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The international leader and his moral code according to the theory of realism

Abstract: As analysis shows, every international leader (whether a Hegemon, Stabilizer or other) has his own moral code. They differ from each other, which generates conflicts and does not foster cooperation. The more versatile the values, the greater the chance of peace, but because a realistic leader is characterized by untenable and selfish morality, which is neither lasting nor certain.

Keywords: international leader, moral code, realism

Abstrakt: Jak pokazuje analiza, każdy przywódca międzynarodowy (czy to Hegemon, Stabilizator, czy też inny) posiada swój własny kodeks moralny. Różnią się one między sobą, co generuje konflikty i nie sprzyja współpracy. Im wyznawane wartości są bardziej uniwersalne, tym większa szansa na pokój, ale ponieważ realistyczny przywódca charakteryzuje się labilną i egoistyczną moralnością, ten też nigdy nie jest ani trwały, ani pewny.

Słowa kluczowe: kodeks moralny, przywódca międzynarodowy, realizm

Introduction

The subject of this analysis is the dilemma of morality, or a certain moral code of leaders in the light of the assumptions of realism. The main hypothesis is the assumption that international actors, although their activities are determined by factors such as power and domination, are also guided by specific values in their activities. However, these values are not the same for everyone. They are dynamic and change depending on the circumstances, goals and style of leaders' actions, finding their reflection, among others in the labels used to refer to them. So the Hegemon will be an actor striving to increase his power and dominance over others. The Stabilizer prioritizes improving his own security through balance and cooperation, while the Conservative will strive to maintain the status quo, and

the Revisionist will put emphasis on changing the prevailing international order, both trying to maximize their influence.

Therefore, to confirm (or refute) the above hypothesis, one should answer the following questions: firstly, what exactly are the values that guide international leaders? Despite the differences between them, can one draw a single moral code common to all, or are there several? If there are more of them, then what are the consequences for both individual leaders and other actors in international relations? Finally, is it possible for individual leaders – the Hegemon, Stabilizer, Revisionist or Conservative – to exchange codes with each other, and if so, in what situations and with what consequences for themselves and for their mutual relations?

The subject of analysis thus defined will also determine the structure of the deliberations conducted: starting with the characteristics of individual leaders, i.e. with the ruthless Hegemon, and ending with the conciliatory Conservative and egoistic Revisionist, at the same time pointing to the norms, principles and values evolved over time that drive them in their moral codes.

The article makes theoretical considerations, its purpose being to show or build a certain schematic model of norms and values that international leaders follow in the light of the assumptions of realism. Therefore, the research method adopted will necessarily be determined by the subject (actor-leader), his place in the structure, identity, goals and the role he plays. It will also be analytical in character and will be based mainly (but not exclusively) on the works of the creators and researchers of realism.

First of all, relevant English language literature will be included (mention may be made of researchers such as R., Gilpin, JJ Mearsheimer, HJ Morgenthau, R. Schweller, WC Wohlforth, F. Zakaria) along with some German sources (whose representatives are H. von Treitschke, S. Harnisch and HW Maull). This choice is mainly explained by the research interests of English and German-speaking scientists who dominate (although they are not alone) in considering power and leadership, whether global in the first case or regional in the second. However, one must also include Polish researchers (J. Czaputowicz and A. Wojciuk), who also have, mainly due to their rich historical experience, a significant and decisive voice in this matter.

Realism and morality and leadership

To be able to answer the questions posed in the Introduction, a few basic concepts should be outlined and the relationships between them defined. It is therefore worth considering what realism is, its attitude towards morality and its connections with political leadership.

Realism is a theory that assumes that international relations are based primarily on violence, war and competition. The main goal of states remains domination over others and preventing their advantage over others, assuming that values such as power, egoism and moral ambiguity play a decisive role here. Therefore, it should also be noted that in realism “there is a tension between the principles of morality and the requirements of the success of political action” [Czaputowicz 2014: 26]. In the world of politics and functioning of states thus understood, the notion of good, justice or a “good life” becomes a relative value, primarily determined by the self-interest of each of the states [ibid.].

