover, is not a regime type as we might generally think of a democratic one. The term is used to denote a mix of institutional characteristics that

¹³ S. Levitsky, L. Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism: Hybrid regimes after the Cold War*, Cambridge–New York 2010, pp. 3–5.

¹⁴ Ibidem, pp. 4–5.

¹⁵ H. Hegre, T. Ellingsen, S. Gates, N. Gleditsch, *Toward a Democratic Civil Peace? Democracy, Political Change, and Civil War, 1816–1992*, “The American Political Science Review” 2001, No. 1, pp. 33, 35.

¹⁶ J. Fearon, D. Laitin, *Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War*, “The American Political Science Review” 2003, No. 1, pp. 75–76, 81.

¹⁷ M. Marshall, T. Gurr, *Polity IV Index Project 2005*, The Center for Systemic Peace, <http://www.systemicpeace.org/polity/polity4.htm>.

¹⁸ J. Vreeland, *The Effect of Political Regime on Civil War: Unpacking Anocracy*, “The Journal of Conflict Resolution” 2008, No. 3, pp. 401–425.

often constrain or facilitate democratic processes. As such, most scholars identify a range of institutional constraints that describe adequately a democratic or autocratic regime, respectively, and relegate combinations that fall into neither ideal type to a catchall anocratic category. This range of institutional characteristics is necessarily broader than either of its polar corollaries. We adopt the anocratic convention in part because it has been convention but also because it is in these ranges of political-institutional arrangements that empirical results suggest a link to civil war.¹⁹

According to Regan and Bell, the institutional characteristics contribute to the regime's inherently unstable nature. Weak institutions limit state ability to provide political goods, especially social welfare payments. At the same time these weak institutions create opportunities for the citizenry to make demands on the state and rebel. The combination of these factors increases the potential for violent contentious politics.²⁰

According to the different definitions, both autocracies and democracies can turn into anocracies. This fact, in my opinion, with weakness and instability as specific characteristics is not enough to classify anocracy as a separate regime. If we compare its qualities with the definition of a political regime (See 1), I do not see enough definitive traits to classify it separately. When a democratic regime loses its capability to accommodate conflicts, is unable to prevent violent outbreaks and is pressured to give in to unelected parties it is not an anocracy, but a *weak democracy*, unable to uphold neither civil rights nor the rule of law. In the other direction, when an autocracy is no longer able to maintain its dominant position and must share power with other parties we call this a *weak autocracy*. In both cases the situation may spin out of control and result in more violence and repression, which we usually call *civil war*. When such a situation deteriorates even further, one may speak of '*Chaocracy*' – the rule of chaos, where all central authority breaks down and enclaves of unlimited power rise from its ashes.²¹ When no mass-scale violence erupts and conflicting parties maintain an unstable equilibrium though some form of dialogue, one can use the term *transitional regime*, which in time can lead to a restoration of the old regime (albeit in a slightly different form) or to a completely new regime composed of elements of the different parties.

¹⁹ P. Regan, S. Bell, *Changing Lanes of Stuck in the Middle: Why Are Anocracies More Prone to Civil Wars?*, "Political Research Quarterly" 2010, No. 4, p. 748.

²⁰ Ibidem, p. 748.

²¹ J. Linz, *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes*, Colorado-London 2000, pp. 36–37.

In my opinion, regime weakness does not need a separate classification. No definition of anocracy identifies a political power holder in a different way than in a democracy or autocracy. Nor is there a change of rules (written, unwritten) within the regime. Even when the regime's ability to regulate their appointments to main political posts is openly contested and it cannot enforce its preferred limitations on the vertical and horizontal dimensions of political power; this does not mean it is another regime type. All these characteristics of anocracy are, in essence, elements of a regime breakdown, with chaocracy – or the absence of a political regime at state level – as an extreme result. Since the term is widely accepted and does describe a specific set of conditions that can apply to regimes, I propose to uphold its use as the “*state of anocracy*.” That is, when a political regime has weakened to such a degree that it finds itself in the unstable equilibrium between collapse and transformation. Regimes in this state often face similar challenges and opportunities, but I argue that their regime type (democratic or autocratic, with subtype differentiation) matters in how they will react to their environment. This theoretical elaborated though is beyond the scope of this article.

Another approach is the earlier Trichotomy, which was developed in the 1950s to differentiate between authoritarian and totalitarian regimes. There are overwhelming arguments to treat totalitarian regimes separately, despite the fact that since the 1980s their number has diminished considerably.²² Many aspects of totalitarianism have been highlighted, but I prefer the ones singled out by Juan Linz in his groundbreaking work *Totalitarian and authoritarian regimes* from 1975. Totalitarian regimes are entitled to a separate category because they are unique in the simultaneous presence of an ideology, a single mass party and concentrated power in the hands of an individual or small group. Each of these characteristics can be found separately in a wide variation of authoritarian regimes, but their combination leads to a unique form of regime performance (stability, mobilization, control, etc.) and behaviour (the “unachievable” aim of destroying the line between state and society).²³

A trichotomous division likewise allows a more specific definition of authoritarian regimes. Situated between democracy and totalitarian regimes, Linz

²² In my opinion, today only the People's Republic of Korea could fit the definition of a totalitarian regime. All other regimes of this type have evolved to democracy or different forms of authoritarianism, some still containing elements of post-totalitarianism. (For the concept of post-totalitarianism see Linz 2000.)

