INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS THEORY AND DEVELOPMENTS IN THE BLACK SEA AREA BEFORE AND AFTER THE FALL OF COMMUNISM

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The end of the Cold War also brought the end of the bipolar geopolitical system. The regional level of analysis regained its pre-Cold War importance. The text investigates the context in which the Black Sea region received a new strategic shape and, simultaneously, a new geopolitical importance. The instruments used by this analysis are especially those of the sociology of international relations. A special accent regards Romania's position in the Black Sea security complex.

The common prejudice that history is a sum or succession of events of greater or less importance which significances will sooner or later end with imposing certain *post-factum* proven causality holds true for Central and Eastern Europe as well as the Black Sea area, which experienced a coming out of totalitarianism of a Communist type.

The time span that elapsed from the collapse of the Soviet system and the official end to the "Cold War" is, unfortunately, too short to allow for an explanatory historiographic paradigm able to evidence the dynamic and evanescent international realities of a decade in which the metamorphoses with direct impact in the area conventionally named the Black Sea basin were deepgoing and speedy.

If, in strictly geographic terms this area comprises only the riparian countries – Romania, Bulgaria, Turkey, Georgia, Russia and Ukraine – or sizeable parts of them, in geo-political and geo-economic terms, the same area denotes an expansion with less clear delineations that stretches toward the Balkans, the Aegean Sea, Eastern Mediterranean, the Near East and the Middle East as well as the Caspian basin. This is because the repercussions of the events or the connections between events in one or another region have directly/indirectly affected, to a greater or less extent, relations between the Black Sea riparian countries and the countries in their close proximity.

We mean, first of all, the Balkans, a region of multiple cultural and religious interconnections, with a tragic history, imbued with multi-century traditions and frustrations, the stage of successive army clashes and inter-ethnic conflicts of great magnitude, a region aptly called "the powder keg of Europe" (this region will be the object of our future analysis of the mutual determinations and influences between the Balkans and the Black Sea area).

The effects of such conflicts have led to economic and especially politic relations among states straining off, leaving an imprint on the standards of living and favouring dependency of these states upon states that are stronger in military

terms, as well as favouring the emergence of regional trusteeships and of the so-called regional powers.

Economy has stayed the most important factor, which sometimes recorded declines or was badly affected by embargoes and military operations, as was the case with Yugoslavia, generating social insecurity, instability and moral crises, a rise in tensions related to domestic or external neighbourliness.

During the Cold War (CW) period, most of the theories, doctrines or elements of theories of the so called new International Relations (IR) science were devoted to questions and analyses relating to maintaining superpowers' stability, rather then to questions and analyses of the changes and transformations in a system. Thus, the end of the CW occasioned something of a crisis in the conventional IR theory.

Neither of the two main paradigms – the Neo-Realism and the Neo-Liberalism – had predicted systemic changes of this order of magnitude.

IR professionals were misled by the attachment to theories presented by respectable authors concerning the great power of behaviour and the role of ideas, belief systems and leadership.

Anyhow, regarding the demise of the CW, there is a consensus among IR theoreticians that the single most important factor was Gorbachev's "new thinking" and his pursuit of "Glasnost" (openness) Perestroika (restructuring) and democracy in the USSR from 1985 onwards.

The wide-ranging concessions to these so-called doctrines engendered, accelerated or complemented by the "Regan Doctrine" effectively brought the CW to an end.

Thus, the disintegration of the Soviet Union itself, in general, was an unintended, unforeseen phenomenon.

Yet, in order to get a clearer picture of the theoretic delineations that put some sense into the political and diplomatic developments in Eastern Europe and especially the Black Sea area before and after the fall of Communism we should mark out some highlights of the changes having occurred that have affected the whole area.

Usually, there is justification behind any domestic or foreign policy action that is practical in the first stand and grounded in certain doctrinaire elements legitimating the action in question.

That is why deciphering and anticipating the course of political events have become possible, even when there are still some discords or occurrences that do not follow the trajectory anticipated by the advocates of contemporary theories. This is because each country and each actor has particular features and especially own dynamics as far as the realities in question go.

There are two concurring elements that help decipher the policy of a state and ascribe its development trends to one theory or another, i.e. the density of international events in which the given state participate and the dynamics in the domestic policy of each participating actor.

Also in the case under consideration, namely the Black Sea area, there are a multitude of events having happened over a relatively small period of time that have nevertheless upset all the previous calculations and theories.

As mentioned before, the dynamics specific to the domestic policy of a given state have to be taken into account, which generates a totally unexpected result.

In other words, the changes having occurred in the Black Sea area, its division/regionalisation, the emerging relations between older and newer states, the domestic policy of these states reflected in the ties with neighbour or far countries, cannot be explained with the aid of a single theoretical construction, and consequently there is need for elements from many widely circulated political and IR theories.

That is why, I believe the following elements can explain and define a theoretical framework for the developments and current state of affairs in the Black Sea area.

Firstly, the "Gorbachev Doctrine," which made all this openness and transformation possible; then, the regionalisation element taken from the theory of interdependence advocated by Keohane and Nye.

Insecurity is an equally important element, which many theoreticians point out, with different emphasis and personal options.

In order to decipher the current state of affairs, we should make use of the "Balance of Power" concept and some elements from Holsti's theory about the "weak state."

The End of the Cold War: the Final Countdown and Present Projections

Coming back to the events and changes that marked a turning point in contemporary times, namely the collapse of the Iron Curtain and the implosion of the Soviet Union, we have to take note of the end of a bi-polar power structure revolving around rivalry between the United States of America and the former USSR that left its imprint on the lines of power around the world as well as on the system of international relations created in the aftermath of WW II. This can be said to be the first set of changes.

A second set of changes relate to the modifications in the nation-states that abandoned the Communist model and had to face the dramatically thorny issues of a transition toward a market economy. The Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia have all disbanded, leaving behind a series of successor states that either recovered the historical tradition of suppressed statehood, or built their ad-hoc statehood.