Realism is therefore a theory of international relations that talks about how morality relates to states [McMahan 1996: 79], assuming that their activity is determined by their desire to control others (classical realism), or by a place occupied in the structure of the international system, where states strive to add up their own resources and maintain a balance of power (neorealism), or maximize their own influences by connecting the structure with the subject in order to maintain the status quo or through revisionism (neoclassical realism) [Czaputowicz 2014: 26-36].

Because realism assumes that the actors on the international stage are states (not individuals), and therefore they constitute the basic analytical category and are the driving force of action. They more or less affect the behavior and decision-making processes of other subjects of international relations, shaping the relationships between them. Therefore, they are decision-makers who shape political activity as well as the balance of power in the structure of the international system. Thus, the term “leader” used in the article should be understood only as states, with both terms (“state” and “leader”) used interchangeably as being identical.

Moreover, it must also be borne in mind that the considerations here do not exhaust the issue of leadership morality. Other theories of international relations, such as liberalism or constructivism, shed a completely different light on the issues raised. Realism, however, is considered the most influential (and at the same time

most criticized) current in the science of international relations. Based solely on the mechanisms of violence and conflict and guided by a pessimistic approach to the possibility of peaceful cooperation with other actors on the political scene, it assumes that “(...) international relations are a world of relapses and repetitions, not reforms or radical changes” [Burchill 2006: 98]. Realism is therefore a “logic that prevents the implementation of alternative models of international order (...)” [Burchill 2006: 98], including, and perhaps above all, in the moral aspect. Therefore, egoism and competition as determinants of international order do not include the idea of building the common good, understood as the cumulative output and investment in the future of all political actors.

This article therefore aims toward a sensitivity to the consequences of leaders practicing a purely realistic moral code, that may result in aggression, lead to wars, and the fall of the leaders themselves. For states, guided solely by selfishness and self-interest, do not cooperate with each other (and if they do so, only for their own benefit, and not for the common good) and do not strive to build international order, accepting anarchy as the basic determinant of international relations. The issue of morality in politics is now relevant because the priority of “hard power” with all its strength was particularly strongly manifested “(...) in the most brutal of all centuries – the twentieth century” [Burchill 2006: 97]. Therefore, the task of the next generations should be to strive for cooperation and peaceful order as a common good, also in the field of morality and international relations.

The Hegemon as a cynical leader not bound by moral ties

The Hegemon (Dominant) is an international leader who arises from classical realism. The starting point for his analysis is the reductionist theory, which stems from the assumption that the whole can be studied only when one knows its parts [Waltz 2010: 25]. This is indeed an insufficient approach, and even, as Kenneth N. Waltz himself states, it is sometimes flawed [ibid.: 43]. Nevertheless, it helps to analyze group behavior and understand international politics by explaining the links between it and the state apparatus. Moreover, in this approach there is a perception that national decisions and actions remain the overriding issue [ibid.. 2010: 25-26], determining the behavior of a leader. This has further consequences for the Hegemon, because according to the above approach, his attitude is shaped not by the structure of the system, and the internal expectations (of individuals) on the one hand; (*I*) and in the context of external relations (as a set of expectations) on the other hand (*Me*) [Harnisch 2011 : 9-11]. So, the Hegemon as *Me* constituted by the prism of *I*, it organizes social life from the inside and

represents it externally, holding a monopoly of power in this matter [Hasenclever 2000: 47].

By stopping over the significance and influence of the internal environment, which according to KN Waltz is characterized by sovereignty and subordination, and thus a lack of anarchy [Waltz 2010: 84-93], it gives us a picture of a leader who in his conduct will be “free” to external restrictions, but on the other hand “bound” by internal standards. Admittedly, he will try to separate “personal dreams” from “official duties”; however, as Hans J. Morgenthau notes, “not every foreign policy follows such a rational, objective and emotionless path” [Morgenthau 2010: 23]. Certain elements of human personality, such as prejudices, own preferences, or weaknesses more or less affect the Hegemon’s policy. Moreover, as Reinhold Niebuhr notes in turn, given the boastful, aggressive and selfish nature of man, it must be assumed that these qualities cannot be completely excluded [Niebuhr 1936: XX]. This opinion is also shared by precursors of realism Thomas Hobbes and Niccolò Machiavelli. The former claims that competition, distrust and fame are immanent human traits. Man is the enemy of another; he violates him, wants to rule, and “people live without having power over them that would keep them all in fear, they are in a state called war” [Hobbes 2009: 206].