²³ J. Linz, op.cit., pp. 66–68.

attributes this type some defining characteristics regarding pluralism, ideology and mobilization. Authoritarian regimes, to various degrees allow for more pluralism. In comparison with democracies of course, this pluralism is limited and can be called limited monism as well. This pluralistic dimension can be *de jure* or *de facto*.²⁴ Since they cannot derive their legitimacy from free and fair elections, nor from ideology as totalitarian regimes, they must rely on coercion (and in some cases on traditional forms of legitimacy, e.g. monarchies). This legitimacy deficit is projected in their relation with civil society, which they are not able to mobilize as in totalitarian or democratic regimes. This makes them the most instable of all three types.²⁵

Obviously, this basic trichotomous typology still requires more nuances and subdivisions. Especially the authoritarian type is much too heterogeneous to be effectively applied in comparative politics. In this paper I will mention some renowned classifications of authoritarianism, but I will stick to the three archetypes. In my conclusion I elaborate why. Nonetheless, even a basic typology has its merits for comparative studies. But first of all, I will define these three groups of regimes, in line of the earlier proposed definition of political regimes by Skaaning.

3. Defining Democracy, Authoritarianism and Totalitarianism as Regimes

The first part of the definition provided by Skaaning starts by outlining the “who” of regimes: a political regime is a group of people, identified by a set of formal and informal rules as the power holders within a state. According to these rules, they decide who gets what piece of the cake. This brings forth three main dimensions by which we can differentiate between democratic, totalitarian and authoritarian regimes: the pluralism of the power holding group, its legitimacy, and how this group divides the main political posts. If one translates these three issues on the paradigm of formal-informal rules, democracy finds itself at the far formal end, totalitarianism at the other side, and authoritarianism in the middle. The typology can further be outlined by focusing on the horizontal and vertical power limitations of each regime.

²⁴ Ibidem, p. 161.

²⁵ Ibidem, pp. 159–166.

Formal and informal rules

Democracy has clear formal rules to identify the group of power holders and institutionalize them. Different election systems, all based on the consensus of free and fair elections, in combination with a level playing field²⁶ for all participating groups (previously registered as political parties, fulfilling formal requirements), provide a selection mechanism for different groups. Those elected groups possess the legitimacy to create a power holding coalition according to their size of the vote. According to the electoral system, there are different elections for the legislative and executive branch. The division of main electoral posts is done according to informal rules, backed up by the formal framework of checks and balances, conflict of interest, accountability, etc.

Ideal totalitarian regimes would not bother with elections at all, as their formal power is based on ideology. In reality, even those regimes have often used a minimalistic democratic façade in the form of rubber stamp legislatures that unanimously ratify decisions put in front of them.²⁷ Ideology identifies the power holders, always united in *one* party. Their informal power on the other hand is derived from a combination of coercion and mass following. Solely informal rules regulate which members of the groups get the main political posts. This type of regime has a very small “selectorate” in comparison with democracy’s electorate. Originally coined by Bueno de Mesquita et al., the term denotes those, “whose endowments include the qualities or characteristics institutionally required to choose the government’s leadership and necessary for gaining access to private benefits doled out by the government’s leadership.”²⁸ In totalitarian regimes the selectorate normally constitutes the highest ranking party officials, which have strong personal ties with the leader(s).

Identification of the power holding group in authoritarian regimes exposes their heterogeneous structure, which requires further differentiation. In theory, these regimes have a broader selectorate than their totalitarian counterparts, but

²⁶ The term is borrowed from Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way. It denotes the situation in which all parties have a real chance of winning elections. In other words the playing field is not skewed by fraud, abuse of state and media resources or a breach of civil liberties (See Levitsky, Way 2010).

²⁷ D. Furman, *The Origins and Elements of Imitation Democracies. Political developments in the post-Soviet space*, “Eurozine” 2007, <http://www.eurozine.com>, first published in *The Europe beyond Europe, Outer borders, inner limits*, “Osteuropa” 2007, No. 9, p. 2.

²⁸ B. Russett, *Hegemony and Democracy* [in:] *Security and Governance Series*, F. Adanson et al. (eds.), London–New York 2011, p. 15.

smaller than a democratic electorate. Different authoritarian regimes can be arranged along this broad scale of limited pluralism (smaller – bigger selectorate), but as a sole defining characteristic this aspect would be too vague to label them as one group. Luckily, there exist other criteria to define these various regimes as a separate group, for instance, legitimacy.

Authoritarian regimes possess different levels of formal legitimacy. Those regimes with strong institutionalized formal rules, like monarchies or theocracies, can rely on their tradition or constitution to prove the legitimacy of the power holding group. Some regimes are highly reliant on coercion and intimidation to stay in power (military coups), and try to formulate some nationalistic, ideological, pragmatic or other discourses to make up for their lack of formal legitimacy. Those regimes which lack both (formal legitimacy and coercion potential) or choose not to use them, usually install a multiparty system as a democratic façade with the aim to create a source of formal legitimacy. To summarize, the lower a regime's formal legitimacy and/or its potential to extort its power holding position by force, the bigger its selectorate and power sharing level. Authoritarian regimes, who allow other parties to participate in elections, sometimes have to co-opt opposition parties and interest groups and share some power with them in exchange for their support and acceptance of the existing set of rules (formal/informal).

Horizontal limitations

The next defining aspect of political regimes is the horizontal limitations or the division of powers. Democracies have constitutionally based checks and balances between the legislative, executive and judiciary. These formal divisions are absolute in most cases. In case of doubt or overlap the judiciary branch, especially the constitutional court has the final word. Usually, each of the different branches can initiate investigating commissions when they perceive another branch has acted outside its competence. The army and intelligence agencies are also *de facto* and *de jure* subjugated to the executive and legislative.

In totalitarian regimes the party is the monistic centre of power. Its task is not to represent the people, but to transform its members.²⁹ Its power towers far above all other ceremonial branches of government. Depending of the heteronomy of its ideological foundations, the party's actions can be normatively restricted in some dimensions. For instance Leninism-Marxism provided a stable, autonomous basis of legitimacy for communist parties, but at the same time confined

²⁹ J. Linz, *op.cit.*, pp. 79–86.

its policies within the boundaries of its ideological content. Fascist totalitarian regimes could draw from various ideological sources and could interpret its meaning more loosely.³⁰ So even when there are no formal or informal divisions of powers, the totalitarian party does not possess absolute power. Army and secret services, while they are often used in intraparty struggles, are clearly subdued by the party. If at a given moment the military apparatus or government would exert control over the totalitarian party, we can no longer call the regime totalitarian.