In the new European configuration, all these states had to redefine their national interests. Many were the times in which the affirmation of post-Communist statehood colluded with the national interest of neighbour countries

or the interests of national minorities within or outside newly established borders.

The re-division of Europe in two blocs could be said to constitute the third series of changes in conjuncture with the end of the "Cold War." This time, the division is not along ideological lines, but rather along political and economic reasons and the divide is between Central Europe and Eastern Europe.

The fourth set of changes relate to the modifications in the role of international organisations. International organisations are faced with new challenges, somehow different from the challenges of the times when the two superpowers would vie for world dominance. The United States are increasingly hegemonic, becoming a dominant superpower in the world arena, a superpower to which there is no counterweight, which has unhesitatingly assumed a mission to protect or reconfigure the world order under some global or visionary projects. Both UN and NATO were convinced to get in the trailer of the American policy and even its state interests, their guiding and decision role as well as their status of actors in the field of international relations and crisis management having considerably diminished in the process.

Although the Warsaw Pact crumbled and NATO has atrophied to becoming a politico-military alliance following its expansion to Eastern Europe, other bodies and organisations concerned with maintaining equilibrium and security on the old Continent sprang up, diversifying their tasks or burdening their agenda with new issues (see the European Union or the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe). At the same time, new regional institutions were created in the quest for a kind of an association that will be consonant with the interests of the member countries, by countries preoccupied with avoiding marginalisation or the dilution by big local or international actors of their regional role (see the Black Sea Economic Co-operation Organisation).

Undoubtedly, the end of the "Cold War" also witnessed the demise of a certain kind of residual behaviour characterised by leanings toward ideological and military confrontation, as well as the defusing of tensions between East and West that had traced on the Elba, in Berlin, the Balkans and even in the Black Sea basin some allegedly impenetrable and hyper-secured borders, which were left extremely threatened and even vulnerable once the entire supporting system collapsed.

Besides being grounded in the psychosis of mutual nuclear annihilation perpetrated by the two blocs, the "Cold War" was also based on doctrinaire elements inspired by heterogeneous political and geopolitical orientations in their "Neo-Liberalist" or "Neo-Realist" versions, the sudden disappearance of Communist regimes from the world history took by surprise most of IR theoreticians and analysts, which had nevertheless worked out many short and medium-term scenarios.

The "Cold War" lived under the sign of tension and détente. The superpowers would incessantly conduct an exhausting and terrifying arm race,

relegating the rhetoric of disarming and concerns with world peace and security to the ritual of international diplomacy.

Any examination, be it a summary one, of famous IR theories oblige us to remark that they were much unable to configure a relevant reference system under which awareness and deciphering of the geopolitical issues facing the Black Sea area before and after the fall of Communism could be possible.

Many of the *en-titre* theoretic outgrowths that explicitly or tacitly point to the theories having exercised hegemony over international relations, either do not hold true at all, or they partially hold true. Without any intention of generalising or blaming en-masse various theoretical contributions, we could say that some of these outgrowths suffer from certain doctrinaire "heredities," reductive tendencies or normative propensities that do nothing but occulting certain aspects of the matters we want to bring up for discussion.

The "Gorbachev Doctrine" Between Illusions and Failures

Undoubtedly, the difficult economic state and the prospects facing the former Soviet Union in the 1980s had been a major component of the decision-making process conducted by the last Secretary General of the Soviet Communist Party Mikhail Gorbachev ever since his enthroning in 1985. Resizing the domestic and foreign policy of the former Soviet Union called into question the future of the USSR and, consequently, the future of the Communist bloc. Under the leadership of Gorbachev, a chapter closed in the world history, namely the Communist system, and a new era opened, the post-Communist era.

The promotion of *"Perestroika,"* and *"Glasnost"* as well as a new opening toward a diplomacy of partnership with the West meant to become a support for a domestic policy of gradual reform in the Soviet system, all contributed to the re-launch of the idea of "peaceful coexistence" between yesterday's adversaries, on the background of Moscow tolerating some tendencies toward emancipation under strict trusteeship of its Eastern-European satellites.

Gorbachev unequivocally rejected the doctrine of "limited sovereignty," which, under Brejnev, used to be the ideology to justify all the military campaigns of Moscow any time "the cause of Socialism" was perceived as being threatened (Hungary, 1956; Prague, 1968). The "Gorbachev Doctrine," if we may say so, no longer disregarded other actors in the international relations, be they big, small, important, or insignificant. Confining the areas of potential conflict could thus prove useful to all the protagonists. Dampening the arm race and increasing the concerns with making the traditional influence areas relatively secure were not so much the foreign policy option of a reforming Communist leader embarked on a race against time and fighting against the gerontocracy of the Politburo, as they were rather a strategic orientation, *volens-nolens*, a seemingly viable alternative in response to the technological and

consumerist challenges issued by the West to an exhausted Soviet Union no more able to keep pace with global competition.

As he was no longer willing to play the card of perpetual war threats, Gorbachev could not think of other logical solution than to disengage from the area outside the USSR borders and to withdraw into a security system guaranteed by arrangements with the Americans and a Germany left to fulfill its dream of reunification. The satellite countries orbiting Moscow were to create a *sui-generis* protective "sanitary cordon," patterned on the 1920s post-Versailles model, with Gorbachev hoping the West would not force the filling in of the security vacuum that resulted from the withdrawal of Russian troops within the union borders by an eastward expansion of the North-Atlantic Treaty Organisation. Yet, later developments were implacable: the Warsaw Pact countries hurried to change alliances, entering NATO one by one and thus falling short of the expectations of a crumbling Soviet Union no longer able to master its own, domestic security area (the conflicts in the Caucasus – Georgia, Nagorno Karabah and Chechnya – the break-away of the Baltic States from the Russian machinery, worsening situations in Central Asia, the August 1999 coup d'etat in Moscow, the nationalistic ambitions of Ukraine as well as the take-over by Yeltsin's Russia of the mandate to guarantee security in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), which was created on the ruins of the USSR).