Machiavelli, starting from the nature of man outlined in this way, presents his image of the leader and his qualities, thanks to which his policy is to be effective and guarantee the state’s strength. Therefore, he commits cruelty, and facing the choice of love and fear he focuses on the latter, because only this gives him power [Machiavelli 2017: 92]. Moreover, its maintenance justifies acting against the law, goodness and mercy [ibid.. 2017: 99-100], because the leader has both an animal and human nature, which he should be able to use if necessary [ibid.. 2017: 96].

The Hegemon’s personality (identity) shaped in this way translates into his relations with other international actors because the priority of his policy is to maximize his own power, which is why he is forced to impose control on other states. Thus, a conflict arises between conscience and social needs, between morality and politics, which seems incompatible [Niebuhr 1936: 257]. This is due to the fact that the community has no conscience (one could say that it is amoral), so relativism [Morgenthau 2010: 247] begins to appear between national and international morality, which is consequently replaced by the principle of loyalty [ibid.. 2010: 242].

In the Hegemon, the system of preferred values also changes over time, and these also depend on the circumstances [Szayna, Byman, Bankes et al. 2001: 50]. While it is easy for an individual to make independent decisions and make choices (because he has a conscience and is guided by it), the Hegemon faces a complex problem, and his dilemma remains the choice of what is most important and best for everyone. In this way it could be said that the greater the internal hierarchy of power and pluralism in external relations, the more virtues and values are blurred and more difficult to enforce. R. Niebuhr also pointed this out when he wrote that “the more the moral problem is transferred from the relationships of individuals to the relations of groups and collectivities, the more egoistic impulses over social predominate” [Niebuhr 1936: 262]. As a consequence of society, nations and leaders use different principles and norms, and universalism gives way to particularism. Ultimately, “there are as many potential codes of ethics aspiring to universality as there are politically active states” [Morgenthau 2010: 243]. Anarchy is therefore a threat to morality, which is cleverly, like Machiavelli, used by cynical leaders, “children of darkness,” as R. Niebuhr defines them, guided in their action not by law but by force [Niebuhr 1944: 9-12].

The Hegemon defines not only the way his values are shaped (from the expectations of the individual, through society) and their gradual relativism, but also the external circumstances. He must, therefore, play and wish to continue to maintain his role, constantly fighting for his position. Leaders may desire to wield the greatest power over others as a guarantee of their own security, through fear of the domination of others, making him fight for his place without changing his clothes. Also, because no country voluntarily gives up its freedom, the only way to enforce subordination and minimize the power of others remains war. So strength becomes a tempting and more effective alternative than following the law. It becomes an end in itself, the supreme value in a morally skeptical world.

So it is external anarchy that imposes the Hegemon’s rules of the game, because it involves “structures that encourage certain behaviors and punish those who do not respond to incentives” [Waltz 2010: 110]. Therefore, it follows that in the event of war, the Hegemon can only count on himself (self-help), in accordance with the principle that: “God helps those who help themselves” [Mearsheimer 2001: 33]. Therefore, the only method to achieve the goal of dominating (controlling) others is strength. Therefore, the self-preservation instinct of a leader understood in this way compels him to survive regardless of the costs to others. There is therefore no room for moral norms, and rationalism becomes the only value. Only wise

and thoughtful decisions can save the leader from falling. The Hegemon does not know values such as peace or cooperation. The determinants of his actions remain conflict, distrust and war [Kahl 1999: 29-34], and he bases his power on the power and strength of coercion, not on authority [Xuetong Yan 2016: 8-9]. This opinion is shared by J. Mearsheimer, saying that “the international system creates strong incentives for countries to seek opportunities to gain power at the expense of rivals and to take advantage of situations in which the benefits outweigh the costs. The ultimate goal of the leader is to be the Hegemon in the system [Mearsheimer 2001: 21], and the standards by which he acts and is guided by are offensive self-help and maximizing power, based on fear [Mearsheimer 2001: 32].

The Hegemon, therefore, according to the assumptions of realism as a rational and autonomous actor, entangled in the network of his interests and goals, strives to make the best use of his own resources. The latter, in turn, prioritizes security, with such issues always being paramount. He is not afraid to use anger and violence, and with the right means and capabilities, he can force others to obey [Hasenclever 2000: 47-49].