Once more authoritarian regimes find themselves in between. Notwithstanding its many forms, this regime type is characterized by its unbalanced division of power. Whereas some of these regimes can have additional government structures or even (temporary) suspend existing institutions, the power holders usually have a monopoly on executive power (although theoretically authoritarian leaders could exercise their supreme power through judiciary institutions). Joakim Ekman concisely summarizes the position of the legislative branch in autocracies: “In outright authoritarian regimes real legislatures do not exist or, if present, are so firmly controlled by the ruling executive or the ruling party that there are de facto no checks and balances between the executive and legislative branches. In hybrid regimes, parliaments may be ever so weak, but they can still function as potential platforms for the opposition.”³¹ The position of the judiciary is in general more instrumental. The power holders bribe, extort, dismiss, or appoint their own loyal candidates within its structure to create a third branch that is independent in form only.³² They use its arbiter function to their own advantage to make up for their lack of formal legitimacy. The rule of law in autocratic regimes is often absent regarding the horizontal dimension of power.

Vertical limitations

The relation between the power holders and the people they govern provides some clear criteria to treat these three regime types separately. In democracies political, civil and economic liberties are protected and balanced. Political rights grant opportunities to the people to organize themselves, vote, participate in the political process, express their opinion without fear of persecution, etc. In short, they hand to people all the tools to take part in the decision-making process

³⁰ Ibidem, pp. 76–78.

³¹ J. Ekman, *Political Participation and Regime Stability: A Framework for Analyzing Hybrid Regimes*, “International Political Science Review” 2009, No. 1, p. 9.

³² Ibidem, p. 9.

through elections (indirectly) or through referenda (directly). Civil rights, on the other hand, protect the population from their government and from short-term populist majority rule. And economic liberties provide an additional check on political power as it gives the citizens a livelihood. This allows them to gain personal autonomy and equips them with the means to associate and organize.³³

All these necessary conditions enable a booming civil society and independent media, which are key to push, alter or oppose the political decision-making. Opposition in itself is an important feature of democratic regimes. Formal rules provide a framework for opposition from the civil society in the form of strikes, manifestations, etc. but also foresee a platform for legal political opposition within the state structures (the legislative). The rule of law is upheld, breaches are sanctioned, and the rights are protected. Of course, the image drawn here is an ideal type of a democracy, but still, democracies, once consolidated, must be closer to this definition than to ideal types of other regimes in order to be recognized as such.

As an ideal type, totalitarian regimes are exactly the opposite. In no way they protect their citizens from arbitrary persecution. On the one hand, the rule of law is installed; on the other, it offers the people no protection from the state. While these regimes adhere to civil and political rights on paper only, even basic economic rights are denied. The economy is centrally planned, which eliminates the formation of interest groups outside the party. Leftist totalitarian regimes do have a tradition of granting some socioeconomic fundamental rights, which are “positive” in nature:³⁴ The right to housing, the right to medical care, the right to work, and so on. Depending on the economic potential of the state, these rights are allocated to its citizens on condition that their civil duties are met.³⁵

Civil society is controlled in totalitarian regimes. With instruments ranging from propaganda and education to coercion, the masses are mobilized and integrated into the system. Mostly recruitment starts at an early age through youth movements like the Komsomol or the Hitlerjugend. Another function of the party is to control all specialized functions that can become independent, non-political centre of power over time.³⁶ Paradoxically, these regimes emphasis

³³ S. Chan, *Liberalism, Democracy and Development*, Cambridge 2004, pp. 39–45.

³⁴ In opposition to the historically ‘negative’ human rights developed in the West since the Feudal age, which protect citizens from the state.

³⁵ K. Malfliet, *Hoever kan Europa oostwaarts reiken. De Russische factor* [How Far East Can Europe Reach. The Russian Factor], Leuven 2008, pp. 75–77.

³⁶ J. Linz, op.cit., pp. 80–94.

on participation also brings some democratic aspects with it. Linz adequately states:

Foremost, their capacity to penetrate the society, to be present and influential in many institutional realms, to mobilize people for large-scale tasks on a voluntary or pseudo voluntary basis rather than just for material incentives and rewards allows such systems to carry out important changes with limited resources and therefore to serve as instruments for certain types of economic and social development. It also gives them a certain democratic character, in the sense of offering to those willing to participate (accepting the basic goals of the leadership rather than advancing alternative goals) a change for active participation and a sense of involvement. Despite the bureaucratic character of the state and of many organizations and even the party, the mass membership in the party and in related sponsored organizations can give meaning, purpose, and a sense of participation to many citizens.³⁷

Although this facet of mobilization is a central feature in the vertical relation of totalitarian regimes, civil society cannot opt for any alternatives, nor propose them. All forms of opposition are categorically opposed by the party. Of course in history no totalitarian regime has been able to actually achieve these totalitarian characteristics all the way. Like with democratic regimes, the mentioned defining features give form to an ideal type. Existing totalitarian regimes have come closest to this type and arguably deserve this separate classification.

