

Research Article

The concept of leadership in international relations

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ABSTRACT: The article examines the theoretical foundations of the concept of "leadership" in international relations on the basis of the role of this category in the formation of the structure of the system of international relations, and draws parallels between the historical evolution of this structure and the history of the emergence and development of the notion of "leadership" as an important part of it, before the transformation into the concept of "hegemony." The specifics and peculiarities of the leadership position of the states on specific historical examples of subjects of international relations occupying a leading position are analyzed. Such examples include the great powers of the 19th century, the superpower of the 20th century and the hegemon of the late 20th and early 21st centuries. Conclusions are made about the likely transformation of the leader's position in the near future due to the analysis of the contradictory influence of the current configuration of leadership on the state of the international system.

Key words: system of international relations, actors and subjects of international relations, poles of international development, leadership, hegemony, great powers superpowers.

The concept of "leadership" implies such a position of the subject of activity in relation to another subject of activity, in which the subject with this position, has the possibility of such influence on the activities of another subject, which will be decisive in relation to this activity, primarily the one that has an impact on the leading subject. The decisive aspect in this definition is that leadership arises not only in the subject-object, but first of all in the subject-subject relation, and at the same time is provided by the special position of the leading subject in relation to another subject under the influence of the leader. [1]

The main feature of this provision is the ability of the leader to carry out actions that are decisive for the General position of two or more interacting subjects in a single system of relations for them and not carried out by the subject with whom he interacts. Accordingly, for a leader in international relations, a special position in the unified system of international relations is decisive. The important reasons to pay attention to when analyzing the phenomenon of leadership are thus structural reasons. It is the subject of international relations that will identify itself with the element of this system at a particular stage of its historical development, which is the most important and significant for it, and has the most weighty grounds for claims to leadership in international relations. [2]

The understanding of leadership can range from the ability of a leading actor to realize his political goals, despite possible resistance from another actor (or simply to acquire key influence abilities to achieve the goals in which different actors are interested) to the postulating of the relationship of leadership with the ability to organize more and more aspects of the activities of a competing player. Claims to the unilateral nature of leadership in the last described situation brought to the extreme will be linked to the hegemonic intentions of the claimant. [3]

If we follow the dynamics of the historical development of the international system, we will see a change in the nature of the leading actor. If in the system of international relations of the 19th century, which largely corresponded to the parameters of traditional research approaches, such subjects were States called "great powers", in the 20th century – States that concentrated in their hands much more influence on the international arena and therefore called "super powers", and at the turn of the past and present centuries, the only state that retained the status of a superpower – the United States of America – put forward claims to world hegemony. Accordingly, consideration of the historical dynamics of the international system allows to determine how the transformation of the concept of "leadership" and how it increasingly correlated with the concept of "hegemony".[4]

The leadership of the great powers in the 19th century was associated with the development of European colonialism in the framework of the competition of major European States after the defeat of Napoleon's France. This historical example confirms that it was possible to characterize a state as an international leader only in the conditions of the acquisition of international relations of a global character. Before that, we could only talk about regional leadership. The Deposit to characterize the behavior of States in the international arena could have been exactly as "leadership", formed the Westphalian system of international relations: it is the principle of inviolability of the sovereignty of States allowed to characterize the relations between them through the category of "leadership", since the purpose of the participants in the international political process (for the beginning, among European States) was not the final conquest of the territory of the opponent state, but the provision of superiority and influence, including by force. Since the main means of resolving international conflicts, and hence the way of

developing the international system, were wars, the leadership was achieved by the state that was militarily not inferior to any other state that could claim to be a source of unilateral influence in international relations. The preservation of economic and cultural superiority could only be achieved if accompanied by the military force and to be implemented could not, while military superiority is often still in itself has been a priority basis to preserve their superiority and influence. [5]

Thus, the subject of competition between States gradually becomes the position of the leader when the very existence of another state becomes the basic principle of the joint organization of international relations by their participants. Therefore, it can be noted that the origin of the phenomenon of the struggle for leadership is the resolution of the Hobbes war of all against all between the States-subjects in the direction of the joint Treaty. The struggle for leadership begins where, on the one hand, the emergence of a political struggle through the classical definition of "friend-enemy" is mediated by the Treaty defining the boundaries of such political self – determination, on the other-the risk of extreme situation in the form of war between the parties remains. The phenomenon of the struggle for leadership is an indicator of the beginning of the stabilization of the international system. However, such stabilization was made possible by the direct contradictions between competing States from the outside, thanks to the colonial system. However, the subject of this competition – the dominance of the leading European States outside Europe-still led to a clash of interests of European States. In this situation, only the state that would exercise a dominant position on a global scale could have the leadership itself. The relative stability of the internal European system, supported by the leading position of several States (in particular, the famous concert of powers), faced with the uncertainty of the emerging world system. Under these conditions, the main goal of the most developed countries of Europe is gradually ceasing to be the struggle for leadership and becomes the struggle for global hegemony. The imperialist policy becomes the geopolitical basis of such struggle. Such a claim to influence at the world level, which is associated with the ability of one state to determine all the existing advantages of other States over the rest, which made them leaders, and is hegemonic. [6]