While Soviet diplomacy under Gorbachev recorded notable achievements especially as far as limiting strategic nuclear weapons was concerned, and won more credibility in the eyes of Westerners, the management of Moscow's relations with the CIS republics aspiring to independence was, paradoxically, in stark contrast. The imperial center proves itself inertial and rigid as well as retrograde and out of synch with its own principles and slogans. Moscow preferred either to block things out or to delay them in an attempt to win time in its confrontation with nationalist and secessionist forces as well as with the advocates of independence in the CIS republics. Whenever it could, the imperial center overtly supported the pro-Russian components and organisations that were hostile to breaking away from the USSR, as it also fuelled suspicions, frustrations and the historical psychological complexes of the local ethnic communities through propaganda, economic as well as diplomatic blackmail and even by operations entrusted to the secret services or the special units of the Army.

All this mixture of arrogant official statements, hesitations and half-measures in the political and diplomatic action deployed favoured the emergence of new hotbeds for crises and new tension areas within the Soviet Union. Consequently, centrifugal and anarchical tendencies broke out in traditionally highly explosive areas due to errors and abuses in the policy of Czarist and Soviet Russia toward coexisting nationalities.

This is the only explanation for the events that preceded and followed the dismantling of the USSR occurring in the Black Sea area and the surroundings,

namely the Caucasus, the Republic of Moldova (where bloody army conflicts ensued), Georgia, Abkhazia, Nagorno-Karabah (where conflicts erupted between Armenians and Azeri people), Transnistria (where conflicts erupted between pro-Romania Moldovans and pro-Russia Moldovans) as well as Chechnya (where the conflicts were between local separatists and Federal Russian forces).

These are only some of the political highlights of the troubled years that followed the disintegration of the Soviet Union and that determined to a great extent an acceleration in the process of the former Soviet republics resizing their relations in an attempt to counterbalance any new Russian domination.

International Anarchy and the Security Dilemma

Machiavelli is undoubtedly the architect of historical Realism, while E.H. Carr, a famous neo-Machiavellicist, and J. Burnham are the head figures of the 20th century historical Neo-Realism. Structural Realism, which originates with Tucidites, is best exemplified by Morgenthau, the promoter of a behaviourist outlook on the power of states, with roots in the biological impulses of the human being.

A structural realism that projects human behaviour on the world system is most often associated with the name of Kenneth Waltz, the author of a fundamental work in this field called *Theory of International Politics* (1979). According to Waltz, the anarchic structure of the international system, where there is fear, envy, suspicion and insecurity, all felt by the human nature, is to be considered the cause of conflicts in the world politics. States, he says, have to conclude cooperation agreements in order to put an end to conflict states.

The condition for anarchism, which is far from being the consecration of a bigger power that will institute peace among sovereign nations, is most often seen as being synonymous to the war state. The war state should not conjure up the idea of generalised war being a current circumstance in world politics, but that the eventuality of a certain state being able to resort to using force shows that war is always a possible scenario in an anarchic world.

Thus, the system structure may lead states to war, even when state leaders want peace (Butterfield, *History and Human Relations*, London, Collins, 1951). This kind of structural realism insists that the type of state – democratic or totalitarian – or the personality of the state leader are less important in explaining the war, than the fact that action replaces inaction in an anarchical world context.

Starting from Hobbes's Leviathan, H. Bull develops in his *The Anarchical Society* (1977) a theory that can be considered a support for Liberal Realism. Bull maintains that world anarchism could be diminished by the states that have the capability of preventing other states from committing aggressions, as such

states are able to create elementary levers to prevent conflict to the benefit of everybody's coexistence.

Both Waltz's structural realism and Bull's liberal realism take into account the vital need for self-saving of each state, given that the anarchic international system calls into question state security. But, in trying to assure its own security, any state tends to automatically induce a certain degree of insecurity in other states. The term that best describe this "insecurity loop" is security dilemma.

As Wheeler and Booth point out, security dilemma ensues when military preparations in a given state trigger insurmountable indecision in the strategy of another state, which starts questioning whether the preparations are for defensive purposes (to protect security in an unsure world) or for offensive purposes (to modify the status quo to personal advantages) (Wheeler and Booth, 1992, p. 30). This scenario suggests that the concerns of a state with its own security are a source of insecurity for another state.

How could such a security dilemma be avoided?

"The Security Dilemma" in J. Baylis and N.J Rengger's *Dilemmas of World Politics: International Issues in a Changing World*, Oxford University Press.

The advocates of Structural Realism claim that the security dilemma is a perennial condition of the world politics, while the advocates of Historical Realism argue that this dilemma can be attenuated. The balance of power, they say, is the main mechanism. Preserving a balance of power has always been a priority in the foreign policy of the big powers.

Waltz claims that the balances of power are independent of the personal intentions of the states. In an anarchical system composed of states aiming to secure their perpetual existence, alliances will be created to tip the balance to disfavour other states. A fortuitous balance will result from the interaction of states in a way similar to the supply and demand in an open market (as described by the classical Liberal economic theory). The supporters of Liberal Realism are more credible when they emphasise the crucial role of state leaders and diplomatic games in keeping the balance of power in equilibrium. In other words, the balance of power is nothing natural or inevitable, but something that has to be built and kept in equilibrium from one stage to the other.

Disequilibria in the balance of power will consequently lead to mistrust among the actors of the world politics.