Authoritarian regimes as a separate group encompass more vague criteria in their (vertical) relation with civil society. Their subtypes could provide a more nuanced classification. Generally speaking, as a group, these regimes cannot bridge the gap between the power holders and civil society as do the democratic or totalitarian archetypes. Once their formal and informal rules are institutionalized, these regimes usually face continuous challenges from various groups they draw support from. Some power holders are masters in playing out these different groups against each other to remain in (more or less) full control. Others are less successful and must include some in their selectorate, when they do not possess other means to subdue them. This usually results in the suspension of (some) political rights for the population as a whole and arbitrary breaches of civil rights for those targeted by the regime for some reason: (perceived) politically dangerous individuals or groups, discriminated ethnic or religious minorities, personal vendettas of the power holders, etc. Economical freedoms

³⁷ Ibidem, pp. 72–73.

are usually granted to the population in a fairly high degree, especially in those regimes which abide by a liberal economic policy. Depending on their level of control power holders consolidate their grip over the main state resources. Civil society as a whole is restricted, but not systematically penetrated by state actors, nor dismantled.

Two aspects are constitutive to these regimes. Firstly, their set of rules provides no framework or opportunities for mobilization for big segments of the population. As there are no formal rules to become included in the selectorate, the gap widens between the power holders and the population as a whole. Linz therefore sees authoritarian regimes as inherently unstable. As these regimes do possess some support and mobilization at the time of their creation, participation becomes hard to sustain without moving more in the direction of democracy or totalitarianism. This equilibrium and limited access to power leads to apathy and disappointment among its initial followers.³⁸ Secondly, as it was mentioned above, authoritarian regimes with few sources of alternative legitimacy and/or coercion potential, invest more in their democratic façade. This means they allow a restricted platform for opposition. The exact forms of this opposition (legal, illegal, alegal and semiopposition)³⁹ differ according to the category's subtypes. This phenomenon is a crucial aspect of incremental democratization and is clearly absent in totalitarian regimes. In extension my argument that authoritarian regimes should be treated as a separate type, despite their heterogeneousness.

4. Conclusion: Three definitions of political regime archetypes

I would like to summarize this article by proposing three workable definitions – one for each regime type, based on the insights presented in the previous steps and in line with the definition of a political regimes offered by Skaaning. These definitions could be my point of reference for further research as too often existing flawed terminology is parroted without reflection or definitions of political systems are projected as regime concepts.

In the above figure, the institutional hierarchy of each regime type is presented in a simplified way. While the figure does not represent the actual relations between different political and societal groups, it succeeds in indentifying those actors who potentially play an important role in each separate regime type. Although far from exact, the figure has its merits as for instance the difference

³⁸ Ibidem, pp. 166–167.

³⁹ Terminology borrowed from J. Linz (See Linz 2000, pp. 168–170).

between an electorate and a selectorate is well represented. Intelligence, police and security forces were not mentioned separately, but should be included in the tag “Army.”

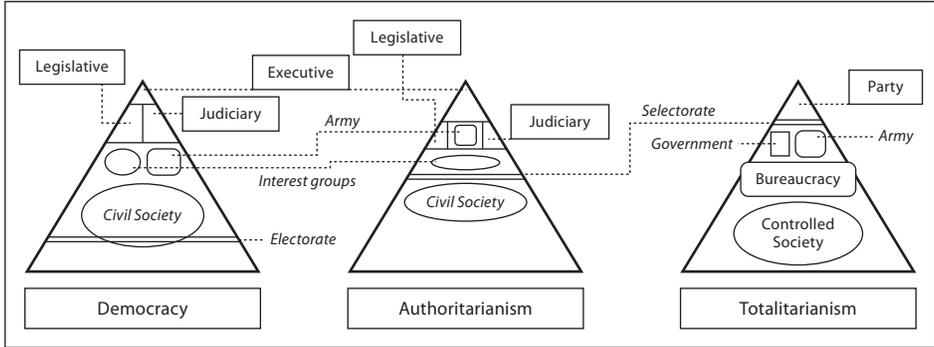


Figure 1.1. Basic Typology of Political Regimes

In a democracy the regimes are usually chosen from political parties (although sometimes independent candidates win elections). The governmental instruments of their power are the legislative and the executive. Depending of the political system, the regime’s power is more concentrated in the former or latter. For instance, in parliamentary democracies the nexus of power is the legislative. In presidential regimes power typically lies in the executive. The judiciary plays a crucial role as it is has the final word in disputes and has a important hand in the creation of new formal rules. In democratic regime types, the three branches of government all have their turf, and maintain this balance through checks and balances.

Decision-making in democracies does not exclusively belong to parties: Interest groups and sometimes the military apparatus can influence or steer decisions through lobbying the governing parties or by their leverage on the branches of government. Key is that there are clear rules, widely accepted by all actors at all levels. Even when rules are broken, those actors who break them realize they are crossing a line. There exist formal rules to denote the electorate: usually citizenship, universal suffrage and an age limit at 18. In consolidated democracies the rule of law is upheld and political, economic and civic liberties are protected. Breaches of the law or cases of discrimination are usually investigated under pressure of citizens and civil society.

As democratic regimes are elected, there are no general “rules” on how often these regimes change and succeed each other. Analyzing elections results and

coalition forming does not suffice. In democracies with a first-past-the-post electoral system and its typical dualistic playing field with two historic grand parties competing each other, there is a bigger chance of regime change when one party defeats the other in national or presidential elections. In democracies with many smaller parties this level of analysis is not enough. A regime can constitute a dominant “bigger” party and its traditional coalition partners, or two or more parties of similar size with a history of cooperation, or a big party that enters a coalition with anyone remotely acceptable to create a minimal winning coalition. In the last case the regime will be concentrated within the ranks of the big party, as the small coalition party gets only a few government posts as a reward for cooperation. In the second and first case there is no clear division line between the parties, as their mutual understanding is an essential informal part of the regime they compose together. Democratic regimes are very closely intertwined with the different government institutions because the strict formal framework, the informal consensus on some basic issues with the opposition parties and the long-lived nature of consolidated democratic systems and the traditional parties that operate within it. This makes radical regimes change rare.

