When History Begins

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WHEN HISTORY BEGINS*

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Abstract: It is fashionable to claim 'the end of history'. As classical war seems to be over, many scholars – particularly Alexandre Kojève – argue that we currently face 'the end of international relations'. This article considers the opposite, that is to say how we are now at the real beginning of international relations, and even of 'intersocial relations', whereby social actors and individuals are more and more involved. Such an analysis is also a way of reinterpreting the dawn of IR, with its internal debates and tensions as well as their present transformations. The article questions the traditional typology of IR theories, and points out correlations between theoretical challenges and changes or evolutions of history. It is also a way for shedding light on what could be considered, in such a chaos, the French approach of International Relations. Is it only a 'French touch' or the basis of a new paradigm?

Keywords: IR theory, end of history, sociology of IR, power politics

As a philosopher, as well as a lawyer and a Franco-Russian diplomat, Alexandre Kojève (1902–1968) perceived recent IR transformations as the early signs of an end of History .[1] In a very shared vision, he postulated that IR resulted from a age-old rivalry among states, making this argument the corner-stone of all possible conceptual edifices. Here is probably the basic misunderstanding of our discipline which was too promptly defined, in Hobbes' wake, as a science of the war exclusively based on power politics. If globalisation now challenges state sovereignty, results in an ever denser network of international laws, transforms inter-state wars into intra-state conflicts, erases borderlines, then Kojève is definitely arguing correctly.

The spectre of a world society is thus properly perceived by Kojève as the real beginning of the end of History. Such a fear is however rooted in a vision which limits international politics to power politics shaped by a permanent confrontation among potential enemies. It opens up the perpetuation of IR as an inter-state set of relations. It provides a worldwide dimension to the specific European adventure that is a fragmentation of states and perpetual competition between them. Such a reduction dramatically structures the discipline, blinds the view of scholars and observers while paralysing actors and present policy-makers. What if this end of traditional IR, for erstwhile diplomats and soldiers was in fact the beginning of a new history? What

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1 Alexandre Kojève, *Introduction à la lecture de Hegel* (Paris: Gallimard, 1947) ; Alexandre Kojève, *Esquisse d'une phénoménologie du droit* (Paris: Gallimard, 1981).

if a new history was starting by including not only rival states, but also struggling or cooperating social actors and 'compenetrated' societies? What if 'intersocial' relations were taking the place of international relations?

A CHAOTIC DAWN

International politics has obviously a long history, but was belatedly built up as an academic discipline. Wars have then played a major role. For example, the first chair in IR was created at Aberyswith just after the First World War, but the new science was really organised just after the Second World War. This last trauma contributed to shaping it as a science of war and power. Without such a disaster, it could have been less oriented to war. Without US hegemony constructed during the war, it could have been conceived differently, probably as less American but more universal.

In its time, the Versailles Peace of 1919 paved another way which was leading to a science much more oriented to peace studies. The academic rallying cry was 'never again', in line with the League of Nations which was created at the same time. Scholars were then prompt to follow Norman Angell who published *The Great Illusion* just before 1914 in denouncing war as out of touch and old fashioned.[2] Intellectuals who were appointed by the US State Department and the British Foreign Office to participate in peace negotiations were known as pacifists, like Keynes, Zimmern or Toynbee.[3]

Institutes were promptly created in the USA and the UK for promoting international cooperation, more than working on war. The *Royal Institute of International Affairs* (1920) had to deal with the "different points of view of peoples and nations". The *American Institute of International Affairs* (1920) merged with the *Council on Foreign Relations* to work on a better understanding of international issues and on a more relevant foreign policy. The League of Nations boosted *the International Studies Conferences* which aimed to educate public opinion in various fields, like 'states in economic life', 'collective security', 'peaceful change' or 'economic policies and world peace'.

Obviously, the die was not cast and all the ways were still open to a very young and uncertain science. Hobbes seemed to be as far away as the next war was too. For this reason, the starry-eyed dreamers were probably the first to be blamed in 1945 after a war which entailed a pendulum swing. From a Kantian science, IR moved to a much more Hobbesian position. Without the two wars, IR studies would have certainly followed another path and probably with another form as well as another substance.