In other work called *Man, the State and War* (1953), Waltz notices that the coordination of the interests of state entities each following standard action principles aiming at self-saving entails logics to underlie concerting cultural patterns, leading models, norms and procedures that will guarantee everybody's security. The aim of a world organisation of such scope (the United Nations or the World Trade Organisation) or of any other associations and bodies aiming at similar ends is exactly the one to increase mutual trust among states, even at the

risk of punishing any member disregarding the rules commonly agreed or abusing rules to selfish ends.

The advocates of Structural Realism share a common idea with the supporters of Liberalism that political regimes can facilitate cooperation under given circumstances, although "the Realists" still believe that under a self-saving system cooperation is hard to achieve and hard to preserve, as it greatly depends on the power of the state (see D. Baldwin *Neo-Realism and Neo-Liberalism*, The Contemporary Debate, New York, Columbia University Press, 1993). Consequently, it is a matter of collective action in a self-saving system. This is the inflexion point in which realist thinking tends to converge with "constructivist" IR postulates.

If in the Enlightenment, philosophers and law people sought to accredit the idea of a "commonwealth" of united European states in a family of nations with common laws and customs, the decentralised international system of the 20th century witnessed a diversity of interaction models that went from the state of war to cooperation ways for collective security or regional integration. Alexander Wendt's assertions that self-saving entails self interests and that anarchy is the result of what states do, is both topical and true (see A. Wendt *Collective Identity Formation and the International State*, American Political Science Review 88 (2)).

Kenneth Waltz's structural realism theory is but a version of Neo-Realism in international affairs. Joseph Grieco is another representative for this theory (see *Anarchy and the Limits of Cooperation: A Realist Critique of the Newest Liberal Institution*, in International Organization 42 (Aug.), p. 485-507 and *Realist Theory and the Problem of International Cooperation*, in Journal of Politics, 50 (summer), p. 600-624) who integrated Waltz's idea with the views of some traditional Realists – Hans Morgenthau, Raymond Aron, Stanely Hoffmann, Robert Gilpin – in a construction claiming modernism. He concentrates on the concepts of relative and absolute gains. According to him, states want to increase power and influence (absolute gains) and will consequently cooperate with other states that will boost their capabilities. On the other hand, states are interested in how much power and influence they can gain (relative gains) from their cooperative efforts.

These relative gains are indispensable to the survival of states.

In a world of uncertainties and fierce competition, the fundamental problem, says Grieco and his followers, is: if not all parties stand to gain from cooperation, who will gain more from our cooperation?

Offensive Realism. Defensive Realism. Neo-liberal Ambitions in the Field of International Relations

Many analysts embracing Neo-Realism, particularly US analysts, have lately come up with clarifications in understanding the nature of security in a world

system as well as in deciphering strategic options the states have to follow if they are to survive and thrive under the system. Two tendencies were shaped out: the offensive and the defensive tendencies.

John Mearsheimer, an "offensive realist" in his studies into international security, argues that the relative power of a state is more important than its absolute power. He suggests that state leaders elaborate and carry out security policies designed to deter potential enemies and increase the power of their own states (see *Back of the Future: Instability After the Cold War*, in International Security, 19 (3), 1994/1995, p 5-49). The advocates of Offensive Realism most often end in a game similar to the "prisoner's dilemma."

In the globalisation era, offensive realists maintain, incompatibility between state objectives and state interest increases the competitive nature of the anarchic system of international affairs, making conflicts and cooperation inevitable. Thus, talks about cutting defense budgets as well as any statement about the end of the Cold War are rejected by Neo-Realists as plain aberrations. State leaders, they claim, have always to put up with expansionist states that will defy global order. If some countries start a campaign for disarming and confining their power relative to other states, they only invite expansionist states to attack them.

Other supporters of Neo-Realism of "defensive" orientation, such as Robert Jervis (*Realism, Neo-Liberalism and Co-operation: Understanding the Debate*, in International Security, 24 (summer), 1999, p. 44-63) and Jack Snyder (*Myths of Empire: Domestic Politics and International Ambitions*, Haca New York, Cornell University Press, 1991) maintain that most of the leaders weigh the costs of the Cold War against the benefits of it, knowing that the former prevail. Resorting to armed force to conquer and expand is a security strategy most of the political leaders disavow in the current era of complex interdependencies and globalisation. Nevertheless, war remains a tool for manipulation in the hands of many political leaders; and yet, enough wars are perceived by citizens and their political leaders alike as being generated by irrational and dysfunctional forces from within the society itself, including excessive militarism, ethno-centrist tendencies and nationalist tendencies.

"Defensive" realists are sometimes mistaken for Neo-Liberals, particularly when they advocate the idea that war can be prevented by setting up security institutions (alliances, the control of the arming process, or treaties on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons) that will attenuate the security dilemma and provide more common security to all the states adhering to such formulas. Yet, they do not believe such institutions to be the most efficient way of preventing war.

Paradoxically, "defensive" Neo-Realists share the same pessimism of "offensive" Neo-Realists. Many of them believe that conflict is inevitable under certain circumstances. This is because, firstly, expansionist states exist and these defy world order; secondly, because many states make conflict with other states

inevitable when pursuing national interests. Nonetheless, "defensive" Neo-Realists are somehow more optimistic than their "offensive" emulators or the supporters of Neo-Liberalism in international affairs (Jervis [1999]).

"Offensive" Neo-Realists see conflict as necessary only in a sub-set of situations. Then, state leaders can never be sure that an aggressive attitude of a state (for instance supporting a revolutionary movement in a neighbour state) is an expansionist action defying regional equilibrium or merely preventive action aimed at protecting own security. "Defensive" Neo-Realists emulate Neo-Liberals when saying that areas where the interest of states can converge and where the foundations for cooperation and the edification of new institutions can be laid are easy to identify. But, it is clear that, if cooperation is possible this will be conducted with friend countries.

The Neo-Liberal outlook on international relations has lately recorded a visible rebirth alongside Neo-Realism. David Baldwin points to the existence of four main orientations: Commercial Liberalism, Republican Liberalism, Sociologic Liberalism and Institutional Liberalism.