In the figure (1.1.) it is clear that authoritarian regimes often have a similar “formal” outlook when compared to democratic types. This has grown historically: during the Cold War and before, many authoritarian regimes did not feel the pressure to pretend to be democracies. Only after the fall of the Berlin wall the normative supremacy of democracy has increased this pressure. This does not mean all authoritarian regimes fit this model: there still exist many military and monarchic types that do not fit this institutional structure. Although the global trend towards a democratic façade was clearly visible and was a main catalyst in the scientific literature on these “hybrid” regimes and political regimes in general.

As a very heterogeneous type, the nexus of political power is not evenly divided among the different branches of the government or even lies completely outside it. Generally political power is concentrated in the executive, the army or other institutions (not included in the figure) like a theocratic institution or royal family. In some regimes they can be strongly intertwined with existing interest groups that provide support for the regime in return for economical benefits, are partly incorporated or even created by the regime. Anyway these groups are often included in the selectorate, exercising leverage on the choice of future candidates and benefiting from the rewards they get in exchange for their loyalty. These arbitrary criteria to become part of the regime and limited

access make its population apathetic towards its rulers in the long run.⁴⁰ As some regimes tolerate opposition and other forbid elections, the exact relations between existing institutions and the regime's behaviour cannot be analyzed deeper, without establishing some clear subtypes of authoritarian regimes. The same goes for regime transition as it based on informal rules.

The totalitarian type is inherently different from the other archetypes. Considering that in its structure *the* party completely dominates the institutional hierarchy, it does not even remotely resemble the traditional division of power. Traditional government institutions are a formal appendix to the well-oiled bureaucracy that aims to control every aspect of its citizens. Army and security services are clearly subjugated to the party's power. Both government and the military apparatus are excluded from the selectorate, although it might happen that high ranking members of the party are in charge of these institutions. If so, their function is not to represent the institutions they command within the party. Usually they are responsible for them as it is their duty to control these institutions. With their instruments of propaganda, ideology and education they do bridge the gap with the population in a way authoritarian regimes are not able. Mobilization is a crucial element of these regimes' internal long life expectation, although ideological erosion is widespread in light of economic decline.

Summarizing the above analyses of these three archetypes, it is possible to create some minimal definitions for each type. As each type can be divided in more precise subtypes, these definitions only stress the basic differences between the main types. Still as I argued above, all three regimes are each distinctively unique to be treated separately. Their minimal definitions sound as follows:

A democratic regime is a group identified by a highly formalized, institution-alized set of rules, accepted by all parties on the basis of their electoral legitimacy under free and fair elections that take place on a level playing field. The electoral victors (usually in the form of political parties) create a ruling coalition according to internal informal rules. Their political power is divided within the group among different branches of the government in interaction with legal opposition according to strict formal rules. In general democratic regimes are more *open* than other types, because they are usually recreated in modified form with every election. The power holders are constrained by (external) formal rules like a constitution and human rights. They are accountable to the electorate. Succession is formally regulated through elections.

⁴⁰ J. Linz, *op.cit.*, p. 167.

An authoritarian regime is governed by a small group internally regulated by an informal set of rules. Their power may be concentrated in on one or more branches of the government (no real checks or balances) or outside the government. Its power holders are identified by informal legitimacy like coercion or seemingly fair elections, or in combination with formal, traditional legitimacy. In case of elections, they are not free or fair, or lack a level playing field, since political power is not derived from an electorate. In case of the former, the selectorate is even narrower, but often does include some selected interest groups. Internal succession is regulated according to informal rules by the selectorate. Power holders are not bound by external formal rules since informal rules supersede them. The regime is closed to big segments of the population.

A totalitarian regime is organized in one mass party led by a small group, formally identified and its actions constrained by ideology. The party controls state institutions and the military apparatus and aims to do the same with its population. The rule of law is upheld and serves to implement the ideology. No legal framework protects the citizens. Human rights are provided arbitrarily if at all. The regime's aim is to mobilize and transform its population according to its ideology and uses the state for control, propaganda and education. The selectorate is very narrow as only the party can influence succession. The regime is more open as some (loyal) citizens are offered opportunities to participate in the system.

One may question the point of creating these minimal definitions when subtypes would be better suited for analyses. On the one hand I agree with this view, on the other I do not presuppose there exists only one way to subdivide these three archetypes. As political regimes differ on so many dimensions: institutional structure, nature of rules, pluralism, main actors, behaviour, cultural outlook, potential, horizontal and vertical limitations, and so on, I cannot possibly claim there exists only one way to divide them internally into subtypes. Each researcher should use or create his/her own typology that fits best to the research's level of analysis, as long as they are in line with the definition of a political regime.

Oleksandra Matushenko

Maria Curie-Sklodowska University in Lublin, Poland

THE RESEARCH ON POLITICAL ELITES: STEADY VS. MODERN THEORIES

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the article is to address an existing challenge of conducting the research on political elites in modern societies, particularly in the emerging democracies. In addition to a significant gap between theoretical and empirical data, there is also no common vision of the best approach to the research on political elites, especially in transition countries. Most of all, it is caused by the absence of unified common view on the role and distinct functions of political elites in emerging democracies by the scientific world. Consequently, there is a problem with appropriate estimation and conducting analyses of elites' actions, their weight, and strategy in decision making process towards or backwards to establishing democratic institutions and implication of democratic values. Thus, the article is to describe and analyse main divergence of views on the role, scope and dimension of research of political elites, provided by different theories, namely Marxist one, the classic political elites' theory and the theory of democratic elitism in accordance with the challenges and requirements of the realities of the current political process.

Key words

political elites, transition society, emerging democracies, regime change, elite theories

There are four groups of theories on the regime change: functional theory with its traditional focus on social and economic conditions; transnational theory that mostly considers international influence and trends; interactive theory, which concentrates on the dynamics of the relations between social-economic and political conditions; and generic theory, which mostly focuses on the political elites' strategies and decisions¹.

