

International leadership models in the assumptions of the theory of realism

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Abstract

This article is of theoretical nature and aims to try to define various models of international leadership and their nature in the light of the assumptions of realism. The main research determinants include the ones typical for the abovementioned theory, such as an actor's identity, its position in the system, as well as the source of power and interdependencies to which it is subjected. These, on the other hand, may turn out to be useful in outlining types of international leadership represented by particular players.

In realism international leaders (states) attempt at attaining their goals by maximizing their own power, security or by exerting influence. The tools and methods they use depend on their feeling of identity, therefore, they choose the path of aggression, negotiation or peaceful cooperation. Thanks to this and as a result of influence exerted by other international leaders and the structure itself, they occupy a particular position in the international environment. This position determines their attitude to each other and to the system in which they function (and *vice versa*). In this way international roles played by the international leaders are built. Such roles are not permanent. They require revision of observation of factors inside the state and in the system, as well as acceptance of other leaders (it is not enough for an actor to want to be a *hegemonic leader* to be acknowledged as such by others).

Key words

international leader, state, leadership models, realism, power, international position, identity, international roles

Introduction

Although realism is constantly of interest to many researchers whose aim is to analyze the power, influence or potentials and interdependencies of states on the political scene, it overlooks and ignores

the perspective of political leadership, nowhere else as clear as here. Therefore, a question can be asked: who is and what is a political leader in realism? What are his attributes and what shapes his identity? What is his guiding approach to political decisions and what are his main goals? After all, what models of leadership can be outlined based on realism?

The adopted research method is a comparative analysis and microsystem analysis and will be based on the assumptions of broadly understood realism (that is classical realism, neo-realism, and neo-classical realism), since this approach, despite its methodological weaknesses, provides a broad spectrum for perception and analysis of the reality, adding its individual richness to it. This opinion seems to be confirmed by A. Wojciuk, who states: “realism offers a great explanation of why the world is in trouble”, though it does not provide an answer how to deal with it (Wojciuk, 2010: 122).

The subject literature used in this article comprises works of leading representatives of realism, but also Polish and English publications analyzing and referring to the theory of international relations and international leadership.

Leadership can be and is understood very broadly. It can be analyzed through the prism of psychology, sociology, we may consider it on the grounds of political science or in the historical context. Finally, we can combine various theories and fields of science, and build an interdisciplinary picture of the concept. There are many approaches. This article will present the phenomenon of leadership from the perspective of international relations. This will not be leadership *ad personam*, but one which is derived from the state as an entity. Moreover, referring to operation within the spheres of analysis adopted in realism, we will position the state in a certain political structure, whose background will be the definition of the concept of international leadership developed by S. Harnisch. And this position will determine further the specificity of my considerations.

The state as an international actor

No international relations can exist without their participants, as no theater play exists without actors. Also, there are no actors without a role, though these may be more or less significant. Without going into detailed considerations over these issues, assuming that each actor plays their individual role, we also assume that a similar situation is found in international relations. Each entity affects (with varying force) other entities, thus developing a system and a structure of mutual relations. As a result, some participants “stand out” over others and lead them, while others follow them or, for various reasons, oppose them. Each participant plays their own role.

For S. Harnisch, international leadership consists in roles, which, in turn, are “intangible social constructions which reflect international interactions and structures. Roles not only determine conduct, but also constitute actors (ruler-slave). Roles are manifestations of social ambitions of actors and international structures” (Harnisch, 2011: 8). So, in the context of the role understood in this way, who is an actor (subject) of international relations according to realists? Is its image static and coherent for all representatives of this trend? Well, not necessarily.

In international relations the state is an actor. It may be analyzed through its relations with other entities (elements of the system) or through the structure of the international system, but also through the structure and mutual relations developed in this way (Thompson, 1960: 19-21; Waltz, 2001: 12; Mearsheimer, 2014: 7). Depending on the approach, classical realists, neo-realists or neo-classical realists chose one of the above perspectives as a starting point which determined their further research.