However, not everyone sees the Hegemon in ruthless terms. Some exceptions are the aforementioned H. J. Morgenthau and R. Niebuhr. Both refer to the presence of moral principles in politics and international relations. The former, however, defines the concept of national interest through the prism of power (control over others), and considers virtue prudence and efficiency. They allow a leader to “sanctify the means” to achieve a goal, though often colliding with morality [Pillars 2008: 118]. According to the Hegemon’s code constructed in this way, the principle of responsibility dominates, stating that “in international politics every and only action is right which by multiplying the strength of a given state serves its survival” [Pillars 2008: 120]. In addition, H. J. Morgenthau divides politics into internal and international [Morgenthau 2010: 21], noting that states often serve the protection of endogenous values, putting external interests on a pedestal instead of morality [ibid.: 226-227]. Consequently, this leads to a material understanding of power [ibid.: 163]. Thus is born the “paradox of the leader” who, considering his “highest duty to ensure the stability of moral relations within the community he leads (...) acts against the morality of his nation precisely because of this morality!” [Pillars 2008: 121]. So he is forced to choose the “lesser evil” [Rohde 2004: 77].

R. Niebuhr speaks of a certain “impossible possibility”, i.e. an attempt to reconcile law and love: “there is a law in my members that fights against the law which is in

my head” [Niebuhr 1935: 109]. He realizes that the leader has selfish tendencies, so his nature is tainted, but he must try to choose the good [Nowosod 2015: 48].

Thus, the Hegemon’s moral code, according to the assumptions of classical realism, can be twofold. On the one hand, it is cynical, drawing patterns from the political realism of T. Hobbes and N. Machiavelli. Then the practicing Hegemon will make a decision based on pure rationalism, his actions based on the policy of strength and national interests.

The second type of the code “concerns” the Hegemon internally. It confronts him with moral and other dilemmas, ultimately losing in the end in confrontation with the state interest. This does not mean, however, that such a leader gives up his desire to be “moral”. He is a leader who tries to meet the requirements, but consequently acts on the basis of relativism of values. So, although both moral patterns are guided by grassroots (intra-state) moral particularism, they ultimately prefer relativism and pragmatism.

A Stabilizer as a leader with a utilitarian and universal moral code

The Stabilizer, according to R. Schweller Lew and Sheep [Schweller 1994: 100], is an international leader, defined by the assumptions of neorealism, whose identity shapes the supremacy of structure. For the Stabilizer, all leaders are formally equal to each other and work together [Waltz 2010: 84-93] balancing their power. Anarchy holds sway amongst them, because “the essence of the system is (...) the lack of a central monopoly of legal power (strength)” [Waltz 1988: 618]. The system in which he has to work is born spontaneously and is decentralized [Waltz 2010: 93, 96], but both he and other leaders organize themselves in a more complex form (structure) that is dynamic and changeable. This ultimately determines the Stabilizer’s behavior, which largely depends on the distribution of potential between it and individual countries [ibid.: 102]. The assumption that these are not all participants in the structure, but only the strongest “players” remains important, because although the functions of the leaders are similar, their potentials remain different [ibid.: 98-105].

The moral code of the Stabilizer is shaped slightly differently than in the case of Dominant. He identifies with what is outside, directing his actions through the top-bottom perspective [Wojciuk 2010: 30]. Because he completely ignores individual needs from within his own political system (i.e., I), he remains indifferent to them. It focuses on the need to maximize security in the international

system, which becomes its highest value. However, in order for him to defend it in a complex international structure, he must assess not only his power (position) within the system, but also the position of other leaders in relation to each other. Therefore, for him, as an international actor, taking into account *Me and perception of position vis-à-vis others* is the indicator of valuation [Harnisch 2011: 11].

The Stabilizer, therefore, in his moral conduct, although he remains insensitive to his own internal social values, ordinary pragmatism requires him to take into account the expectations of other international leaders. He does this not for altruistic reasons, but for a purely utilitarian objective, calculating “calmly”, his own profits and losses in this matter. Therefore, his actions, and therefore also moral norms, do not remain objective, but depend on his own needs and behavior of others [Mearsheimer 2001: 32]. Furthermore, this morality is not permanent and stable; on the contrary it can transform over time. As the circumstances (time and position) change, the Stabilizer modifies and adjusts his behavior, thus becoming a universalist in this dimension.