The Cold War was an excellent training field for Hobbesian paradigms with a polarised world, made of two rival camps, bringing antagonistic ideologies, and each able to destroy the other. The USSR and USA looked just like the gladiators described in the *Leviathan.* When looking back, the first IR science appeared as *ide-*

2 Norman Angell, *The Great Illusion* (New York: Knickerbocker Press, 1913).

3 Alfred Zimmern, *The League of Nations, and the Rule of Law* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1936). Sir Alfred Zimmern (1879–1957) was a well-known historian and political scientist. He is considered as one of the founding fathers of the League of Nations and UNESCO. Questioning realism, he was regarded as an idealist among the IR scholars.

alist, while the new one claimed to be *realist*: the great transformation was on. The USA became naturally the motherland of this new science which could not but make power its fetish: Weber and Hobbes were back!

Realism has then been commonly said to be the dominating theory. But is it really a theory or, more exactly, a posture? A theory would have provided a global explanation of the international arena, including all its parameters, actors, issues and histories, while realism is restricted to offering a narrative on rivalries among potentially warlike states. In such a perspective, international politics is purely synonymous with power politics and power should be considered without any limits or constraints. Moreover, power used outside the state is then quite different from power inside, and domestic politics as well as ethics have nothing to do with IR, as it was argued by Morgenthau.[4] What we get through this paradigm is a clear vision of international politics during the Cold War. We are, however, deprived of the main instruments for investigating the present global world arena.

Nevertheless, some nuances have to be made. Realism distrusts ethics when it thwarts power, but is still strongly bound to its moral roots and especially to American messianism. One of its founding fathers, Reinhold Niebuhr, was deeply marked by Protestant theology and its norms. US power did not claim to intervene without any moral concerns [5] .It aimed to contain Soviet military power and to block the 'Empire of evil'. Power is also reputed to have a virtuous orientation, and Hobbes is partially mistaken since not all the gladiators look the same. As a matter of fact, realism remains dependent on political context. It moved to neo-realism during the seventies when the Cold War became organised, with détente the order of the day, and a new bipolar order had to be considered. It generated a controversy between 'offensive' and 'defensive' realism when American hegemony was questioned and US foreign policy was torn between Carter's compromises and Reagan's inflexibility.

We can clearly glimpse the role of ideology no matter how blinded it was by realism. There was even a first as IR was never before so shaped by the clash of two ideologies which fed upon one another, to the extent of organising state rivalry as the main game. This 'main game' principle which is now clearly over is precisely the corner-stone of realist posture which makes it now out of fashion. But, even during this 'golden age', was this vision shared everywhere around the world? The overwhelming majority of books published in the discipline came from the USA, so much so that no one there had regard for other sources. The main conventions held in the field were organised by the ISA (*International Studies Association*) which was founded in the US in 1959, with its head office successively in Colorado, Minnesota, South Carolina and then Arizona. It brings together more than 5000 panellists every year, in a North American city, always with English as its working language. It also has book exhibitions displaying works written in English, while papers almost exclusively quote references in the same language.

In Europe, international studies are clearly humble and mainly constituted by British works. In the United Kingdom, scholars were building on a tradition inaugurated before the Second World War. The *British International Studies Association* extended the former 'Bailey conferences' thus distancing itself from the US partner. The 'English school', later dominated by the work of Martin Wight (1913-1972) and

4 Hans Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, (New York: Knopf 1964 (1948).
5 Reinhold Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society* (New York: Scribner's, 1947).

Hedley Bull (1932-1985), was built up in the footsteps of Kant and Grotius, even Durkheim and rather far from a Hobbesian vision. By stressing the role of solidarity, cooperation and 'international society', it was closer to the Continent rather than to US perspectives. [6]

Indeed, there is no 'Anglo-Saxon' science of international relations, as the UK and USA did not experience the Second World War in the same manner. If the latter could consider power as the source of its new hegemony, the former is still in the heritage of an old European history made of compromise and confrontation by which the United Kingdom was progressively shaped. The first is engaged in a messianic function, while the second places itself in a age-old international life of which it has always been one of the major actors.

The same is true on the Continent, and particularly in France, through the Durkheimian solidarist tradition, updated in international politics by the likes of Léon Bourgeois, Aristide Briand or Albert Thomas. As a sociologist, Durkheim emphasised integration in societies, mainly for lowering the intensity of conflicts and avoiding a class struggle. Globalisation is in line with this vision, as it requires a minimum of international integration. For this reason, Léon Bourgeois had an element of foresight when he argued, in 1907, that social issues as well as public opinion will play a more and more important role in international relations, and will be progressively substituted for military rivalry among states.[7] This vision boosted the League of Nations and opened a parallel way to multilateralism. Besides liberal institutionalism initiated by President Woodrow Wilson, consideration was given to the sociological roots and functions of international organisations. Weber lost his monopoly and Durkheimian integration became meaningful as an IR concept. Investigating a global order implied a detour by the classical heritage of the great sociological theories. However this vision was kept out of the American science for a long time. The word 'solidarity' is still ignored and has never been current among US IR scholars.