Representatives of classical realism, who considered states and their interests as independent variables, claimed that the nature of the state, like the nature of a human being, is hostile. This nature remains aggressive, tainted with desire for power and, as proved by R. Niebuhr, it is driven by egoism and arrogance. These features cannot be totally eliminated in human nature (Niebuhr, 1945: XX), which is determined by

a continuous conflict between such contradictory elements as peace and war. Quoting the statement of Hobbes, *bellum omnium contra omnes*, whose works inspired classical realism, we might say that one state is a wolf to another (Hobbes, 1914: 113). Thus, power and, if needed, war in the name of survival, was the domain and the driving force of actions taken by countries on the international stage.

This view was supported by H.J. Morgenthau, who in his *Politics among nations* wrote that politicians take actions not only out of their personal wish, but also out of official duty (Morgenthau, 2010: 22-23). States as political actors, or in fact their governments, are thus a reflection of human nature “(...) they have human features, their behavior is often affected by emotions, passion and impulses, which are the driving force of all changes” (Czaputowicz, 2014: 26). International actors who want to survive will thus be ready and able to use power.

In classical realism cause relations are explained as “going from states, through interactions between states, to results on the international stage” (Czaputowicz, 2014: 29). That is why an international actor with human features of character, when entering into relations with other actors (states) of the international stage, will be directed by values, norms and rules of its own decision-makers, but will always confront them with the interests of its own state, which will remain superior (Morgenthau, 2010: 21-23). As J. Czaputowicz observes, for classical realism, states are always egoistic in their actions. They want to be independent and self-sufficient, they take into account the possibility or the likelihood of the outbreak of war. This makes international cooperation more difficult (Czaputowicz, 2014: 30), and politics is ruthless and there is seldom a place for compromise in it.

For neo-realism, represented by K.N. Waltz, the international system, its structure and elements (countries as actors) affect each other. Cooperating with each other, countries are equal and do not have any superior power over them: “the elements of the international political system are found (...) in relations of coordination. Each of them is formally equal to others (...)” (Waltz, 2010: 84-93) and they are governed by anarchy. The international system is born spontaneously, it is

decentralized (Waltz, 2010: 93-96), and it may change thanks to changes of actors. “For neo-realists transformations inside particular countries are insignificant, regardless of their scope” (Waltz, 2000: 10). This is so because they do not affect the behavior of actors on the international stage. For them the only stimulus can be found in their own interests, articulated externally, to other countries.

Countries organize themselves in a more complex form, a structure which is developed in the course of their coexistence (Waltz, 2010: 93). Structures are dynamic and change, though not because of other countries conduct, as assumed by classical realism, but as a result of the distribution of potential among particular actors (Waltz, 2010). The shape of the structure is not determined by all international actors, but only by “major players”. And although functions of all countries are similar, their potentials differ (Waltz, 2010: 102), and so do their possibilities on the international stage.

K.N. Waltz emphasizes the structure and the positioning of actors (their position and distribution), whereas he totally ignores their internal features and attributes, considering them insignificant (Pawłuszko, 2015: 98). What is interesting, for neo-realists the change of the structure and the system takes place when the number of superpowers changes, as “the structural essence of the system is (...) the lack of central monopoly of legal authority (power)”, and countries as individual actors constitute elements of the system (Waltz, 1988: 618).