Morality based on balancing is assessed differently. Some say that from a moral point of view, it does not matter who benefits more. Thus, the leader making decisions goes beyond his own interests and at the same time focuses on others. As a result, they become a universal law, a universal judgment of an “impartial viewer”, an “ideal observer” [Singer 1993: 12]. All desires are equal [ibid.: 12]. Steven Buckle defines this kind of universalism as “utilitarian preference”. Decisions that are made, although directed at others, have their source in the own interest of the leader [Buckle 2006: 74] and certainly do not interfere with him.

Others believe that the idea of moral universalism in politics means that it is a moral duty to treat the interests of others as if they were our own [Fritze 2017: 10-11]. Nevertheless, it happens that such “solidarity” applies only within a certain group [ibid.: 2017: 13-14], so it could be said that for the Stabilizer it means that he is looking for cooperation with other actors who are similar and have common goals, as actors on the international scene, but not necessarily with the Hegemon. Cooperation with partners who are similar in terms of power means lower costs for the Stabilizer when it comes to giving up their own moral principles than would be the case with the Dominant (he does not compromise, but subordinates completely).

Policy based on balancing is also considered by some to be “more moral” than the Hegemon’s. Firstly, because it inhibits his “tendencies”. Secondly, it forces cooperation, and thirdly, even if the balance is violated, it undergoes self-regulation

[Cohen 1984: 311-312]. It is therefore something “natural”. However, this view is very misleading. “Balancing” leaders often decide on things that they would never, in a moral sense, agree to. The Stabilizer, in relations with other international actors, focuses on external needs and circumstances and, in the name of his own interest, accepts what is unacceptable or even harmful to others [ibid.: 312-313]. As a leader, therefore, facing the dilemma of choosing preferences, and guided by selfishness, he is able to oppose liberalism and support authoritarian regimes, if required by the balance of power [ibid.: 313].

There are also those who describe the motivation to conclude contracts and keep them, i.e. a feature of the Stabilizer, as the utilitarianism of deeds. They claim that he permits “justification of selfish behavior whenever a perpetrator of deeds obtains some significant benefit (...)”, thus minimizing evil (the so-called Brandt argument of minimizing evil) [Bales 1973: 95-96]. Thus, “each state outlines the course of action that it believes will best serve its interests, using force or peacefully” [Waltz 2010: 117]. All leaders, therefore, have both conciliation potential and “(...) some offensive military capability”. In other words, every state has the right to cause some harm to its neighbor. Of course, these abilities vary between countries and can change over time [Mearsheimer 2006: 73].

So, the Stabilizer, like the Hegemon, has two moral codes. The first works if he does not have enough power (power) to balance the Hegemon on his own, and at the same time retain, at least partly, his own values; so he is obliged to seek a compromise. Avoiding war, he rather tries to “adapt” to the expectations of others, thus succumbing to the process of the universalization of his rules (moral principles) with strangers, “defined” by other countries in the structure on the one hand, and his own utilitarianism on the other. However, fearing the complete abandonment of the moral code that is important to him, he will definitely prefer joining smaller states, giving way and giving up some of the less “important” values in order to keep those “more important” according to him. He realizes that by joining the Hegemon, his moral code would be “blurred” and dominated by the imposed and foreign system of the Dominant’s values [Waltz 2010: 130]. Others, however, most often, and whom R. Schweller defines as Sheep (leaders of low power, and therefore weak in moral code), are ready to make concessions and rather sacrifice themselves by joining the stronger and finding protection in his shadow [Schweller 1994: 102].

The second code assumes that attack is the best defense. J. Mearsheimer was a supporter of this theory. He believed that balancing the Hegemon (here: limiting

the influence of his moral code on his own) occurs through conflict (preventive war to scare the opponent away). This, however, does not always bring the expected results, and can even generate more evil than good, because deterrence, for various reasons, is not always effective and not for all [Mearsheimer, Walt 2002: 1-2]. Here, the Stabilizer in external relations will choose its own goals, and will treat others purely objectively (materially). Such a leader, whose moral code is conditioned by circumstances [Schweller 1994: 103], allows *hard balancing* as a method of political action based on superiority and military violence [Paul 2004: 14].