The German political scientist Harald Müller promoted a closely related vision when he compared the European and American traditions.[8] Europe is shown as plural and fragmented, focusing on particular histories, whereas the USA aims at a more global and universal vision. For this reason, American science gives priority to rationality, statistics and quantitative approaches. Quite the reverse is the case in Europe. Scholars keep their distance from rational choice and prefer approaches which are more connected with history or anthropology which shed light on the plurality of values and cultures. The Old Continent is moving to a more transdisciplinary conception of IR which clearly challenges a monolithic realism.

However, the American supremacy in IR studies was so strong that no real controversies took place over several decades, and the theoretical debate was never really embarked upon. Had it been, the evolution of the discipline would have certainly been different. The absence of real debate would explain the false sense of certainty and deceptive universalism which affect the mainstream of our discipline. A stronger participation of European social sciences as well as a real mobilisation of research

6 Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society. A Study of Order in World Politics* (London: Macmillan,1977); Emile Durkheim, *The Division of Labour in Society* (New York: Free Press, 1984 [1893]; Hugo Grotius, *Du droit de la guerre et de la paix* (Paris: PUF,1999); Martin Wight, *Systems of States*, (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1977); Martin Wight, *International Theory: The Three Traditions* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1991).

7 Léon Bourgeois, *Pour la Société des Nations* (Paris, Fasquelle, 1910).

8 Harald Müller, 'Are Distinct IR Reflected in Diverging Security Policies?' *multig*, Groningen, (October 2007)

coming from Asia, Africa or Latin America would certainly have given a different shape to IR theory which would have been richer, more flexible and more universal.

The real configuration of IR theory as it emerged has actually reduced History to one history and universality to one culture. This unfortunate simplification was acceptable during the Cold War, as it was closely inspired by realist rules of game. It becomes unacceptable in the new context of globalisation. Realism can hardly take into account decolonisation and the final victory of the weakest gladiators. It is still hampered by the failing universalisation of state rationality in a globalised world. It fails to understand new international conflicts in their complexities[9] and does not succeed in interpreting correctly cultural pluralism in the international arena, save for mobilising an highly controversial concept – the 'clash of civilizations.' This lack of anthropological vision led directly to developmentalist naiveties, cultural essentialism and a very conservative vision of new international conflicts.

The main features of globalisation are poorly visible and weakly construed through realist constructions. Inclusiveness is poorly compatible with the realist narrative. Non-state actors cannot be spotted except as very marginal ones while the increasing role of a mass communication which challenges sovereignties and territories up to classical geopolitics is underrated.

Inclusiveness questions the old club diplomacy and outdates the Vienna Congress which, for a long time, served Western diplomacy. It weakens the concept of polarity as well as the postulate of an ordered international system. Is then China compatible with Hobbesian standards? In its several thousand year history, the Chinese empire has never really experienced a gladiator game in which it would have been opposed to equivalent Powers, as European states were. Conquest was limited to its own margins and has never resulted in long distance projections. As the 'Middle Empire', it developed a sense of otherness which is quite different from that which we find among Western countries. It ignores the others rather than trying to convert them to its own vision. It has never been attracted by universalism and never brought a messianic vision of international action, except as it was briefly and superficially captured by Marxism which, significantly, was imported from Europe! The present debate on China in the new global world is largely pre-empted by the uncertain compatibility between Chinese history and the realist historical narrative.

The earlier entrance of Japan into globalisation gave rise to the same scepticism. 'Globalization from below', as described by Jeremy Brecher,[10] reveals the social roots of a transformation which took place in the Archipelago after the Second World War and which was poorly controlled by political actors. It also underlines the role of transnational social networks binding Japanese society to other countries. Sociology and anthropology need then to be used in preference to classical geopolitics for reaching a convincing explanation of this development. The same would be true of the forms of 'new regionalism' promoted in Asia through 'natural economic territory' [11] which challenge the classical territorial order beyond sovereign states.

