

THE RESILIENCE STAGE OF SECURITY AND THE IMPACT ON THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE NATION-STATE. POST-WESTPHALIAN LOGIC

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Abstract: *It becomes obvious that for sovereignty to regain its position as the focus of security it has to be redefined in relation to "classic" sovereignty, grafted on the concepts of Westphalian logic, and reality proves that even the criteria of belonging to a state have changed. The hypothesis of the article is that in the period of time that has elapsed since the Peace of Westphalia until now, security has been and will remain indivisible and has experienced two phases, each of them consisting of several stages: the Westphalian phase, in which security is focused on the nation state, on its sovereignty and independence, with its related repetitive stages (tension, détente, preemption) and the post-Westphalian phase, very similar in forms of manifestation with the pre-Westphalian phase, in which the security places a greater emphasis on the citizens and in which sovereignty becomes limited or assisted, with the following stages: détente, preemption, resilience. The nation-state, with its core attributes - sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence - is situated in an outdated Westphalian logic, its inhabitants being rather witnesses to its avatars. The nation-state is undergoing a process of change in content and relevance at the actional level, in which its fundamental attributes are modified. Security, in the resilience stage, increases pressure on the state, which is on the verge of redefining its functional needs.*

Keywords: *security, sovereignty, détente, resilience, preemption*

1. INTRODUCTION

From the point of view of the international relations system, a retrospective view on the past four centuries of history reveals that in every century a certain power appeared¹, power that wanted to impose its own view on the international system, trespassing the order established by will and intellectual fervor. In the XVII century France, cardinal Richelieu coined the concept of nation-state as a modern approach of international relations. In the XVIII century, it was England's turn to introduce the concept of balance of power in Europe for the following 200 years. The beginning of the XIX century reestablishes the balance of power and unity in Europe under the patronage of Metternich's Austria; this order will be dismantled by Bismarck's Germany, guiding the diplomacy and international relations system to

a politics of force. Finally, the XX century will bring a new force that will dominate the international relations based on the fact that its values are universally valid and applicable. It was and still is the USA.

All this time, security has been and will remain indivisible (once you tear a thread, the whole fabric will unravel-A/N) and has evolved in two phases and several stages: the *Westphalian* phase, where security put an emphasis on the nation-state, on its sovereignty and independence, and its subsequent stages (tension, *détente*², preemption), and the post-*Westphalian* phase, where security puts an increased emphasis on citizens and where sovereignty becomes limited or assisted, and the subsequent stages are: détente, preemption and resilience.

Some of the truisms of world orders are the following: they are ephemeral; they aspire to permanence; their lifespan is shorter from one order to the other³; each order brought profound

¹ In a world order created in various historical periods, irrespective of how big the circle may be, the actors belonging to it will always make their political moves in a reductionist manner: in a system of five actors each will consider that it will be one of the three, in a system of three actors each will consider it will be one of the two, and in a system of two actors, each will consider that it will remain in the end.

² From French *détente* and means relaxation, recreation- A/N

³ Not taking into account a series of local and regional wars and only approximating the duration of world orders, the new order after the *Westphalia* Peace lasted 150 years, the world order after the Vienna Congress around 100 years, the new order after the World War II 40 years.

social changes and reestablished frontiers; they will never disappear, they just change or adjust; each political actor who shaped an order started from the fundament of exceptionalism and the will to fight for imposing these values on a continental or global level, converting other actors to their own lifestyle; no political actor who shaped an order came stronger at the end (except the USA); no political actor has peacefully passed the baton at the end of a world order; each order becomes anachronic; every time a major internal change takes place within an entity that makes up a system it is automatically followed by disorder.

Scanning history we notice that each stage, each international arrangement brought about a multiplication of the number of states and their ability to interact was greater than in the past. Therefore, will the next world order be the result of a disorder or of a passing of the baton that has a devolutive character? And will the newly appeared states (as a result of the disintegration of empires and decolonization) or the continental states (USA, China, Russia, India, Japan) be “the basic cell” of the next order? Time will give an answer, but a physics principle says that big objects will never revolve around the small ones.

2. STAGES OF SECURITY IN THE POST-WESTPHALIAN PHASE: DÉTENTE, PREEMPTION, RESILIENCE

In this chapter we will analyze the post-*Westphalian* phase of security and its stages.