¹ G. Pridham, *The Dynamics of Democratization*, London–New York 2000, p. 136.

In terms of regime change theories and transitional paradigm, the questions such “who are the key actors of democratization, how and in what parts of the political arena they operate?” arise. One should take into account that in transition, there is always an issue of leadership first on the agenda due to its significant role in transformation. Moreover, in transition, leadership is usually highly personalized. A perfect example is a notion of the “swing man”, a political figure, succeeding in transforming the state bringing about a solution at the right time of transition². What is more, the personalization of leadership in transition is to shape the new sphere of democratic politics by creating alternative “objects” of emotional affection and political trust³. In this regards, a thorough attention should be paid at the institutionalization of actors’ roles.

Importantly, the characteristics leadership highly depend on the regime type. For instance, the difference between post-totalitarian and authoritarian regimes leadership turns out to be significant. Hence, post-totalitarianism recruits party members, making their careers in the leading party, the bureaucracy, or the technocratic state apparatus. Conversely, authoritarian regime deals with the groups of people that have some power, presence, and legitimacy, which does not directly derive from the regime itself⁴.

Significantly, the issue discussed needs a definition of the term “political elites”. The author uses Olga Krishtanovskaia’s one, describing an “elite” as a ruling group of society, based on holding a position to deal with taking decisions of interest and importance⁵.

There are two main paradigms, conceptualizing political elites studies: classic elite paradigm and the Marxist one. Accordingly, there are different approaches to the regime change itself. The Marxist theory traditionally blames it on industrialization as a diffusing power of a ruling class. Conversely, classic elite theory separates politics from economics. The latter theory sets a link rather between political power and bureaucratic organization, than propertied class and abused

² Ibidem, pp. 141–142.

³ R. Rose, W. Mishler, *Representation and Leadership in Post-Communist Political Systems* [in:] *The Politics of the Post-communist World*, S. White, D. Nelson (eds.), Burlington 2002, p. 434.

⁴ J. Linz, A. Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe*, Baltimore–London 1997, p. 47.

⁵ O. Krishtanovskaia, S. White, *From Nomenclature to New Elite* [in:] *The New Elite in Post-Communist Eastern Europe*, V. Shlapentokh, C. Vanderpool, B. Doktorov (eds.), College Station 2004, pp. 28–29.

masses. Virtually, it counts on the rule of powerful, organizationally-based, self-interested, and responsible elites⁶.

Correspondingly, there have been many typologies of political elites appeared, especially in the twentieth century. For instance, Raymond Aron suggested “Western” and “Soviet” types; Ralf Dahrendorf described “authoritarian”, “totalitarian”, “cartel” and “liberal” types; Robert Putnam wrote about “consensual”, “competitive” and “coalescent” elites⁷. In this regard, R. Dahl, was for the first time proposed to divide political elite into leaders and sub-leaders. Importantly, sub-leaders are supposed to focus on everyday politics, shortening the distance between elites and masses. As can be expected, Robert Dahl saw the way to elite-masses consensus in a stalemate situation, in which none elite group has dramatic influence on all the political issues⁸. The very similar idea one can find in John Higley’s texts. This political scientist also claimed on wider composition of political elites that should include influential senior civil servants, business and trade union leaders, leaders of politically-oriented mass movements, prominent intellectuals and media commentators, religious and other civic leaders, and in many countries top military officers as well⁹.

Generally, the scope and dimension of the research on political elites have faced some crucial changes since 1976. In the first place, there is a gap between theoretical and empirical studies¹⁰. Significantly, because of a desperate lack of empirical research on political elites, a lot of misleading assumptions have been offered, and there has been set up many concepts, which could not be empirically checked for a long time. Instead, a lot of empirical research on political elites, conducted during last few decades, provides an opportunity to revise theoretical concepts and get rid of some ambiguous and doubtful provisions.

In the second place, there have been many vigorous discussions on the term “political elites” in the scientific world. One can surely find a lot of articles and scientific argumentation concerning the reasons of usage the term, emphasising

⁶ J. Higley, G. Lengyel, *Elite Theory Versus Marxism, the Twentieth Century’s Verdict* [in:] *Elites after State Socialism. Theories and Analysis*, J. Higley, G. Lengyel (eds.), Lanham 2000, pp. 229–230.

⁷ J. Higley, M. Burton, *Types of Political Elites in Post-communist Eastern Europe* [in:] *The Politics of the Post-communist World Vol. II*, S. White, D. Nelson (eds.), Burlington 2002, p. 336.

⁸ J. Blondel, F. Muller-Rommel, *Political Elites* [in:] *The Oxford Handbook of Political Behaviour*, R. Dalton, H. Klingemann (eds.), Oxford 2007, p. 821.

⁹ J. Higley, M. Burton, op.cit., p. 336

¹⁰ J. Blondel, F. Muller-Rommel, op.cit., p. 818.

the necessity to make clear differentiation between different types of elites in the research on them. Obviously, there's still no common view on the way to conduct research on political elites and there is still no single theory to be used generally and widely applied¹¹.

As can be expected, the term "political elites" has been being more and more used autonomously from the rest of elite¹². Such differentiation provides an opportunity to measure an influence of different elites on society and see the interrelations between them. Furthermore, in the elite research, one should take into account not only visible factors like recruiting mechanisms, duration of their careers, belief systems, but also interrelations between elites. Therefore, more than just a usual set of attributes should be applied for such research.