Commercial Liberalism pleads for free trade and a free market, and the capitalist economy as an avenue to peace and prosperity. Currently promoting this orientation are international financial institutions, global trade bodies and multinational corporations.

Republican Liberalism proposes the thesis that states have a propensity toward observing citizens' rights and resorting less often to war in their relations with democratic neighbours. This outlook is currently presented as a democratic theory of peace. Both outlooks coexists in an organic combination in the foreign policy aims professed by almost all of the world's powers (the US, the Group of 8, the UK, France, Germany and Japan) as well as in their trade policies and the policies of assistance and security on a world scale.

Sociologic Liberalism privileges the notion of community and interdependency processes. As transnational activities increase, the peoples and governments, irrespective of geographical distances and locations, become increasingly interdependent and cooperation with neighbours is more profitable, be it only for joint financing of projects of common interests. Many of the premises and assertions of Sociologic Liberalism constitute tenets for the advocates of globalisation, especially their references to pop culture and the civil society.

Finally, many analysts justifiably consider Institutional Liberalism or Neo-Liberalism to be a counterweight to realist or neo-realist IR theories.

The favourite theses of the supporters of this orientation read that in order to achieve peace and prosperity, states must be independent, posses own resources and sovereignty allowing them to create integrated communities that will promote economic growth and social development, while at the same time asking to regionally relevant issues.

The establishment of the European Union is the outcome of Institutional Liberalism. The EU is a complex institution that started off as a regional community meant to facilitate and boost multilateral cooperation among certain countries that were later on joined by others in successive waves. From the European Community of Steel and Coal, things evolved into a united Europe, with a single currency, a Parliament, a Constitution and institutions emerging in all fields.

Regionalisation and the Balance of Power

Keohane and Nye have developed an explanatory framework for international relations that focuses on the concepts of transnationalism and complex interdependence. Their arguments point to a world having become pluralist to a great extent thanks to the actors involved in international interactions. These actors are much more dependent on each other and their condition is marked by interdependence (see *Transnational Relations and World Politics*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1971 and *Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition*, Boston, Little, Brown, 1977).

Complex interdependence exhibits some features: a) a multiplication of ties between state and non-state actors; b) a new agenda of international events that cancels the distinction between high politics and current politics; c) the acknowledgement of interaction channels between the actors involved besides national borders; d) the decline of efficiency in the use of military power as a tool for domination.

The new international actors that conduct direct or indirect activities alongside the existing big international organisations and that have a high quotient of efficacy are not to be underestimated.

Non-governmental organisations, multinational corporations, lobby agencies, industrial sectoral groups (the steel industry, the coal industry, the car industry or the diamond sector), all of which are organisations specific to non-violent international expansion of states, become a force to be reckoned with. Many are the instances in which they have managed to impose their interests and policies and in doing so they had an impact on the world politics.

That is to say, as international actors multiply, the decision making process becomes increasingly hard to control and unpredictable. In such cases, the negotiation process emerges, which many times brings about a relative equilibrium between parties, a balance of power that may modify depending on the eventuality of new issues arising on the agenda of the actors of power.

It is true that international organisations approach their relations with member and non-member states in a peaceful manner in an attempt to best satisfy the needs of each party involved.

Yet, other international actors are less moderate in their wish for absolute gains and, when these do win, the result is catastrophic for the losing state or group of states.

Exclusion, albeit for a short period of time, is an immediate consequence.

The exclusion phenomenon generates feelings of insecurity with the actor or state in the question, which will attempt a regrouping around clear-cut objectives, of which the main aim will be to fill in the dominating vacuum of security, and here emerges a new international actor that will participate in the future balance of power.

Generally speaking, the objectives set by various international actors are short or medium-term targets.

Today's losers are very likely to become, in some years' time or in a new context, the object of a proposal for collaboration coming from those who not long ago humiliated and isolated them.

We have mentioned the balance of power as a relevant element or mechanism in the world politics, at least from the point of view of Neo-Realists, who are concerned with the preservation of the freedom of states.

The balance of power is a notion that originated in England at the end of the 17th century under Wilhelm of Orange, a Dutch Protestant that was to replace Catholic James II, who was ousted by the 1688 English Revolution. The theory has stood the test of time and is ever topical today, albeit with some changes in tones. The essence and reason of this concept resided in the attempts to prevent the emergence of a hegemonic power in Europe of that time by the constitution of state alliances that were to counterbalance and prevent any territorial expansion of such power.

Irrespective of the variations accompanying the meaning of the notion, irrespective of who is on which side – powers, superpowers, hegemonic states, coalitions, formal alliances – this has so far been the only mechanism able to keep powers in equilibrium (as was the case in the whole period of time after WW II and throughout the Cold War, when the East-West competition was grounded in the institutionalisation of a politico-military system of alliances: the Warsaw Pact and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation).

The same can be said about the Black Sea area, where the former Soviet republics, now independent states, along with Turkey, Iran and Saudi Arabia are trying to counterbalance Russia's wish (and not just the wish) for expansionism and monopoly, yet they do so not be setting up military alliances, but through cultural, educational and economic programmes, the so-called brain washing industry that characterises today's materialistic information and technology society.

Political Neo-Realism, no matter how well articulated, has not been without criticism, and it cannot claim having come up with a formula that needs no revisions or is free from internal tensions or even heresies (Doyle, 1997; H.J.

Smith, 1986; Walker, 1993). We can safely say that there is no such thing as a monolithic Realism, but, instead, there are various versions of Realism.

The Weak State

A special mention should be made of the developments in a theory that has R Aron (*Paix et Guerre entre les nations*, 1968) and Carl Schmitt (*Theorie des Partisanen*) as precursors and Kalevi J. Holsti (*The State, War and State of War*, 1996) as well as Rudolph Rummel (*Death by Government*) as the head figures, all of whom theorises about the "weak state." Holsti's thesis is a prolongation of Barry Buzan's theory of new insecurities in a global context and the role of the weak state in keeping and multiplying insecurity.