So the Stabilizer, like the Hegemon, chooses the “lesser evil”, but his dilemma of the leader is the degree of universality and utilitarianism of his own moral code (and not relativism, as in the case of the Hegemon). Balancing takes place here between cooperation (peace) and conflict (war), between particularism (Me) and utilitarianism (Others) and universalism (Me and Others).

The persistent and morally consistent Conservative vs. the aggressive and rational Revisionist

International leaders who understand their moral code taking into account all the previously mentioned evaluation perspectives (I, Me, and perception of position vis-à-vis Others) are the Conservative and Revisionist. Because the rules and norms of their behavior are shaped by the spirit of neoclassical realism, both types of leaders pay attention to the functions of material and non-material factors. In addition, maximizing their influence becomes a priority of their actions, which they achieve in two ways: by maintaining the status quo or through revisionism [Czaputowicz 2014: 35].

The Conservative and Revisionist, as international actors, believe that the power of the state grows thanks to activities that transform the system [Zakaria 2008: 36, 39] and the ability to perceive their own power. They result from the experience of politicians making decisions on behalf of the state that are subjective and changeable, which makes them more dynamic [Wohlforth 1993: 1-2]. Randall Schweller adds to the aforementioned catalog the necessity of the internal cohesion of the elites, claiming that the stronger the government (more coherent and less chaotic), the greater the emission of power of the external leader [Wojciuk 2010: 74]. Thus, the use of national resources in combination with the skills of a leader, as well as competitiveness [Zakaria 1998: 9], “economic and technological success (...), cultural creativity and magnetism, result in efficiency in maximizing influence” [Zakaria 2008: 107-108].

The position and location in the structure of the international system and the perception of the Conservative and Revisionist's own power, seen in this way, affect their behavior and moral codes, which are equally different. Because both types of leaders do not have such power as the Hegemon does, they are "rising states" and status-seeking states, and so their methods of action are both different from each other and differ from those practiced by the Dominant.

Conservatives (mainly sheep) are sometimes referred to as "good countries" because for them the path to achieving satisfactory status is moral authority, "more supporting the system than conflict-causing" [Wohlforth, de Carvalho, Leira, Neumann 2018: 9]. Interestingly, they connect with other international actors, most often neighbors, forming so-called "peer groups" [ibid.: 3-4]. At the same time, unable to match the Hegemon's material power, they are forced to use other sources of strengthening their position in the structure. So they show creativity in seeking new opportunities and fill the "gap" by becoming "moral" or "humanitarian superpowers" [ibid.. 7-8].

So "being good" is also understood as having a broader dimension, as it affects the socialization process of other international leaders. Sebastian Harnisch expresses it as the constitution of the "teacher-student" relationship in which certain norms are passed on to others [Harnisch 2011: 13] by imitating elite groups [Wohlforth, de Carvalho, Leira, Neumann 2018: 7]. So, it can be said that leaders not only undertake *role-taking*, *role-playing* and *role-making* [Turner 2002: 235], seeking acceptance, but they also do the same in their codes moral, treating them as the essential components of their powers and striving to expand their influence.

Iver B. Neumann and Benjamin de Corvalho argue that "small powers constitute great powers" [Neumann, de Carvalho 2015: 2], using their moral advantage in terms of authority and prestige. Therefore, the Conservative too, being a conciliatory leader seeking to avoid conflict, will pay special attention to values such as peace and support its development. And although he does so with great commitment, his activity is not due to purely altruistic motives, but is a carefully thought-out strategy of Realpolitik [de Carvalho, Lie 2015: 61-62]. At the same time, wanting to strengthen what is his strength and what is missing from other international leaders (Hegemon or Stabilizer), he is characterized by a positive approach to the world and an optimistic vision of human nature. Because he is also aware of both external structural anarchy and intra-state hierarchy, noticing the correlation between status and identity, because both have a similar order

[Wohlforth, de Carvalho, Leira, Neumann 2018: 3], “extending” its moral code to all levels of relations international (I, Me and Others). It has a chance as a rising state, therefore, to become a recognized authority in an area in which others fail. And not wanting to lose his position and membership in the main league [de Carvalho, Lie 2015: 59], it will try to be persistent and faithful to his principles. For they build the image and power, moreover, with the premise that “prestige (...) is today the daily currency of international relations” [Gilpin 1981: 31].