In this regard, attention should also be paid at the democratic elitism theory, causing particular changes of perception of the concept of political elites in scientific research. While classic elite theory claims that political elites are an inevitable but necessary evil, democratic elitists, on the contrary, see the elites as a main defender of democracy. They stem from the fact that people of a higher social stratum, tend to have much more opportunities at their disposal and, accordingly, easier access to education. As can be expected, they are supposed to see the world in more sophisticated way and thus have appropriate systems of belief. It follows that, political elitism counts the responsibility for protecting democratic values and principles on the privileged groups of people. These people are perceived as more tolerant, open and sophisticated than the rest of society.

With reference to early researches of public opinion, there has been considered a lot of significant differences between belief systems of masses and belief systems of elites¹³. It is worth noting that Mark Paffley and Robert Rohrschneider, have made an attempt to check the most controversial pillars of the democratic elitism theory, focusing on empirical data. Hence, in their article *Elite Beliefs and the Theory of Democratic Elitism* asserts that, in the first place, democratic elitism theory foresees a consensus among elites in their support of democratic values. In the second place, political elites in a democratic state are supposed to have their systems of belief well-structured and consistent. Thirdly, the authors

¹¹ J. Higley, M. Burton, op.cit., p. 335.

¹² J. Blondel, F. Muller-Rommel, op.cit., pp. 818–819.

¹³ M. Paffley, R. Rohrschneider, *Elite Beliefs and the Theory of Democratic Elitism* [in:] *The Oxford Handbook of Political Behavior*, R. Dalton, H. Klingemann (eds.), Oxford 2007, p. 65.

claim that elites as those are a priori much more democratic than masses due to their privileges and given advantages. Finally, the advocates of the theory of democratic elitism conclude that elites are supposed to be reliable defenders of democracy, “guarding democratic institutions from intolerant public”¹⁴.

In this regard, the results of the research on political tolerance (defined as readiness to let others express the opponent ideas) have showed that the level of political tolerance is significantly higher within elites than masses, granting thus to the theory of democratic elitism additional support¹⁵. Therefore, one could assume that democratic elitism theory turns the classical one, according to which citizens control the elites, upside down.

However, one should remember that in 1980–90s, the provision of democratic elitism, which claimed that political elites are more tolerant than masses, was largely criticised. The roots of the critics referred to the way of carrying out the empirical research, focusing only on an average level of difference of political tolerance by elites and masses. On the other hand, dividing both groups according to the ideological views, conservative elites, for instance, turned out to be less tolerant than conservative public, and, obviously, much less tolerant than liberals. This adjustment of empirical data, has, therefore, significantly weakened the theory of democratic elitism¹⁶.

It is worth noting that there is a certain difference in the role, which political elites are supposed to play in the developed Western democracies and developing or emerging democracies¹⁷. Thus, even when the post-authoritarian elite turns out to support democratic values more than the masses do, there is still no guarantee political process will follow democratic standards and principles. In addition, it is well-known that, as a rule, new democracies significantly lack appropriate institutional structure and coherence, typical for the Western democracies¹⁸.

Concerning systems of belief of the political elite, one should also take into account the issue of socialization that emphasises the importance of experiencing particular procedures of a regime, substantially influencing the absorption of system values. Furthermore, individuals whose system of beliefs corresponds

¹⁴ Ibidem, p. 66.

¹⁵ Ibidem, p. 68.

¹⁶ Ibidem, p. 69.

¹⁷ Ibidem, p. 73.

¹⁸ Ibidem, p. 74.

to the regime are usually much more welcomed in the state structures and have more chances to get prestigious positions than others¹⁹.

In this regard, a strategic role of political elites should also be taken into consideration. Accordingly, not only the long-term effect of socialization is important to building the systems of beliefs, but also political elites' short-term interest. Thus, elites might as well tend to reject democratic regime due to the issues of efficiency and lack of democratic values²⁰. At the same time, in democratic transition, short-term political calculations might make elites themselves support democratic institutions due to political risks of losing power. In any case, numerous researches prove strong influence of the socialization of political elites on values implication.

A number of different factors that also impact on political elites' systems of belief should be taken into consideration as well. That is because it is sometimes very difficult (if not impossible) to find out which factor is crucial for one political group or another²¹. Even if former authoritarian elites imply democratic values, they lack the experience of ruling the country according to the principles of democracy. In this regard, it is also worth noting democratic elitism pays too much attention to the political parties' elites, almost neglecting elites as such. Moreover, it does not take into account their link with huge financial and media resources that currently play significant role in the struggle for power. To cope with it, John Higley (in terms of classic elites approach) assumes that elites create and support democracies as well as they create and support every other political regime, also claiming that democracy can be built only by a consensually united political elites²².

Overall, a mixture of political and theoretical developments has revived interest to the theory of elites during the last decades of the twentieth century. Decision making process and the importance of elites' political provisions and actions became an issue of significant attention by political analyses and scientific research areas. The main outcome of such developments was an assumption that elites' choices and actions guide spectacular economic and political changes and virtually shape transitions of regime in the third wave of democratization²³.

¹⁹ Ibidem, p. 75.

²⁰ Ibidem.

²¹ Ibidem, p. 67.

²² J. Higley, *Democracy and elites*, "Polity" 2006, No. 2, pp. 22–31.

²³ J. Higley, G. Lengyel, *Elite Theory Versus Marxism*, op.cit., p. 238.

On the other hand, the confrontation between the Marxist theory of elites and a classic one has been (partly) blurred by a set of theories stemming from the liberal thought. One may conclude that the so called “democratic theories” have not achieved such support and scope as the Marxist and classic elite theories have. They serve, most likely, as a normative vision rather than an explanation of political and social change²⁴. Hence, taking into account the abovementioned statements, there is still a significant gap in defining the nature and the role of political elites in the modern world²⁵.