A mighty state is a necessary, yet not sufficient condition for instituting the observance of security norms in a given area.

As Aron points out and Holsti agrees, industrial societies experienced the cancellation of excessive violence (the war) as well as of obsolete oppressive systems (slavery), without managing to escape some ways of confrontation and competition in matters relating to technology, finance, economy and trade espionage. Violence seems visible in the bellicose and exclusivist attitudes of some ethnic and religious groups elsewhere in the world that sometimes translate into wars between peoples and nations, the so called "guerres des peuples" (the Caucasus, former Yugoslavia, tribal and religious wars in Africa and Asia and even some separatist movements in Western Europe – Northern Ireland, the Basque Country and Corsica). These wars are not bellicose acts between states, but rather bellicose acts between minorities. There is no clearly established front or the character of a military campaign; these wars are guerilla warfare or active terrorism, depending on the camp; also, there is no difference between the combatants and civilians.

Holsti perceives the impasse reached by a regime that claims its interests based on the use of the military might it exercises on national minorities, a regime that is nothing but a "weak state" projecting on the outside world its ambitions and frustrations. Whenever a state gives the impression of an authoritarian power, its development is seriously limited by local resistance centers, bureaucratic inertia, corruption and social disintegration. The weak state moves in a vicious circle: it has no capability of winning legitimacy by providing security and other services; in its quest for authoritarian power, it carries out preying and spoliation tactics, manipulating or exacerbating the existing social tensions among the multiple communities making up the society. Everything the state does in order to become mighty, says Holsti, will only aggravate its weaknesses. (The State, War and the State of War, Holsti K., 1996, p. 116).

The only viable alternative to a weak state, argues Holsti, is the state of law.

This is a theory that holds true in our case after 1991, particularly, in connection with the newly independent republics of the former Soviet Union and former Yugoslavia.

I have mentioned earlier the main deficiencies that emerge and subsist within a weak state: corruption, excessive red tape, social disintegration and insecurity.

Far from trying to justify these deficiencies, it would be worthwhile deciphering and identifying their origins.

Any human society witnessed and still witnesses these deficiencies, but, obviously, to different degrees, although the beginnings were somehow similar.

It should be remembered that interpersonal relations are rapidly exfoliating at the beginning of the 21st century and they make room for unscrupulous, aggressive materialism. In other words, money becomes the measure of all things and it influences the politics, economics and the social sphere, and all the more so at the international level.

Let us take Central and Eastern Europe as well as the former Soviet Union as examples.

This is an area made up of countries that have no relevant democratic experience, where an ideology of a certain kind was forced upon and where society would be divided into three distinct categories: the political class, the middle class (mainly composed of technocrats) and the labour class.

None of these three categories may claim to have amassed huge material values.

On day D of political changes, when the start toward a market economy was sounded, there were unexpected turns of events for these social categories.

Conscious of the power of money, the first two categories, less so the third one, switched rapidly to amassing money and other valuable assets.

Yesterday's politician became today's democrat and the middle class started up in business.

Because of the reminiscences of centralism in the previous times, any potential business contract in these countries is distributed by the political decision makers along the lines of a crony system and the so-called business people pay a quota of their business to the so-called democratic politician.

Two new elements emerge in the process: a direct partnership between politicians and business people and an attempt by the second political echelon (office directors, heads of departments, advisors, experts, etc.) to follow in the steps of their party superiors.

Here we have what can be termed horizontal and vertical propagation of what is generally known as corruption.

The third social category becomes the worst-off social stratum, the largest in size to which part of the former middle class adds up.

The pauperisation of this social category triggers social tensions that widen any time one of the third elements vital to human existence worsens (daily food, a roof above the head, the very existence of the family composition).

The political class tries to defuse these tensions using two methods: force or turning public attention toward secondary or artificial matters especially created to this end.

The turning away of public attention is made in various ways: identifying an aggressive foe state, blaming the current state of affairs on a minority or proclaiming the need to protect by any means the fellow people living as a minority community in a neighbour state, all depending on the psychological traits of each people and the opportunities at hand.

Manipulation is performed through well-known means, the media being a favourite.

As audience rates are at least double the rates in the developed countries and political culture and democratic exercise lack, mass intoxication and manipulation particularly through television and print media reach alarming levels.

In fact, all these strategies are found in the works of Machiavelli and, more recently, in the works of Harold Lasswell.

Coming out of this vicious circle is difficult, because the hardcore of business people and politicians resist any attempts at change.

Even when such a change occurs, it is nothing but a formal switch between echelon 1 and echelon 2 in the political sphere. It is an alternating move along time consisting of repeated changes between the two echelons or in the political trends specific to a given state.

In trying to break this circle, big international organisations credit these states, ask them to follow certain strict behaviour and economic lines, even getting involved to the extent of nominating companies to carry out certain contracts.

Many times this approach works, but most of the times it proves counterproductive and it is never followed in countries holding sizeable natural riches (gold, oil).

The theoretical statement that best explains the situation described is probably the message conveyed by the father of modern economy Alfred Marshall and Adam Smith that "Natura non facit saltum" (The nature does not make jumps).

The Deconstruction of the Balance of Power in the Black Sea Area.
From Regional Anarchy to Equilibrium of Mutual Tolerance

Our overview so far of consecrated IR theories is an attempt to highlight some power lines able to provide analysts of South-Eastern Europe and the Black Sea area with useful references to help them summarise events and mark out the trends in nearly one decade before and after the fall of Communism.