A similar argument could also be applied to rising Powers, especially India and Brazil which cannot be compared with European history, as well as Arab or African countries. The Arab Spring confirms the specific historicity of the region and the

9 Mary Kaldor, *New and Old Wars* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999).

10 Jeremy Brecher, Tim Costillo, Brendan Smith (eds.), *Globalization from Below: the Power of Solidarity* (Cambridge: South End Press, 2000).

11 Robert Scalapino, 'The United States and Asia: Future Prospects', *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 70, No. 5 (1991)

inadequacy of European paradigms for taking it into account. An anthropological investment is needed for interpreting their politics, to ferret out many dangerous common phrases like 'African tribalism' or 'Arab fundamentalism'. While a realist geopolitics inclines to reify such categories, a sociological analysis takes them as markers of a failed international social integration. When a realist analysis brings these features back to the norms of a classical inter-state competition it gives an incorrect vision of these conflicts and creates illusions on the way to deal with and solve them. Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, Congo, along with Vietnam, cannot be reduced to a simple competition of state Powers, nor can these conflicts be compared with the Thirty Years War.

IN SEARCH OF ALTERNATIVE MODELS

This realist stubbornness has to be explained. Is it due to a lack of theoretical choice, or a too limited debate inside the discipline? Controversies were not absent, but not really clear, and have never toppled the realist hegemony. Marxism could have been a challenge, but appeared, in the Cold War context, as an ideological rival rather than a scientific competitor. Beyond it, three other debates suggest the reshaping of IR and give rise to a possible new configuration to the academic field. The first one is certainly the oldest. It dates back to the 17th century when it opposed Hobbes to Grotius. The second one has its roots in the 19th century when a science of power was opposed to a science of integration. The last one took place in the USA when realism had to meet behaviourism. All of them could have been very sharp, but they were actually skated over or at least ambiguous. When they became more radical, they resulted precisely in the myth of the end of History.

A strong debate could have structured the discipline of IR by opposing two traditions, one coming from Hobbes and the dominant vision, the other from Grotius. Should the latter have been the winner, IR studies would have been more promptly oriented to transnational relations, and peace studies would have probably provided a vision of a less belligerent world as is required by commerce. It is probably why princes and decision-makers did not really trust the famous Dutch lawyer during the state-building time when war-making reinforced state-making and contained the pressure for democracy. They could not but observe that his references to natural law limited their room for free political and military manoeuvres. His liberal heirs turned out to be timorous and moderate. They were not committed to all the aspects of Grotius' work. Instead of being inspired by the conclusions of his major book, and notably his exhortations to 'good faith and peace' in diplomacy, they preferred to remember his praise of competition which resulted in their mind in an apology for a free market. They pointed to his references to 'just war' without taking into account what Grotius wrote on 'dubious causes' which prefigured so many subsequent military interventions.[12]

For these reasons, liberalism has never been a strong challenge to realism. It was successively incarnated and reincarnated into secularism, enlightenment, free market, property, individualism and democracy. Unstable in its nature, it appears as

12 Hugo Grotius, *Du droit de la guerre et de la paix* (Paris: PUF, 1999).

a chameleon which nevertheless is unable to contain the realist credo. It can hardly be situated in the IR theory debate and cannot be considered as homogeneous nor as a clear retort to realism. Richard Beardsworth pointed out that it was alternately libertarian, neo-liberal, social democrat, republican, even radical. As such, it has been borrowed or captured by each of these trends.[13] Hobbes was thus considered as a liberal when he supported a free competition among states even though he distrusted individual liberties. Locke was considered as such when he argued that the independence of states is a collective liberty as well as that territorial integrity should be in the line of a collective conception of the property right. China would be in perfect accordance with such a Lockian vision!

Referring to liberalism, Stuart Mill was mainly anti-interventionist,[14] while Cobden was strongly against any kind of intervention, as it denies liberty. French Girondins were pro-intervention on behalf of a liberal credo, as are contemporary neocons, as they consider intervention as an instrument of emancipation and liberty. Bentham had a finely-shaded opinion, whereas Canning, the liberal foreign minister, considered it favourably when it suited his own policy! Some of the liberals were militantly in favour of an increasing role for institutions in international governance, especially Woodrow Wilson who claimed to contain war and instability by promoting international institutions and multilateralism. However neocons struggled against international organisations by using liberal arguments, while the ultra-liberal Ronald Reagan or Margaret Thatcher considered that international institutions did not have any role in the international game.