Neo-classical realists tried to take a broader perspective. They considered the world to be more complicated than the world perceived by classical realists or neo-realists. Representatives of this trend, such as R. Schweller or W.C. Wohlforth, claimed that the structure of the system depends not only on external factors (namely other actors), but also on internal factors. While this aspect was neglected in former approaches, it was emphasized and deemed to be decisive in neo-classicism. For example, when analyzing the end of the Cold War, S. Wohlforth came to a conclusion that the collapse of the Soviet Union was a result of a wrong strategy. Neglecting the influence of internal factors, namely “personal strengths and weaknesses of Gorbachev, and other central

decision-makers, (...) growing national sentiments in the whole soviet world” and “the scope of diplomatic and military interactions between countries and other social groups” led to the end of the Cold War. Therefore, W.C. Wohlforth claimed that the best solution consists in combining classical realism and neo-realism (Wohlforth, 1994-1995: 126). That is why who should identify and combine in a cause and effect system both decision-makers – their ways of perceiving, deciding and verifying views, that is factors inside our own system (Wohlforth, 1994-1995: 127-128), and the international system itself, along with its structure.

Neo-classical realism, like neo-realism, assumed that the structure of the international system determines the place in the system occupied by particular countries. These countries “evaluate and adjust to changes in their external environment partly as a result of their specific internal structures and partly as a result of the political situation” (Schweller, 2006: 6). Representatives of the former trend believe, however, contrary to K.N. Waltz, that this position is additionally determined by internal policy implemented by actors, which then affects the shape of foreign policy. Depending on what is happening in the country, but also in the context of the whole system, actors take specific, rational actions. The state thus remains under system pressure and responds to it in its foreign policy (Kaczmarski, 2015: 16-17). This aspect was neglected by classical realism of H.J. Morgenthau, or neo-realism of J.J. Mearsheimer and K.N. Waltz.

Identity and power

When discussing roles played by actors of international relations, we cannot omit the concept of identity. Although both categories are well known in science, as S. Harnisch observes, they are rarely defined through the prism of their mutual ties (Harnisch, 2011: 9).

Initially, identity was understood as collective “me” confronted with the perception of position vis-à-vis others. Behaviors and expectations of individuals and other actors on the international stage were not important and rarely taken into account. Along with the development

of science international roles began to be perceived and understood as more complex phenomena. The shaping of identity was defined as a combination of individual predispositions (I) and collective ones (Me), and these with the perception of position towards others. Also the importance of such variables as expectations of others and behavior of others were emphasized (Harnisch, 2011: 9). As S. Bieleń points out, international identity “is born in feedback with other participants of international life” and is manifested in their external activity, including entering into relations and interdependencies of various intensity (Bieleń, 2015: 155-157).

In realistic tradition, when defining a country identity it was important to emphasize its power (Bieleń, 2015: 156). This power, however, was defined in various ways and its sources differed. Classical realist, for example, pointed at human nature and its broader dimension. H.J. Morgenthau claimed, using the language of definition, that identity and power are built when the *I* category becomes a determinant of *Me*. This denotes transformation from an individual sphere to a social sphere. In his opinion, this is how national interest was shaped (Morgenthau, 2010: 22-23, 128-129). Since not everyone, but only the chosen ones had an opportunity to hold power in the society, these limited, but also accumulated and “suppressed” wishes of individuals were fulfilled through identification with one’s nation and its needs. Individual aspiration for power thus took the form of national interest and further affected foreign policy of the country (Morgenthau, 2010: 128-129). Its goal was to build the power in relation to other subjects of the international system. Human nature has an inborn aspiration and competition for power. Power determines an actor, becoming not a means to an end, but the goal itself, the ultimate benefit (Morgenthau, 2010: 47). The country uses power to gain an advantage over others. In this way it avoids aggression from its opponent, but also it subdues the opponent and controls its power.

R. Niebuhr, on the other hand, looking at the history of humankind, especially at the rise of Hitler and Stalin to power, based his thoughts on the assumption that the world is governed by “children of light”

and “children of darkness”. The latter are cleverer and more cunning in conducting their policy, therefore human nature, tainted with evil, becomes a source of expansionistic behavior of countries towards each other. “A man who is seemingly devoted to “common good” may have desires and ambitions, hopes and fears, which put him in conflict with his neighbor” (Niebuhr, 1945: 15). This leads to international rivalry, and, as a result, leads to escalation of power and to war: “children of darkness skillfully turn one nation against another” (Niebuhr, 1945: 16). Egoism and desire for safety, as well as fear of external aggression, force international actors to control behavior of other countries. For them “there is no law except power” (Niebuhr, 1945: 15).