The collapse of communism and USSR dissolution were the result of gradual accumulation of determining factors, among which the issue of human rights was one of the decisive causes (Molnar, 1990: *passim*), alongside with the political, economic, and military. The issue of human rights is the one that played, after the Cold War era, an important role in redefining the international security environment and international relations.

The genesis of human rights observance and of placing the individual in the center of society is actually the signing of the 1975 Final CSCE Act of Helsinki. The process was separately institutionalized with the Western European countries being the first to include the issue of human rights in national security strategies, turning the issue of respecting them into a preemptive means in order to ensure regional or international security (Badie, 2002: *passim*). Given the pressure of these evolutions, the instruments that the international community has to manage the

international security environment will diversify. For instance, the concept of “peace enforcement” will appear (Lebovic, 2004:910-934). This evolutive process minimizes the role of states and national sovereignty is somehow relativized. National security, by placing in the center the citizen, will change the way national security is designed and will justify at the same time the interference in the internal issues of other actors. Practically, there is a major change in the actional philosophy of international relations, where the observance of human rights is stronger than national sovereignty. It is the post-*Westphalian* “phase” of security that we currently live in, a phase where security has the individual in its center – as opposed to the *Westphalian* phase that has the state in its center.

The fall of the Berlin triggered a change in the structure of the international security environment. In the first post-Cold War decade until 9/11 terrorist attacks of 2001, the security environment was characterized by unpredictability, compared to the Cold War period (Wohlforth, 1999:5-41). Within the state-sovereignty-security triad, given the mutations that took place at a global level as well as at the level of the concept of sovereignty and state, security focused on the individual. There will be an institutional transformation of the main international organizations and entities (ONU, NATO, OSCE, UE), followed by a major reconsideration of the actional objectives and means. In other words, human rights will transcend the idea of state sovereignty and security will enter a stage of *détente*, where the accent is placed on the individual.

As we mentioned above, the preemptive action replaced the reactive attitudes. During 11 September-1 May 2003 (the end of the Iraq invasion), security switched from the *détente* stage to preemptive action, the USA being the first to include the concept of preemptive action in its national security strategy; an entire doctrine on preemptive action was developed subsequently (Reisman, Strong, 2006: 525-550). This overlapped with the transition from maintaining peace processes and mitigating conflicts in friction and conflict areas to direct involvement in negotiating solutions for imposing peace. Now there are a lot of imperatives that become standard for any state that shares liberal democratic values: Security for whom? Based on what values and interests? How much security? Who defines risks and threats? What are the costs of security? What is the defined time span for developing preemptive actions?

Security expands its area becoming an aggregate that starts from individual-society-community and reaches all levels of the international dimension, local-regional-areal-continental-intercontinental-global. There appear various dimensions of security, from the political, economic, social, and military up to the human, cultural and ecologic dimension, from individual to global security. The security resources diversify and the security paradigms increase. The three types of security – collective, common, through cooperation – recalibrate their actional objectives and means by adapting to the current realities. The relevance of state and its sovereignty is decreasing at the level of international relations and of their impact upon security, also because subjects became non-state actors and hierarchy of security risks and threats evolved.

In the third phase, since the Iraq invasion (1 May 2003) until now, the focus of national security has fallen on the resilience ability of the state, i.e. on the correct understanding of the fact that there are threats, risks, vulnerabilities, hazards that cannot be eliminated, irrespective of the (offensive or defensive) measures that can be taken. It is a theory that belongs rather to the neorealist school of thought. The state must have the capacity to reinstall the proper security level in the aftermath of a major disruptive event. Because the role of national sovereignty is decreasing within the international relations system, one of the natural consequences is a diversification of the typology of actors who make up the international system. Besides the classic actors, nation-states and governmental organizations, also non-state actors diversify: terrorist groups, transfrontier mobster organizations, transnational radical religious groups, NGOs, corporations, etc. International organizations such as UNO, NATO, OSCE, EU adapt to reality following the actions of non-state actors; as a consequence, the agenda of state actors is dictated by that of non-state actors. Moreover, state actors “surrender” their sovereignty and that is why limited or assisted sovereignty is a new concept of discussion. For this reason security has entered the stage of state’s resilience in front of current and future threats, risks, vulnerabilities and hazards.