In such a confusion, liberalism and realism alternately supported and faced each other, as if the original opposition between Grotius and Hobbes had faded. Actually, debates reacted to a political context much more than to a theoretical controversy. Confrontations arose about the use of multilateralism, the opportunity for foreign intervention or the status of US hegemony. In spite of its strong visibility, the 'neo-neo controversy', opposing the contemporary derivations of both realism and liberalism during the eighties, mirrored political research on the best way for keeping or restoring American leadership after the defeat in Vietnam which challenged US hard power for the first time. As they kept far from a real theoretical debate, both of them even tended towards the same conclusions. If liberalism admits the relevance of non-state actors in the international arena, it does not question the primordial role of the state. Although it claims the central role of inter-state conflicts, realism opts for a rational choice analysis which makes the state like a rational firm and then joins up with the liberal mainstream. Like realism, liberalism fell through its attempts to set itself up as a global theory of international relations. It only amended the Hobbesian discourse by stressing a very flexible and blurred vision of what liberty should be on the international arena. However, both of them were reluctant to become aware of anthropology, history, social structures and transnational solidarities, by sticking to a strictly monodisciplinary vision of international relations.

These ignored aspects could have been highlighted in Europe at the end of the 19th century when the Old Continent was strongly affected by the class struggle at the domestic level. Actors and scholars came then to value social integration and solidarity as a necessary orientation of domestic policies. Emile Durkheim opposed

13 Richard Beardsworth, *Comspolitanism and International Relations Theory* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2011).
14 Stuart Mill, 'A Few Words on Nonintervention', in G. Himmelfarb (ed.), *Essays on Politics and Culture* (Gloucester: Peter Smith, 1973).

the concept of social integration to the Weberian concept of power. Politics was no more considered through domestic hard power but through its social substratum. Even if Durkheim never extended his interpretation to international politics, some of his followers used and mobilised his postulates for promoting a new vision of international life along these lines. The initiative came more from politicians, like Léon Bourgeois, Albert Thomas or Aristide Briand and was hardly passed on to social sciences. This new direction strongly affected the League of Nations, the ILO, the Briand-Kellog Pact or Locarno. Competition among states was denounced as the main cause of the global 'European weakness'. When war is considered as a necessary evil, Bourgeois objects that it is a "barbarian theory": Hobbes is far away and the conclusion goes to a needed introduction of a real sociological perspective.[15]

Peace is then perceived in a positive way and must be set up and managed through law, and particularly the rights of peoples. Peace is therefore defined as the corner-stone of international politics, while its main motor has to be located in the respective societies. Bourgeois claims that peoples were formerly isolated by state sovereignty and are more and more inclined to a mutual solidarity since sovereignty is then only 'relative'. Conflicts are now considered in their social origins to which they are more due than to political and military competition. The French lawyer Georges Scelle thus considers that states are more and more 'compenetrated'. [16] International politics is hereafter at the confluence of law, political science, sociology, economics and history.

This embryonic vision of a new science was however marginal. It was never used during the Cold War with which it was hardly in tune. This was the case even in France, where Raymond Aron had a clear preference for realism and Max Weber while he severely questioned the Durkheimian heritage.[17] Only a very few scholars in the discipline turned to sociology, the notable exceptions including David Mitrany, John Burton or Norbert Elias, even if the latter observes that civilisation affects international politics only at its margins.

While it was constituted as a science in USA, IR had to define itself in relation to other social sciences which grew up in the American universities during the sixties and the seventies. Such a confrontation could have been the third one which would have contributed to the evolution of the discipline. It was, however, marginal and moderate. IR was clearly closed and relatively impervious to influences coming from political science. Obviously, behaviouralism introduced new and useful perspectives, especially in foreign policy analysis, stressing the role of affect, misperception or prejudice in the decision-making process. However, behaviouralism did not succeed in overcoming the rational choice illusion in the international field as it did in the domestic sphere. Standing alone and outside, IR did not benefit from the main stimulating controversies which took place in political science, neither on the state, nor on power (this debate occurred mainly in the UK with Susan Strange or in Canada with Robert Cox), while the controversy around the concept of non-decision could have been fruitful in international studies. Nothing convincing can have been found in IR on culture and politics, but a very simplified and provocative hypothesis on the 'clash of civilisations' which totally ignores Geertz' contribution

15 Léon Bourgeois, *op. cit.*
16 Georges Scelle, *Précis de droit des gens* (Paris: Sirey, 1932).
17 Raymond Aron, *Peace and War: A Theory of International Relations* (New York: Doubleday, 1966 [1962]).

to anthropology and political science.[18] The strong separation between the domestic and the international kept the discipline away from the research on political behaviour, mobilisation and social movements, at least up to Rosenau's works, and more recent research on transnational social movements.[19]

Scholars definitely exchanged very little across the lines which separated IR from the other social sciences. International studies had to pay grievously for getting and keeping an abusive status of exception. Blocked in a ghetto, IR was condemned to a kind of rigid conservatism. It was as though an international fact was so very different from other facts that it had to be kept away from all improvements and benefits found elsewhere.