The Conservative, therefore, is characterized by respect for the prevailing order and awareness of his own weakness. However, he does not always have to choose mild measures. He may also want to maintain the order by force when the circumstances and strategies of other international actors change [Mearsheimer 2006: 75]. In general, however, he realizes that they are more powerful than him and does not want to bear the risk of failure. Thus, the Conservative’s moral code will not be labile, but instead characterized by durability and consistency.

The Revisionist also usually represents a growing, courageous state that is ready to act. He is an international leader dissatisfied with his own position and place in the structure, therefore seeking change and a new balance of power within. Unlike the Conservative, however, he takes the challenge upon himself and calculates the costs. He realizes that playing the more important role he desires is associated with transformations with consequences for actors involved in international relations (i.e. not only I, Me, but also Others). He must also take into account the resistance of the Hegemon and Stabilizer, because this is an ongoing zero-sum game and the rise of one leader means the fall of another [Yan and Yang for Xuetong Yan 2016: 11]. None of them voluntarily gives up the power they have.

The leaders Revisionists, Wolves or Jackals, as defined by R. Schweller, [Schweller 1994: 100] are perceived by some as “devastating in politics”, which is explained by the nature and weakness of human nature [Rynning, Ringsmose 2008: 22]. Nonetheless, these leaders, similarly to the Hegemon or Stabilizer, face a double moral dilemma. On the one hand, they can be aggressive and strive for change through conflict, and on the other, they can also adopt tactics of peace [Schweller 2015: 11] and expect only the weakening of a stronger power (ibid.: 4).

If the argument of force becomes the determinant of their moral code, then as Offensive Revisionists they will strive for war, perceiving the world through

the prism of “severe Hobbes’s anarchy” [Rynning, Ringsmose 2008: 25]. Thus, depending on the circumstances, their moral standards will become similar to the Hegemon’s. As “hungry countries” they will take high risks, putting everything at stake. And because they are not limited by law (because there is anarchy) or fear, they will strive for expansion [Schweller 1996: 106-107]. Without moral brakes, they are not interested in the “side effects” of their own actions ricocheting on others. The revisionist is aware of the changeability and dynamics of power, which is why he consciously uses this property in his decision-making process too. So, he is not a morally permanent leader. He connects with others, for longer or shorter depending on his own needs, guided by the usual egoism. So he goes in the moral sense, if necessary, for far-reaching compromises.

The Defensive Leader (Revisionist), in turn, values moderation and restraint, assuming that the world is good and for him expansion becomes an “anomaly” [Rynning, Ringsmose 2008: 25-26]. The moral determinant of his actions is, among others soft balancing as a gentle method of changing the order. Thus, he prefers formal and short-term agreements and treaties (the Entente), or builds coalitions that weaken the Hegemon (Paul: 14), but recognizing the strength of moral influence (as a non-material element of power), he concentrates only on gaining an advantage over him in a compromising manner. He is therefore a rational egoist, but a peaceful one [Schweller 1996: 109].

Final conclusions

Some believe that separating moral issues from political events is unjustified and even impossible. They affect the lives of individuals, groups and entire societies [Hoover: 2015]. Others, in turn, claim that realism has broken this interdependence, emphasizing particularly the role of anarchy and the independence of international actors. Therefore, in a world understood in this way, there is no place for moral values, because they conflict with the paradigm of domination and the national interest associated with it [McElroy 2014: 3].

There are also those who do not reject morality as much as relativize it. As Heinrich von Treitschke notes, there are two types in life: private and state morality, but the latter creates moral norms, which only affect the individual as an individual in the second place. “The moral judgment of the state should first be formed on the basis of the nature and life goals of the state, and not of a single man” [Treitschke 1899: 105]. This means, as Henry Davis notes, that the international leader becomes the highest moral instance [Davis 1914: 6]. After all, there are also those who claim

that there are two separate moral codes: one concerns individuals, the other states, and international actors cannot be expected to apply moral standards regarding people [Wolfers 1962: 49].