Based on this, as a hegemonic state can be represented, most clearly among other States expressing the tendency of the system of international relations to unite and has a sufficient number of advantages of geopolitical, economic, cultural character in order to influence the international political process at the world level. It maintains stable relations among a number of international actors and world politics, but can interfere in the Affairs of a number of other States and by force of arms. Therefore, we can agree with the thesis of Immanuel Wallerstein, who cited the United States of America in the second half of the 20th century as a classic example of hegemon. First of all, this applies to the period during and some time after the collapse of the Soviet Union, because it was during this period, a number of developing countries, was

built into the logic of bipolar confrontation and was forced to join one of the two blocks led by the superpowers – the US and the USSR, not without their help economic modernization. Accordingly, the fall of one of the two superpowers left the United States alone with the process of world economic unification, during which the first time in history was the formation of the only state that is a military and geopolitical guarantor of economic exploitation of the world center of the world periphery and foreign policy dependence of the second on the first. In the previous historical periods, there were either several States that were the most developed on the world stage, which were regional hegemony and poorly crossed by foreign policy activities, or the very Center of the world system was divided into several competing leaders. [7]

Wallerstein's point of view, according to which there were several world wars in world history, the end of which led to the emergence of hegemonies, probably leads to a somewhat strong expansion of the concept of "hegemony", since the system of international relations at the moment has not reached such a high degree of integration that from the comparison of the position of the leading States of the system it was possible to determine one of them as dominant at the global level. The example given by the researcher in the United Kingdom in the 19th century, successfully competing with other great powers for the role of leader in international relations, still did not make in real practice the object of competition the division of the world as a whole, because the process of colonial development of the European great powers of the rest of the world was still in At the same time, the United States of America in the second half of the 20th century was the guarantor of the process of integration of the world-system, including its allies in the face of the developed countries of the First world in the structure of dependence, in which developing countries exported products to developed countries. The hegemonic position in this case was ensured by the fact that neither developed countries could oppose their policy to the hegemonic state, because they depended on the import of products of those developing countries in which the political elites were loyal to the United States thanks to the geopolitical expansion of the latter, nor developing countries could not unite their efforts against the. [8]

We can say that the influence of hegemony on the preservation of global stability is twofold: the increase in the degree of order and integrity of international relations coincides with a greater depth of contradictions in the case of the preservation of States, as well as economic and social forces, whose interests do not coincide with the interests of hegemon. The reason for this is that the very subject of such contradictions is not just the possibility of an independent foreign policy, but the ability to be one of the key centers of influence in the conditions of the formation of global economic interdependence. The emergence of new poles of development in the context of the formation of the world multipolarity can not be stable with the continuing claims of the old hegemon to act on behalf of the "world community", in fact splitting the actors of the international system is not in the

promotion of the interests of certain powers, but through the construction of a model of the organization of the world order.

[9]

The universalist trends in the development of the international system lead not only to the increasing role of international institutions in the regulation of international relations, but also to the involvement of countries with different interests in these institutions. In this context, the intention of developed countries and the current world leader – the United States of America – to act as the main force playing a key role in the implementation of the work of these institutions, thereby consolidating the institutional foundations of leadership and hegemonic claims, destabilizes the international system, launching a new phase of the struggle for international leadership, which, in turn, aims to stabilize in the new conditions. Therefore, we can agree with the remark E. M. Primakov said that unilateral decision-making practice is hardly compatible with the emerging trends in the development of the system of international relations, which means that hegemony in the near future is unlikely to be the main practice of the leading subject. The transition from the struggle for hegemony that took place in the 20th century to the struggle for leadership is a consequence of the decentralization of the system of international relations, the complexity of the organization of the world order, in which the interests of developing countries play an increasingly important role, whose economic associations allow them to acquire greater geopolitical weight, and the emerging process of dialogue of cultures – the opportunity to make the dominant Western – centric discourse more competitive and diverse.

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