THE BREAKING POINT

That is why changes could not come other than from a drastic change in the context. Will we breath indefinitely the air of 1947? Are the minor amendments from all the 'neos' sufficient? The Cold War sequence is not eternal, however much this idea may hurt the major part of the academic (even political) community. Even polarity which was so lately accepted [20] is no more lasting, its collapse contributed to questioning the conceptual edifice. However this founding order could not last, as it arose from very exceptional, even hazardous circumstances – the advent of nuclear weapons, the defeat of nazism and the victory of two rising super Powers, a paroxysmal ideological confrontation, a colonial order which kept two thirds of the planet out of the system, and a global economic reconstruction. All these features obviously did not disappear. The break was not sharp nor absolute and we are not confronted by a strong paradigmatic revolution. Changes are too drastic for explanation through the interpretative capacity of classical theory, but not drastic enough for prompting the epistemic community to change its conceptual background.

Actually, the conceptual edifice vacillated as soon as sovereignty weakened. As an 'organised hypocrisy',[21] sovereignty was the corner-stone of the Westphalian system. It helped to define the state, to justify their competition, to validate the founding distinction between inside and outside, and even to make war meaningful. As a fiction, it created legitimacy and provided coherence in the international order. When did such a mechanism break down? Probably when sovereignty lost its meaning and when solidarity got into the international arena being no longer confined to the domestic sphere. This change should not be considered as an ethical progress, but as a trivial result of the technological changes in communication, and most obviously to the increasing interdependence which is the main principle of globalisation. International action is no longer limited to competition and a gladiator struggle, but has more and more to include strategies which go beyond a zero sum game. Crisis and conflict are less and less a result of a power competition, but an effect of social discrepancies and social pathologies. Power is no more a way of regulation and bal-

18 Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Free Press, 1973).
19 James Rosenau, *Turbulence in World Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990); Sidney Tarrow, *The New Transnational Contention* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).
20 Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York: Addison-Wesley, 1979).
21 Steven Krasner, *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

ancing, when this function cannot be effectively achieved by social regulation and transnational solidarity.

IR is then attracted by a new agenda which is to be dominated by the 'tectonic aspects of societies'. Social issues, in a global world, are more and more externalised and become major international issues, while the economic and social dimensions of nation-states are increasingly interdependent. How can we forget that hunger in the world results in 2800 deaths every three hours, almost the exact number of casualties caused by the attack on the World Trade Center? How can we ignore the international consequences of such a drama, even on the social behaviour of those most likely to be affected and who compare their plight to that of others throughout the world? How can we deny the effect of such social issues on present world conflicts? How can we imagine that they do not fuel frustration, humiliation, even life depreciation and create new commitments for radical transnational movements? How can we feel reassured by believing that military instruments are able to contain these new conflicts?

In the meantime, failures and disasters among the weakest states and their populations entail potentially grave and costly setbacks for the most powerful ones. Environmental catastrophes in the southern world, health deterioration, particularly the AIDS drama, and collapsing states are jeopardising the security of northern countries. With globalisation, one actor's failure is likely to threaten its partners' position. Realist egoism is no longer productive, when altruism is getting more and more strategic. As a matter of fact, international relations are less exclusively political than realists considered them to be, while social and economic dimensions are more and more relevant, pushing interdependence to the very centre of the new practices. Indeed, 'politics among nations' is then becoming 'the social among nations'. For this reason, sociology is ever more relevant in the field, when geopolitics become marginal and illusory.

This decreasing relevance of 'power politics' entails a loss of meaning in the familiar opposition of 'friend-enemy'. The Cold War period was clearly rooted in this opposition as the enemy was then evident and frontal. When it won the Cold War, the USA was prompt to look for a new enemy, which it found in China which, however, quickly declined this new role. The US then turned to 'rogue states', even 'terrorist' groups or networks like Al Qaida. Such an evolution broke up the concept of enemy which can hardly be used for describing asymmetric relations, even worse, for considering non-state actors, deprived of territories, armies, laws and governments. As a pivot-concept in realist theory, it implied symmetry, a front, a zero-sum game, equivalence and absolute separation. With these fading, it directly questions the relevance of classical theory.