As the analysis has shown, the realistic leader seems to combine, at least in part, the above views, because on the one hand in the decision-making process he is guided by his own values and, on the other, he changes (modifies) them depending on the situation and circumstances. Moreover, although he strives for his power above all, his moral code is in fact confronted [Morgenthau 2010: 243]. Because every power is closely related to identity and position in the structure, so the means and tactics that the leader uses are based on and translate into his preferences in terms of the value system. Therefore, the struggle is also for “integration (...) of the idea and way of life” [Rohde 2014: 140], and since the moral codes of a realistic leader are determined by the goals he sets, the values are therefore both objective and secondary in nature and relatively linked (depending on the behavior of other leaders).

Because each leader also has his own moral code, which he considers the best and wants to impose on another force [Morgenthau 2010: 243], opposition is born and conflict is generated, and that power is understood in a material way, so there is usually no room for compromise, considered treason and surrender [Morgenthau 2010: 243].

Therefore, it can be stated that:

1. The Hegemon's moral code is particular (I + Me) and allows physical violence. As a leader, he must survive and therefore adheres to the principle that “Better to die than live like a slave” [Waltz 2001: 11]. Therefore, its values will be strongly relativized depending on the circumstances and time [Morgenthau 2010: 246-247]. The Hegemon in the sense of realism, therefore, appears as an absolute and cynical leader, preferring the value of his own power over moral principles. In his behavior he is not bound by moral bonds, which does not mean that he has no internal dilemmas. However, his choice of the “lesser evil”, and thus the ruthless behavior is sometimes justified in the name of higher (for him, not for others) reasons.
2. The balancing Stabilizer (whose identity is referred to as Me + Others) focuses mainly on external relations, so his moral code will take into

account the compromise factor. Because his position in the structure of the system does not give him an advantage, he must therefore seek agreement. Therefore, he connects (temporarily) with others, adopting various strategies, which leads to moral universalism. The Stabilizer's moral code can be twofold: peaceful and aggressive. However, both (to varying degrees) are characterized by utilitarianism and universalism.

3. The moral codes of the Hegemon and the Stabilizer differ. Often there is conflict and disunity between them (the clash of particularism with universalism, as well as war-peace strategy). Due to the fact that there is a large asymmetry of values, cooperation becomes difficult or impossible.
4. The Conservative (Sheep) is usually a small but growing power aspiring to the rank of "moral teacher", "moral superpower" with a lasting and coherent moral code, mitigating conflicts, striving for peace, preferring consensual values.
5. This code can also be used by the Hegemon [Mearsheimer 2001: 237] in the role of a Lion, as well as a falling Hegemon (declining state) [Davidson 2006: 1], who will depend on maintaining his power. Therefore, he will set the rules of the game (norms and rules), but at the same time he will not strive for change (he wants to maintain his advantage over others), preferring the status quo, building non-offensive coalitions, neutralizing great or potentially threatening powers.
6. The Revisionist [Wolf and Jackal] is active and courageous. He is a rational egoist, although his moral code is often seen as aggressive. However, this is not always true. He can act both peacefully (defensively) and in conflict (offensively), playing a risky game.

A summary:

1. Each leader has his own moral code.
2. The nature of the moral code is determined by the identity of the leader, his position and goals set, and how power is defined.
3. What counts for all leaders is the goal they aim toward, but the more the identity is related to I, the more the code becomes hegemonic, and the more oriented towards Others, the more universal it becomes.
4. The less material understanding power becomes, the more universal the moral code becomes, it is accepted by others more quickly and

- generates fewer conflicts (from the Hegemon to the Revisionist and Conservative).
5. For some, selfishness matters while for others, cooperation counts in achieving goals. Leaders are brought to account (rewarded and punished) by the structure of the system for the effectiveness of their policies, not for their morality. This is only a result of the tactics and strategy adopted. It remains secondary and subordinate to the goals.
 6. The moral codes of leaders, as well as their roles, are often redefined [Turner 2002: 235-236, 253] and overlap. The Hegemon, for example, works both based on his own rules, but depending on the situation (fall), he will also prefer the values of the Conservative. Balancing also means the interpenetration of the values of Stabilizers and Conservatives [Schweller 1996: 116]. Also, the Revisionist Jackal can become a Stabilizer and strive for conflict and change, and to conduct “(...) wars to preserve (...) balance of power” [Waltz 2001: 118], but the role of the Wolf in Sheep’s clothing, although not excluded, seems complicated in this case.

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