For classical realism, whose subject is the state, identity defined as strong *Me* (but created by *I*) determines further behavior towards other actors of the international stage, implemented through appropriately constructed foreign policy. International actors thus may dominate others or become dominated. J.J. Mearsheimer, a representative of the so-called offensive realism, fully shared this view. He assumed that countries naturally aim at hegemony and maximization of their power. Since they can never be sure of the behavior of other international actors, they are distrustful or even hostile to them (Mearsheimer, 2014: 2-3). The category of power is for them the issue of to be or not to be, since each reduction of their power means that their position is weakened while the power of the enemy grows and the situation of the enemy improves.

Noticing imperfections of classical realism and accusing it of reductionism, neo-realists believed that the behavior of countries does not result from human nature, but from the structure of the international system in which they operate. Since the system is governed by anarchy, as K.N. Waltz claimed, the aim of the country is the desire to ensure maximum security. Its guarantor is power, however, when trying to increase it, countries must take into account not only their own interests, but also interests of other countries in their strategies. They evaluate thus not only their power (position) in the system, but also positions of other countries to each other (emphasizing *Me* and

perception of position vis-à-vis others), ignoring totally the *I* category. It is the structure of the system, claims K.N. Waltz, that determines behavior of countries and forces them to compete, causing conflict and leading to wars. The aim of international actors is to maximize security, and military power is treated as a tool for ensuring it. According to neo-realism, security is achieved by balance of power (Waltz, 2001: 210).

In neoclassical realism, identity-affecting factors are both internal stimuli, an actor and the structure of the international system (*I, Me* and *perception of position vis-à-vis others*). M. Kaczmarek points out that for the country the key issue is its ability to mobilize its own resources (power understood statically), as well as an ability to define its possibilities and wishes to use power (dynamic presentation) against others. Power is transformed, which in practice means the necessity of adequacy of actions taken by the country in time (they cannot be taken too early or too late) (Kaczmarek, 2015: 18).

Also W.C. Wohlforth emphasized an important issue typical of neo-classical realism. He noticed that it is not only the structure of the system and the position occupied in it that determines international actors to act. It is not the power and its resources, either, but perception of one's capabilities. This perception is subjective, changeable and more dynamic than power, as it stems from experience of politicians who take decisions on behalf of the state (Wohlforth, 1993: 1-2).

This issues was discussed further by R. Schweller, who defined power not only through the prism of the elite behavior, but also in the context of its interior coherence. The stronger the government, the clearer the power message to the system, the weaker and more chaotic it is, the less effective its emission outside (Wojciuk, 2010: 74). It is, therefore, vital, in his opinion, to preserve integrity of internal and external policies of the state.

F. Zakaria, another representative of neo-classical realism, also emphasized this. He believed that it is not only decision-makers who shape power, as it is also influenced by social antagonisms, efficiency of machinery of state and competitiveness of its representatives, the decision process and its structure, the country wealth and access

to own resources (Zakaria, 1998: 9). In addition to national cohesion, power also comprises “economic and technological success, political stability, military power, cultural creativity and magnetism” (Zakaria, 2008). Power grows when the state is able to transform the system, but since it is dispersed in the contemporary world, its legitimization is necessary (Zakaria, 2008: 36-39).

The position of an international actor

International position, as defined by Z.J. Pietraś, is a certain “objective phenomenon”, an expression of the positioning, status or rank of actors resulting from their potential (power) (Pietraś, 1990: 29). The place occupied in the hierarchy thus depends on power. Aspiration for power may be derived from various sources. On one hand, it is the result of individual wishes (*bottom-up*), as postulated by H.J. Morgenthau, on the other hand, it is the inclination of the international system (*top-bottom*), as observed by K.N. Waltz (Wojciuk, 2010: 30). Neo-classical realism combined both approaches (*bottom-up* and *top-bottom*) considering them equally important.