This Schmittian concept reflected specific European history, in which the enemy shaped international life, but also states and political strategies.[22] It even regulated the balance of power through which the potential rebirth of the 'Unique Monarchy' could be prevented. As such, it was the first realist narrative. Now the game is over. New actors and partners in the global world are not committed to the same history. China never used this way of constructing the enemy. It has now understood very promptly that it has no interest to speed up or even entail the collapse of its partners, either its main debtor, or all the Western economies upon which it depends. It was

22 Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

easily convinced that the zero sum game is over. China grasped globalisation earlier than all the other partners when it understood that this new context implied revisiting the very concept of enemy and to conceive international relations in a much more fluid way, in which enmity, indifference and friendship tend to merge.

With globalisation, the more powerful a state, the less it would be rationally inclined to play the Schmittian card of enmity, while weak or poor states would have good reasons to stay in the classical Schmittian role. It helps them gain diplomatic visibility, to consolidate their ability to mobilise and to strengthen their institutions and even challenge the great Powers. North Korea, Iran and Saddam Hussein's Iraq play or played this card. But is it still enmity? When opposition is not a structural one, when fighting is not balanced, when potential war cannot imply any more a zero sum situation? What is true for weak states is even more evident for groups, militias or networks. The logic of the state declines to the benefit of the logic of societies. Is it meaningful to be the enemy of a society or a part of a society, a religion, or even of an interpretation of this religion? If this pivot concept looses a part of its meaning, it pulls down with it the concept of military efficiency and alliance. It is then probably the beginning of a new history.

THE BEGINNING OF A NEW HISTORY

We are probably at the very beginning of an international history which turns into 'intersocial' history, involving individuals, social actors and social dynamics. Societies enter the world arena, not as instruments, but as full and effective actors, with their culture(s), religion(s), economies and social behaviour. At the negotiating table, princes and diplomats had formerly a monopoly of international choice. The practical issue which is presently at stake is to imagine how to build up an international partnership with these new actors; the scientific challenge is to determine how to take them into account, as sovereignty-free actors and as power reducers.

In fact, liberalism was supposed to work in that direction. However, by stressing the role of markets, it tended in its analysis towards the *homo economicus*, while liberal paradigms could hardly engage with social actors and social structures. Teivo Teivanen points out that globalisation gave an impetus to economics and to the triumph of an economic science which is more and more conceived as positive, technical and neutral at the risk of threatening democratic choice.[23] It clearly appeared when Papandreou and Berlusconi were brought down and substituted by two technocrats who were trained by MIT and the Goldman Sachs Bank.

This new vision of economics should be partly considered as an imposture since economic science is neither neutral, nor causal, nor prescriptive, while globalisation cannot be reduced to economics, even less to markets and still less to liberalism. As it should be seen as inclusive and structured by new sophisticated ways of communication, it has to be considered firstly as a social system.[24] Following this trend, IR mixes with social relations and goes beyond what the most advanced liberals could

23 Teivo Teivanen, *Enter Economism, Exit politics: Experts, Economic Policy and the Damage to Democracy* (London: Zed Press, 2002).

24 Jan Aart Scholte, *Globalization. A Critical Introduction* (New York: Palgrave, 2000).

argue. The state is then more than a 'market state'[25] or a 'competition state', the main function of which would be to improve economic competitiveness.[26] In the same manner, the international arena cannot be described only through political hegemony or economic multipolarity because it also includes expressions of identity (ethnicity, religion) articulating resistance, frustration and protests which gain increasing international relevance, as the Arab Spring shows. Globalisation creates new insecurities, arouses new frustrations, reshapes and internationalises social behaviour, causes new social inequalities and then new tensions, even a new democratic deficit.[27] By acquiring an international dimension, all these social facts become major international issues, entailing new conflicts and new threats: political and military choices are then less relevant than this new 'social tectonic' which would explain the 'AfPak' war in a more convincing manner than classical geopolitics. 'Terrorist groups' appear as new 'violence entrepreneurs' who have promptly grasped how they could turn this social substratum to their advantage.

IR studies are then reoriented according to five major axes. The first one would be to seize the social issues which are presently shaping the international arena, issues which are rarely highlighted by states that marginalise them as 'development issues', keeping them out the strategic field without taking into account their real *international* relevance. However social issues have an increasing visibility owing to the progress of communication and the urbanisation of social pathologies which are less and less located in rural zones. Social pathologies are then articulated by entrepreneurs of violence in terms of ethnicity or religion and move as such into the international arena.