It becomes clear that for sovereignty to be again the main focus for security it must be redefined in relation to the “classic” sovereignty, based on the concepts of the Westphalian logic, and reality proves us that even the criteria for belonging to a state have changed.

We cannot speak now about the end of the end of the nation-state and a transfer of the individual to a universal citizenship that is beyond the rigors of belonging to a state. The nation-state, with its main attributes – sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence – belongs to an outdated *Westphalian* logic, nations being rather witnesses of its avatars. The nation-state is subjected to a process of change in content and relevance at an actional level, where its fundamental attributes are changed. Security, which is in the resilience stage, increases pressure upon the state that should now redefine its functional attributes.

3. RESILIENCE OF SECURITY

Before starting the discussion on the resilience of security we need to present a few concepts. We need to mention that there is no generally accepted definition of resilience; the term migrates to the exact sciences rather than humanistic and social sciences, given its attractiveness. Thus, in exact sciences resilience is defined as “the capability of a strained body to recover its size and shape after deformation caused especially by compressive stress; an ability to recover from or adjust easily to misfortune or change” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, *Resilience*), the term was later borrowed by ecology, defining the ability of a system to absorb changes without having its vital functions affected and to keep existing (C.S. Holling, 4/1973: 1-23).

For a better understanding, we find it useful the following explanation:

The «engineering/physical [dimension] refers to physical infrastructure and systems while psychological dimension refers to the social domain that focuses on the individual. We then turn to perceptions of *bouncing back* within the business/economic world-drawing from debates on business continuity management and business leadership/management. [...] This relates to the overall operations of business and the role of management. The final two sub-sections on ecological [...] looks at how research on ecological systems has found that bouncing back from shocks can be both static (strict ecological process) or dynamic (in socio-ecological systems) and the expression of resilience is dependent largely on the scale of enquiry (predator-prey interaction versus human interaction in natural systems) Similarly, [...] research on community resilience reveals the importance of adaptive learning and transformation» (Giroux & Prior, 2012:6).

Closer to our days the definition of resilience received a more comprehensive definition:

Resilience is currently much in vogue and is increasingly making its way into the domain of (national) security. However, the concept did not originate in security, but was imported from the disciplines of ecology and engineering. The popularity of the resilience concept among security experts is closely linked to the emergence of a world of risks rather than threats: Facing a variety of different risks – from natural hazards and the failure of critical infrastructures to terrorist attacks – policy-makers have recognized that not all disasters can be averted, and security can never be fully achieved. As a consequence, the focus has shifted from averting, deterring, and protecting from threats to mitigating the consequences should a disaster occur (Bara, Brönnimann, 2011:6).

In this context, “the concept of resilience offers an apt metaphor of how communities can resist damage and recover quickly from adverse events” (National Research Council, 2011:1).

At the NATO Summit in Warsaw in 8-9 July 2016, heads of states and governments adopted a declaration that says

(...) we are today making a commitment to continue to enhance our resilience against the full spectrum of threats, including hybrid threats, from any direction. Resilience is an essential basis for credible deterrence and defence and effective fulfilment of the Alliance’s core tasks. (NATO, 2016:1).

Back to the resilience stage of security, our analysis will refer to the transformation of the term sovereignty, implicitly of the term nation-state. The evolution of the international systems in the post-Cold War era led to a recalibration of its determinants: risks, threats, vulnerabilities, hazards. The relation of interdependence between the nation-state sovereignty and the system of international relations resulted in several stages of security. The resilience stage is the result of the pace of the changes and their radical nature that manifests globally. The pressure of security is transferred to state actors and the various organizations they are part of. Further on, each entity (nation-state or organization) develops institutional transformations that should grant them adaptability. In other words, the conceptual explanatory image of the international relations system, in the post-Cold War era, is as follows: the détente period coincided with peace maintaining and peaceful mitigation of conflicts, then the

preemptive stage meant imposing peace and active involvement in the effort to find negotiated solutions; the resilience of security stage should have the ability to absorb the “shocks”, continuing to function within functional parameters. All three stages belong to the post-*Westphalian* stage of security and lead to an “erosion” of the sovereignty of the nation-state.