Classical realism defined power in two ways: relational and material. For H.J. Morgenthau power lies in both control over others (Morgenthau, 2010: 48), national character, national morale, but also in geographical location, natural resources, population, military operational readiness and quality of diplomacy and the government (Morgenthau, 2010: 135-166). Relational power (control) is possible only and exclusively thanks to material power. Since no international actor wants to be dominated by others, and no actor has superior power guaranteeing its security, it tries to maximize its power. Driven by the need for survival and preservation of its autonomy, it continuously aims at hegemony. A dominant superpower performs a stabilizing function for the whole system, but carries the risk of overburdening, which may lead to its fall (Gałganek, 1992: 17). Behavior of countries in such conditions of the international system is easily predictable. Separated from ideological issues (as these contradict realism), it is a zero-sum game: I will win or I will be defeated.

In neo-realism, power has material value. J.J. Mearsheimer distinguishes between potential and real power, the former including demographic capabilities and wealth, the latter – military power of the country (Mearsheimer, 2014: 55). Thus, this is the sum of resources possessed by the country. Supporters of this approach emphasize the essence of the balance of powers. The greater the power of one element in the international system, the greater threat it poses to others and the greater motivation to fight for one's security and the desire to neutralize the power of the opponent. In order to avoid being dominated, countries form their own coalitions and unite against the greatest power. As a result, depending on the number of players and distribution of their potential, bi-polar and multi-polar systems are created, the most stable one being that of two superpowers (Waltz, 2010: 172-173). Thanks to this, symmetry and harmony are maintained in the system (Walt, 1985: 4).

However, both deficit and excess of resources can be detrimental, as they violate the above-mentioned *power balancing* (Czaputowicz, 2014: 35). When balance is upset, countries must fight in order to survive. They compete and develop their powers. Ignoring the significance of power balancing or totally forgetting it, according to S.M. Walt, may bring serious threats in international relations. "It unintentionally pushes enemies against each other" (Walt, 2017).

The neo-classical trend of realism has significantly developed its earlier concept of power. Apart from its material presentation, it developed the relational concept of power, particularly emphasizing its changeability. For example, for W.C. Wohlforth, a factor determining the dynamics of power was the ability of its perception (Wohlforth, 1993: 2). He believed, agreeing with W.C. Morgenthau, that power alone is not enough to gain advantage over other actors of the international stage, since power is composed not only from material, but also from non-material (intangible) factors (Wohlforth, 1994-95: 97). Resources and perception translate further into political decisions and specific action.

F. Zakaria, on the other hand, emphasized the relationship between the real power of an international actor and its foreign policy. Distinguishing between state power and national power, he stressed the importance of decision-makers' abilities to use national resources. These might be considerable, but if politicians (those in power) do not have abilities to deploy them, they may not be effectively used (Zakaria, 1998: 9). Thus they determine each other.

R. Schweller blended the earlier approaches, emphasizing both the significance of state power, elite preferences and perception of the international environment (Wojciuk, 2010: 74). He claimed that the scales may turn in favor of those who can accurately assess not only their own power, but the power of the opponent, including the looming threat.

For neo-classical realism power is achieved by maintaining *status quo* or by revisionism. An international actor's preferences as to the choice of strategy may differ depending on the number of superpowers and their system: uni-, bi-, or multi-polar. And for example balancing is not conducive to changes, concentrating on maintaining the present state, which satisfies an international actor as to its power and position it occupies. This is the strategy of preventing potential losses. Revisionism, on the other hand, stems from some deficits in this area, therefore actors try to change and improve their situation by increasing their power (and its resources) and changing their positioning to more favorable one (Kaczmarek, 2015: 19). In a threatening situation they join the stronger actor (*bandwagoning*) forming an alliance with it and agreeing to significant concessions (Czaputowicz, 2014: 32-34). This, however, lasts until the threat disappears or circumstances affecting motivation of countries change.