Concerning the role of political elites in particularly democratic societies, it should be noticed that there are two common features adherent to political elites. Firstly, social composition of political elites does not correspond with a social structure of a society. Secondly, political leaders themselves quite significantly differ from the rest of elites and thus they need to be judged on different terms²⁶. In this regard, one should pick out four ways of political elites’ differentiation. They are the following:

1. The extent of differentiation the political elites from the rest of elite.
2. The level of internal unity/disunity.
3. The mechanisms of recruiting and circulation.
4. Average duration and flow of those who belong to political elites²⁷.

Naturally, one assumes that the further political elites find themselves from the rest of elites, the more democratic the regime is. It is also well-known that the non-Western societies usually face significant problems with the distance between political elites and the rest of elites, as it makes it difficult to define an extent to which political elites impact society²⁸. J. Higley and G. Lengyel call it elite differentiation. In other words, this is an extent to which elite groups seem socially and organizationally heterogeneous, each coping with its own boundaries, formal and informal rules etc. Elite differentiation usually keeps up with the processes of industrialization and modernization of society. However, it might slow down, as was the case under state socialism, if, for instance, dominant political elites do their best to make functionally specialized, autonomous elites to stick to a single ideology, religious dogma, or a ethno-nationalist creed²⁹.

²⁴ Ibidem, pp. 230–231.

²⁵ J. Blondel, F. Muller-Rommel, op.cit., p. 820.

²⁶ Ibidem, p. 824.

²⁷ Ibidem.

²⁸ Ibidem.

²⁹ J. Higley, G. Lengyel, *Elite Configurations after State Socialism* [in:] *Elites after State Socialism. Theories and Analysis*, J. Higley, G. Lengyel (eds.), Lanham 2000, p. 2.

Concerning the role of political elites in the process of democratization, one should also consider the issue of internal distinctiveness of political elites to define the centres of influence and competition among different elite groups. In this case, the higher is the distance between political elites and business elite groups, the more democratic the society is.

However, at the same time, newer models of elite theories assume that the democratic political system, most of all, needs internal co-existence and cooperation between elites. Political elites that succeed in it, are called “consolidated united elites”. Thus, according to modern elite theories, only consolidated united elites can reach a compromise on the norms and values of political behaviour, bringing to existing political institutions effectiveness and success as the key factor in establishing a stable representative liberal democracy³⁰. In its turn, there are two dimensions of the level of unity of political elites that are normative and interactive dimensions. The former is the extent of shared beliefs and values, while the latter represents inclusive channels and networks through which elites obtain relatively assured access to key decision making centres³¹.

For John Higley himself, the extent of unity and differentiation is the key to configuration of the political elites. There can be a strong or a weak unity, accompanied by a wide or a narrow differentiation. For instance, united political elites are seen as integrated, concerted groups of people, united by certain agreements. Conversely, disunited political elites are clearly divided and separated from each other groups of people³².

In this regard, one could find the following division: consensually united political elites; ideocratically united, divided and fragmented political elites. Consensually united political elites are characterised by the co-existence of diverse and competing groups in relative harmony, embraced by sharing common democratic values³³. Ideocratically united political elites take place, when almost everybody belongs to one party or movement’s ideology, religious doctrine or ethno nationalist creed. For this, a single, official belief system is needed. Political elites in the Soviet Union and the other communist regimes of Eastern Europe, except Poland, experienced ideocratically united type of political elites³⁴. Divided

³⁰ T. Pettersson, *Pro-democratic Orientations, Political Shortcuts and Policy Issues: Comparative Analyses of Elite-Mass Congruence in Old and New Democracies* [in:] *Democracy under scrutiny: Elites, citizens, cultures*, Ursula van Beek (ed.), Opladen 2010, p. 123.

³¹ J. Higley, G. Lengyel, *Elite Configurations after State Socialism*, op.cit., p. 2.

³² J. Higley, M. Burton, op.cit., p. 337.

³³ Ibidem.

³⁴ Ibidem.

political elites typically consist of two or three distinct camps that find themselves in an open warfare. This type of elites is characterised by fear and insecurity due to the fact that there is usually one camp which controls the government, perceiving the opposing camps as a mortal threat. It can dominate for a long period of time, which inevitably follows usurpations, uprisings, riots, and terrorist actions fomented by the opposing camps, which generates deep and repeating political crises³⁵. Fragmented political elites are supposed to arise from the diversity of political, economic, cultural, and other groups, accompanying many democratic transitions, especially ones that involve sudden regime collapses or implosions³⁶. The theoretical value of distinguishing these elite types lies in their implications for political regime outcomes: consensually united elites produce stable democratic regimes; ideocratically united elites produce totalitarian regimes that tend to last for several generations; and disunited elites produce unstable regimes that may oscillate between authoritarian and democratic forms³⁷.

Taking into consideration all abovementioned issues, one may conclude that a significant challenge of the research on political elites' functioning in the face of the regime change and in terms of democratic transition has still not been faced. Naturally, the period of a regime change requires more detailed and specifically focused scientific investigation. Moreover, the role of political elites and their peculiar features urgently need to undergo a precise formulation and detailed theoretical and empirical researches. Nevertheless, specific methodological framework has been already constructed and developed to analyse the scope and dimension of such researches, along with numerous concepts and scenarios of possible outcomes of political elites' activities in terms of instability, split among top-leaders, economic hindrance and social dissatisfaction, one can still feel the lack of unified basic principles and profound explanation to particular political behaviour of different elites in the decision making processes in transition. There is a need in the search of such principles and the need for filling theoretical and empirical gap in the research on political elites. Discovering and defining the peculiarities of political elites' functioning in the regime change and democratic transition will result in better understanding of the characteristic features of political behaviour in the face of transition politics, thus resolving its numerous difficulties and obstacles on the way towards democratization.

³⁵ Ibidem, pp. 337–338.

³⁶ J. Higley, G. Lengyel, *Elite Configurations after State Socialism*, op.cit., p. 4.

³⁷ J. Higley, M. Burton, op.cit., p. 339.