The evolutive fluidity and unpredictability of the international security environment are the results of the increased relevance of the transfrontier and transnational non-state actors. They are in a direct determination relation with the state actors and their fundamental attribute, sovereignty, that lose relevance within the international system. “The transfer of sovereignty” of the state actors, through delegating some attributions to international organizations, generates the process of actor multiplication. This opinion is supported from many points of view:

(...) The argumentative scope is diverse, starting from the multiplication of centers of power and authority, the diminution of states’ ability to control their national economies as a result of globalization and interdependence, the inability to fully control information and ideas due to the technical-scientific revolution, up to an increased dependence of most states to foreign natural resources (Tuțianu, 2011:99).

The chain of change is the following: through non-state actors’ action, reality imposes organizations (UN, NATO, EU, OSCE) to adopt documents that should conform with the actional reality. Further on, organizations, through their actions, “affect” nation-states’ sovereignty, turning it into a “limited” or “assisted” sovereignty.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Retrospectively, the past five centuries seem nothing but a series of wars or preparations for wars so that an entity having a hegemonic vocation impose its will against the others. All this time, and possibly in the future as well, the international system has had to constantly transform and nations have always been in competition. Not even periods of peace could stop the processes of continuous change. The secular transformations of the balance of power lead us to the conclusion that the war coexists with the system of great powers. The war is inherent to the will for hegemony. No one can exclude the possibility of a war waged with

conventional arms. The only certainty is that the rhythm of transformations of the global balance of power will be more alert. No one, state or leader, can control the rhythm of change. Otto von Bismarck said that all great Powers “are traveling on the stream of Time,” but they “can steer with more or less skill and experience” (Pflanze, 1963:17). Practically, one cannot endlessly shape an international order, but one can extend the time for doing this. How? With skill and experience, just as Bismarck said.

The evolution of the concept of security was an integral part and shaped the international systems in various epochs. The peace of *Westphalia* and The Treaty of *Versailles* imposed a volatile international order, unlike the Congress of Vienna and the one dominated by the USA in the aftermath of the Second World War, which imposed a stable order.

Ex post facto, the new world order of the beginning of the XXth century started under *Wilsonian* auspices and ended under the same auspices, foreshadowing a new world order based on cooperation, collective action and the force of common principles. The USA proposed, for the third time in a century, an international arrangement upon which it should apply its own internal values. Wilson had dominated the Peace Conference in Paris and had proposed his allies collective security and self-determination; Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Henry Truman wanted to put an end to the expansion of communism and offered an American alternative to it; Ronald Reagan and George Walker Bush accelerated the collapse of communism and turned the USA in the only state able to act anywhere in the world. The new complex and dynamic world order of the XXI century shares similarities with the European system of entities prior to the Peace of *Westphalia*. The international arrangements will be based on a balance of national interests so that peace should prevail. The new world order has not yet been defined, it has not reached a final form because it fails to respond to a series of imperatives: What are its principles? What do these principles aim? How do these principles interact?

The end of the Cold War and the absence of a well-defined political-military-ideologic adversary that should oppose the USA will recalibrate the American priorities and the transfer of resources from the military field to something else, following an internal pressure. In this respect, the lack of a big threat will lead to the fact that each state who benefitted from security warranties from the USA

will assume a greater responsibility towards its own security.

The future world order will no longer be the privilege of a single state, the new construction will have to find a balance between the claims of the future actors involved and availability to impose and apply them. An important role in all this process will be played by the definition of the national interests of those involved. Once the interests of the future actors are defined and the balance between them found, we can speak of a new world order. It is clear that the generations who no longer have the memory of the Cold War or the Second World War will tend to other types of order, where the role of traditional actors, such as the USA’s organic involvement in Europe, will be diminished in building security. Some of the actors we know will tend to isolationism in various forms while others will raise.

In all this mix, security was either grafted on national causes or the result of certain shared principles and values. Each world order basically was given a choice: the power of loaded canons or the power of the word. The unilateral imposing of a global agenda offers both power and responsibilities, which in time trigger the wear of the respective state – its power becoming diffuse but its responsibilities becoming increased.

State sovereignty evolves concomitently with the functional needs of society. The post-*Westphalian* phase of security diminishes the importance of the nation-state and states must adapt to this reality. Even if it remains the main actor of the international relations system, the sovereign nation state will no longer exercise, within normal parameters, its attributions on an international level.

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