Models of leadership

Does position create leadership or the other way round? Are there any other factors determining it? The social role is closely determined by the position of an individual – claims J. Zając (Zając, 2015: 136). The po-

sition of the country, however, is affected, as we have already mentioned, its identity (both in its internal dimension – *I*, and external *Me* against *others*) and its power. The position is dynamic and subject to continuous transformations. A change of one factor (for example resources) is sometimes sufficient to transform the position of the state. Shifts in structure may change expectations concerning the role performed by the country (for example the fall of the *Hegemon*). Realism offers various answers to the question about the leader.

In classical realism a leader is a *Hegemon*. It represents the state and its interests aiming at maximizing its power and (gaining, maintaining) control over other actors on the international stage. This control (both in spiritual and physical spheres), due to the nature of power wielded by the *Hegemon*, although it leads to creation of a certain relational system of interdependencies, refers to the material factor: power as the most effective tool of conducting foreign policy and accomplishment of goals. The *Hegemon* is a rational leader: it always chooses national interest (it will never agree to be dominated), and since its nature is sometimes aggressive, this means (Mearsheimer and his aggressive approach) or may mean (Walt and his defensive definition of power) war. Other international actors join the strongest state in order to increase their power. It is the most important thing for them. In return, they have to take into account the costs of losing their own identity. It may be “diluted” by the *Hegemon*. The *Hegemon* may become stronger or weaker. It collapses when due to its position and role, costs outweigh profits (its power over others diminishes).

In neo-realism, the ruler is a *Stabilizer*. It is aware of the presence of other actors (superiority of the structure), whom it perceives as a threat, therefore it tries to maximize its own security towards others. Since security can only be ensured by power (frightening rivals, discouraging them from taking the risk of war and encouraging harmony), it has material dimension. Weaker states will not join the stronger country (because then they would strengthen it, and they want to avoid hegemony), but the weaker one, where they feel “more appreciated and secure, (...) on condition that the coalition which

they joined has defensive or deterrent power big enough to discourage the opponent from attack” (Waltz, 2010: 130). Joining the strongest state, on the other hand, means strengthening its position and pushing it towards the *Hegemon* role.

Both constant development of power by the *Stabilizer* (its excess) and its cessation (deficit) may lead to the collapse. In the former situation the actor may “run out” of the sum of resources at its disposal, in the latter – it may be defeated by an opponent. The *Stabilizer* loses its position and role.

In neo-classical realism, an international leader is a *Conservative*, who aims at maintaining the *status quo* or, if it is not satisfied with its situation, a *Revisionist*. Being international actors, they both discern ties resulting from the structure of the system, but they also take into account the significance of factors inside countries. In their foreign policy they aim at maximizing influence, seeing this as an expression of their position and nature of their power (both material and non-material). A *Conservative* will care for maintaining its position, since it is assumed that it is reluctant to all changes and novelties (they are either unprofitable or too risky). If changes occur, they are rather of limited range. A *Revisionist* behaves differently. A country adopting this model of leadership will try to make changes within the position it occupies, as well as introduce modifications within its own power (the function of material and non-material factors). This will translate into efforts to change the role played by it and to take the role it desires. This is often unacceptable to other actors, and thus conflict is generated.

R. Schweller, a representative of neo-classical realism, developed models of international leadership, introducing their indirect matrixes. As Conservatives, he distinguished *Lions* – the countries which he called “satisfied” and as Revisionists (unstable actors) – *Wolves*. He placed *Lambs* and *Jackals* between them. Each of the above actors, due to the position it occupies and the power it has, behaves differently and plays a different role. *Lions* spend the most on defending what they have, investing the least in expanding their possessions. They are defensive by definition and aim at maximizing their security. Since they are “kings

of the jungle”, as R. Schweller describes them, they determine the rules of the game (norms and principles), therefore they want to preserve the *status quo* and do not wish to see any changes (Schweller, 1994: 101).