The Black Sea Basin before 1989 would be on the secondary level of Cold War strategists, compared with the attention attached to the divided Germany and the Berlin Wall, being just a potential ground for confrontations between the two military blocs: the Warsaw Pact and NATO. The USSR together with Romania and Bulgaria belonged to the former, while Turkey and Greece belonged to the latter. In a way exocentric to the sea basins of South Europe (the Aegean Sea, the Mediterranean Sea and the Adriatic Sea), the Black Sea was to its riparian countries an area loosely connected to the large East-West flows or the European traffic corridors that expanded to the Near and the Middle East.

Political and diplomatic initiatives, whether originating with the camp of countries under the influence of Moscow or with Western Europe, seemed to concern the Balkans, a sensitive area which experiments, either of Soviet origins or lending from the Western development model, would offer enough reflection themes, convergent points or contrasting views.

The Soviet Union rested its South-Eastern flank – that stretched from the Danube gorges to the Caucasus – on the northern shores of the Black Sea. The Soviet commercial and military fleets were free to roam and had wide possibilities to control and exercise efficient determent over a broad area that included the Dardanelle, the Aegean Sea and Eastern Mediterranean. The Black Sea was a vital area to Moscow's strategic moves in case of a conflict that would oppose the Warsaw Pact to NATO in Europe or particularly the Balkans, as well as to support its allies of the Arab camp in any confrontation in the Middle East.

We should remember that in the context of the 1962 "missile crisis," the "bargain" between Khrushchev and Kennedy brought about a decrease in the pressure exercised on Kremlin by the threat with nuclear warhead missiles deployed by the Americans in Turkey. In the 1960s-1970s, USSR was to get strategic and tactical advantages for its massive military support extended mainly to Egypt and Syria, being able to foist NATO's efforts to follow its ascendance in its furthest flank toward Eastern Mediterranean, the southern shores of the Black Sea and southern Caucasus.

Security in the Black Sea area depended, much as the security of the entire European continent, on the balance of power between USSR and its allies versus Turkey, the spearhead of NATO enjoying direct support from the US, which deployed troops on the Turkey seaside.

Before 1989, Romania and Bulgaria were both members of the Warsaw Pact. Unlike Bulgaria, which excelled in being an obedient ally of Moscow, Romania made a name for itself in 1964 as a maverick ally, staying a member of the Warsaw Pact, but refusing to make its soil available to its alliance partners for military exercises and even refusing to participate in the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia, when USSR could only count of the GDR, Poland, Hungary and Bulgaria for support.

All through those years, Romania deployed intensive regional and international action, trying to consolidate a special position for itself, particularly in the Balkans, which it insisted must become a zone free of nuclear weapons. Romania was reiterating in fact its active policy of the inter-war times, when it advocated the establishment of a system of regional alliances, the like of the Balkan Entente. This system, it maintained, was to include Greece, Turkey and Yugoslavia and was to discourage Hungary and Bulgaria's revisionist tendencies or the call into question of Romania's borders after December 1, 1918 Union enshrined in the 1920 Peace Treaty of Trianon.

Even before the collapse of the Soviet Union, nationalist unrest and independence claims in the Caucasian republics, Moldova and the Baltic States triggered a security blockage, all the more so as Moscow had to face contestations of his dominance over Central and Eastern Europe. Accelerating centrifugal tendencies away from Kremlin's influence were accompanied in the area of our study by the resuscitation of historical specters, as well as ethnic and territorial disputes, all of which had been "frozen" under the Soviet supremacy. The tensions and conflicts, some of which were blood shedding, between the advocates of the imperial power and the supporters of nationalist popular movements or between rival paramilitary factions created along ethnic or religious line, fuelled new risk and insecurity factors in a short time.

The petrified domestic order under the Soviet times was followed by anarchy and an overall state of diffuse belligerency. The escalation of interethnic conflicts between Armenians and Azeri, between pro-Romanian and pro-Russian Moldovans, the civil war in Georgia, the tensions between the Ukrainian nationalists and Russians, between the Greek-Catholics and the Orthodox Christians subjected to the Russian Patriarchy as well as the tribal squabbles in the small Caucasian republics and regions, all highlighted the incontestably real character of tensions, some of which resulted from manipulative operations of some forces that tried to manage regional chaos in the post-Gorbachev era.

Faced with a Ukraine claiming the status of a regional military power (after laying hands on a sizeable portion of the arms and ammunitions of the former Red Army) as well as with Caucasian republics of recent statehood, which state apparatuses were still dominated and ruled by officials of former Communist Party and the KGB and which leaders were of an authoritarian kind, the likes of Schevarnadze and Alyiev, Yeltsin's Russia, the agent of the Soviet

legacy of security, had to admit, after the August 1991 coup d'etat in Moscow, that its security doctrine needed redefining and adjustments to the latest developments.

The attempt to recreate a security area similar to the previous one by varnishing relations and arrangements between Moscow and the former USSR republics in a Commonwealth of Independent States, met a categorical refuse from Ukraine and Georgia as well as initial reticence from Moldova, which finally gave up as pro-Russian troops and Communist forces were regaining ground, and it reintegrated with the economic and military bodies patronised by Russia. After the 1992 war on the Dniester River, Russia's military presence recorded but a small decrease, since the military and industrial facilities as well as the telecommunications equipment there were entrusted to separatists in Tiraspol. This became a factor of insecurity that Moscow used to its advantage in order to justify its military presence in the area (much as it did with the Kaliningrad enclave on the Baltic flank, a hub of Moscow's military power beyond the borders proper of the Russian Federation, in a contiguous Polish-Lithuanian space).

Even if Russia's military deployment no longer expressly threaten the countries in the regions mentioned above, Moscow's grip on Transnistria is undoubtedly a signal that Russia will possibly review its current strategy to increase its influence in the Black Sea area in case the US decides to move to the eastern flank of NATO, that is Romania and Bulgaria, its military bases connected to the theatres of operations in Iraq and the Middle East.