The second axis is shaped by this transformation; social tectonic movements gain increasing precedence over interstate conflicts. Even if some of them are still active or potential, the major part of world conflicts should be analysed as reflecting social tensions: what can state diplomacies efficiently do for solving them? What is the relevance of military instruments for containing them?

The third one points to legitimacy which cannot be exclusively located in terms of law and democracy, when it also has to take into account how states are able to handle and deal with social mobilisations. As a matter of evidence, new ways of legitimisation try to operate by articulating social protest and transferring it into the international arena, giving birth to a new kinds of 'international populisms', of which Indira Gandhi, Gamal Abdel Nasser, and particularly Hugo Chavez were among the harbingers. A radical version of this strategy can even lead to violence, as can be observed in the AQMI rhetoric. Repression is then inefficient and even fuels the mobilisation of protest. International violence is more social than political in its roots – its Clausewitzian nature is clearly questioned.

A fourth axis is constituted by studying the new diplomacy. With the rise of 'intersocial' relations, diplomacy cannot keep its original configuration. If diplomacy has to manage separateness,[28] politics cannot be considered as its exclusive focus, while states cannot pretend to be the only diplomatic actors. New diplomacy has to follow 'social routes', including new paths, new issues and new partners coming

25 Philip Bobbitt, *The Shield of Achilles: War, Peace and the Course of History* (Knopf: Doubleday, 2003).
26 Philip Cerny, 'Paradoxes of the Competition State: The Dynamics of Political Globalization', *Government and Opposition*, Vol. 32, No. 2, (April 1997), pp. 251–274.
27 Jan Aart Scholte, *op. cit.*
28 Paul Sharp, *Diplomatic Theory of International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 30.

particularly from civil societies. Local government, firms, NGOs and the media now have a major role to play, leading to a 'transnational diplomacy'.[29]

Finally, regulation and governance acquire another meaning thus creating a final axis. Regulation was exclusively achieved through state diplomacy and inter-state negotiations, in a hegemonic manner or in an oligarchical way which consigned the management of the world to the biggest Powers. P5 and G8 are certainly the clearest illustration of this messianic delegation. The first option led to the 'hegemonic stability' thesis[30] or to the 'benign leader' assertion.[31] The second one was invented and promoted by middle powers and particularly European ones which expected to retain a role in world governance. Both options are in crisis. Hegemony is more and more questioned and oligarchy does not lead anymore to decisions, but merely tinkers with world order in order to promote its survival. Exclusion weakens and jeopardises global stability and does not at all suit new intersocial relations, as it did in the context of power politics. As soon as integration becomes a fundamental principle, any kind of exclusion becomes dysfunctional and fuels frustration, humiliation and violence.

Regulation is possible when social tectonic movements are taken into account. The Arab Spring, the Greek crisis in Europe, Palestine, the Sahel, AfPak, all give clear evidence of the role played by social dynamics and make interstate regulation outdated, while the absence of any kind of well-tested methods of social regulation lead all these conflicts into a deadlock. That is certainly why this new history is not more peaceful than the previous one. But it is clearly more intense, more universal and more human. It is also potentially more participative and less oligarchical. As long as it is built on grave social pathologies, it will cause more international violence. In the previous sequence, societies were set up as states for making war and strengthening their own identities. We are now facing the opposite: as social violence directly creates a new international violence which grows according to the unpredictability of societies. Instead of being the Hobbesian instrument of a potentially permanent war among gladiators, the international system is a possible instrument of peaceful regulations.

This great transformation is presently looking towards new trends in IR theory. Historical sociology, constructivism, post-modernism, post-colonialism all open IR studies to other disciplines and try to put an end to their ghettoisation. It is in human nature to interpret what is unknown through that which is known and indexed. But is it right to persist in error, to consider Bin Laden like Brezhnev or the Afghan War like the Second World War, to flaunt failure as a false success? Time has come to move to an inclusive vision of the new international relations, to make the analysis more historical and sociological, in order to begin a new history.

29 Bertrand Badie, "Transnationalizing Diplomacy and Global Governance", in Pauline Kerr, Geoffrey Wiseman,ed., *Diplomacy in a Globalizing World*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2013

30 Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

31 Charles Kindleberger, *The World in Depression*, 1929–1939 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973).