Lambs, on the other hand, are capable only of incurring low costs related to defense or increasing their power. They are “prey”, weak countries suffering from numerous ailments (political deficits, ethnic diversity, cultural conflict, etc.), therefore, they will not risk everything to defend their values and they will not strive for revisionism. They are ready to concede, they will sacrifice themselves and jump the bandwagon of a stronger country to hide in its shadow and to avoid being devoured by the weaker side of the game (Schweller, 1994: 102).

Jackals are risk-takers, ready to pay high price and to incur high costs of defending their values. They are dissatisfied with their position, therefore, they use every opportunity to change it. Since they “feed on the leftovers”, depending on the circumstances they join *Lions* or *Wolves*. Their goals are limited (Schweller, 1994:).

Wolves, symbolizing predators, are an extreme model. They value what they could have more than what they actually possess. Their “robust appetite” is unlimited and pushes them to take maximum risk, even at the cost of their life. *Wolves* neither opt for power balance nor join others (Schweller, 1994: 103-104). They can be joined by other countries, which form coalitions and alliances with them. They are aggressive and dangerous, since their goals are unlimited.

There is always a risk of deep changes in the structure, which may lead to radical evolution within the roles played by actors. The fallen *Hegemon*, whose power was dispersed, may become a *Revisionist* in order to change its unfavorable situation. Simultaneously, *Jackals* may form coalitions, though they are impermanent due to poor cohesion of interests (limited goals) and *Jackals*’ tendency to feed on profits of others. Roles are never finite and are subject to continuous redefinition (Turner, 2001: 235-236, 253), though it is very difficult to change them (Nabers, 2011: 80). Moreover, they very rarely exist in their pure form. They usually overlap and evolve. A *Hegemon*, for example, may be both a defender (against an external attack), and a threat (it “takes away” identity). The fewer

roles an actor plays, the more distinctive and consistent its identity is (Harnisch, 2011: 9).

Conclusions

Summing up, it should be stated that international leadership denotes roles played by actors, namely states, while the stage on which actions are taken may be determined by the state (classical realism), the structure of the system (neo-realism) and both by the state and the structure (neo-classical realism). Furthermore, actors' behaviors are determined by their identity (and the other way round). Classical realism emphasized *Me* (through the prism of *I*), neo-realism: *Me* and *perception of position vis-à-vis others*, while neo-classical realism combined and emphasized equally both *I* and *Me* and *perception of position vis-à-vis others*.

The identity that determines the type of power also remains important. If an actor builds its identity through *Me*, it believes in relational value of power (controlling others), though the tool through which it is achieved is mostly military power (classical realism). If it takes into account interdependencies of *Me* and *perception of position vis-à-vis others*, its power is purely material and is associated with balance of power (neo-realism). Since neo-classical realism takes into consideration all factors (*I*, *Me* and *perception of position vis-à-vis others*), it sees power in material and relational aspects (both elements are equally important). It is therefore, possible to implement the scenario of preserving the *status quo* and revisionism. Power determines roles just as roles determine power. Along with the decline in power (classical realism), its potential (neo-realism) and its perception (neo-classical realism), the position of the country changes. Therefore, countries must adopt new strategies and make efforts to implement them. They continuously create their roles, fighting for them and for their acceptance in the international environment, adopting the positions of *Hegemon*, *Stabilizer*, *Conservative* or *Revisionist*, and sometimes changing masks depending on "the game they play".

Although model international leadership in realism and its variations is shaped in this way, we must bear in mind that in reality we can find the above models in numerous variations and modifications. It is not without a reason that we talk about “a wolf in sheep’s clothing”.

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