Capitalising of Russia's eclipse in the area, Turkey has intensified action to win on its side the former Soviet republics where Muslim populations are a majority, with the aim of creating its own influence of Turkish-Uralian origins. The Baku regime is cultivating tight economic and political ties with Ankara and the pattern for this cooperation is imitated by ex-Soviet republics in Central Asia, which at the same time are flirting with the US or other states that Moscow would deem undesirable. Turkey is playing the Turkish-Uralian card, dampening any slogans that may appeal to the military Islamic movements, but this may prove risky, given the radicalisation of some trends associated with religious fundamentalism as well as with anti-American and anti-Western pan-Arabic movements. Turkey's stand is an eloquent example that the emergence of regional geopolitical actors in a security vacuum is inevitable, irrespective of circumstantial allies or the apprehensions of some states that perceive such orientation as a threat against their own security.

The expansion toward the eastern part of Europe of the North-Atlantic Alliance has tipped the balance of power in favour of NATO, which determined Romania and Bulgaria to show readiness to join the Alliance, as both security beneficiaries and security providers.

There are new opportunities emerging from the change in the security prospects in the Black Sea area, where NATO has managed to make a junction

of its Central European defensive system with that in the Balkans and Little Asia (Greece and Turkey) following the integration into its politico-military bodies of Romania and Bulgaria. Thus, highly troubled areas, such as the Near and the Middle East, could be better monitored and controlled using or generating crises to better anticipate any further complications. The crusade against international terror as well as its connections with reverberating regions more or less remote seems to concentrate in an expandable confrontation area (Afghanistan, Iraq, maybe Iran and Syria) where the US and its NATO allies seem fully justified to intervene.

The tenets of the doctrines and analysts attached to the principles and practices of IR realism will hold much true when objectively applied on the situation in the Black Sea area in the 1990s.

After a short time of hectic diplomatic action when the regional actors overvalued the virtues of state interference with legitimating the actions for preserving security in a context of high instability with multiple risks and threats coming from all directions that were met with an all azimuth strategy, a new era of reinvigorating bi- and multilateral diplomacy opened that has transcended the Black Sea basin proper. An increasingly important role is ascribed to cooperation and security bodies created with the aim of getting various international actors (states, regional associations, non-governmental organisations, working bodies, operational commissions, etc.) involved in a complex, functional, flexible and efficient mechanism in the medium and long run.

In the anarchic and highly dangerous context in the Black Sea area of the past decade, new lynch pins were created meant to bring common relations among the states in this area up to normal conditions and to revalue good neighbourliness. The obsession with "surviving" in a geopolitical habitat open to insecurity threats, as well as the impasses reached due to small states failing to correlate their diplomatic action as they carried out a foreign policy focused on the concept of self-saving, increased their vulnerability.

Realising that any recourse to military means is inoperative in solving historical or ethnic legacies, the Black Sea riparian countries and those in their close proximity concluded that a legal diplomatic and institutional framework should be created that will deter aggression or the exhibition of force and will pave the way for a polycentric security system made up of more partners and partnership forms (political, economic, civil, cultural or ecologic partnerships).

We could safely say that, in a relatively short span of time, an identity outburst occurred on the background of integrating aspirations at a European or a global level that takes into account the conditions and interests of each country in the area. Belongingness to the riparian or surrounding area of the Black Sea region became the argument behind the affirmation by these states of self-interests and their readiness to act on a stage to which access is little restrictive and not impregnated by institutional restrictions.

The Black Sea countries came to the realisation that security dilemmas can be reduced to a series of objective data obliging them to coexist and seek self-saving solutions either together or each for itself that will no longer endanger the security of some or provide some of them with the illusion of power over neighbours.

The Balkan experience after the fall of Communism, the bloody collapse of Yugoslavia, the wars between the successors, secessionism, ethnic cleansing, population exoduses, destroyed infrastructures, the resuscitations of the past specters, the rekindling of nationalist excesses and all sorts of fanaticisms, the protectorate of KFOR over the Kosovo province, the economic decline in the Danube area as well as the doubtful results of the Stability Pact in terms of the reconstruction of war-stricken areas clearly show what can happen when survival instincts are expressed in anarchic, destructive and exclusivist manners. The winners, if any, escape the area, but the losers are left all equally impotent to face the direct and collateral consequences of the disaster in which they got involved. Maybe it is not by chance that among the countries aspiring to join the Black Sea cooperation area are the Balkan states that suffered war tragedies and horrors after 1991.

Black Sea Economic Cooperation, a Model for Regional Institutionalistion in the Global Era

The political and economic developments having occurred in the Black Sea area in early 1990s highlighted the inevitable character of the option of the most states in this area for a solution that will take into account first of all the decisive role of interdependences of all sorts. Breaking the impasse created by the deconstruction of the balance of power in the aftermath of the Cold War and overcoming isolation as well as the resurgence of Russia's hegemony in the area had the Black Sea riparian countries associate in order to set up regional bodies and institutions meant to provide them with a new identity in a world in which no actor can any longer act alone in international affairs.

Starting from the economic desideratum, which prevailed along history and still prevails, some of these states realised that they can better affirm and direct their interests and foreign policies in the Black Sea area, winning a preponderantly regional role in the process.

Other states, which initially gravitated toward close centers and areas of interests, were either discouraged or their moves to join regional association bodies were rejected (CEFTA) or they declined the invitation to participate in super-state constructions that would obstruct further free movement or would subordinate them to strategies running counter to certain own objectives (CIS).

In the close proximity of the Black Sea, another category of states appeared attracted by a formula for association and cooperation allowing them to exercise working ways, dialogue, bi- and multilateral contacts, to gain

experience in international relations that will help them prevent or defuse conflicts with neighbor or other states, avoid marginalisation and gain foreign credibility, which in turn will ease their relations with international bodies (for instance with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the World Bank or the International Monetary Fund).

In this context, the establishment of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation organisation represented a moment in the history of the area under discussion when a new system of coordinates was created.