

# A transforming international system and the three approaches to the security dilemma

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**Abstract** This article seeks to analyse the security dilemma in light of the transforming international system of today. Hereby, K. Waltz's three images of war (men, the state, the international system) were taken as the basic approaches to the causes of the problem, while the carcass for the formulated systemic macro-models (federal world government, mature anarchy, balance of power) was provided by the key IR theories. The logic behind this approach lies in the belief that the international system periodically re-structures itself as to form the most stable structure possible for the respective period in history. The analysis revealed that the foundation of a federal world government could be excluded with near absolute certainty, while the prevalence of either the mature anarchy or the balance of power model was found to depend on whether the mental and physical interdependencies generated by the forces of globalization can create universal values and which functional type of the key international regimes they produce – cooperation or coordination. The results indicated the primacy of a multipolar power system balanced between civilizational blocs, which proved to be a natural consequence of the verified systemic trends as well as to display a sufficient potential for stability.

**Keywords** International system · Security dilemma · Globalization · Balance of power · Mature anarchy · Federal world government

## Introduction

The resolution of the security dilemma<sup>1</sup> in international relations and the enhancement of national and individual security as a result has been addressed by many philosophers such as Emmanuel Kant, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Karl Marx, Max Weber, and representatives of the different schools of international relations (IR) theories, among them Ernest Haas, Alexander Wendt, Hans Morgenthau, Robert Keohane or Barry Buzan to only name a few. Among the existing approaches, the work of the prominent structural realist Kenneth Waltz appears most useful, as the three causes – or 'images' – of war: *men*, *the state* and *the international system* he delineates [4] basically account for all relevant currently existing theoretical attitudes towards international security, since there is broad consensus on the fact that war is to be seen as the highest form of insecurity and, thus, to be avoided. Generally speaking, those approaches can be grouped into two main categories:

The first category inclines towards the federalist and neo-functional schools of thought and bases its arguments on the idea of global integration suggesting for an abolition of the state-system in favour of a supranational geo-political entity in form of a federal world government. This group mainly blames the state for the security dilemma and, hence, tries to abolish it. The other two groups are rationalist in nature - realists and liberals. These groups accept the anarchical nature of the system as it is, while blaming it for all the insecurities a state may face, and trying to find strategies to counter-act this effect. At that point, one of the crucial differences between the two rationalist schools of thought becomes tangible: Liberals

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<sup>1</sup> The essence of the security dilemma lies in the fact that "many of the policies that are designed to increase a state's security automatically and inadvertently decrease the security of others" [1, p. 358, based on Herz [2] and Butterfield [3]], and, by doing so, its own state's one, as other states feel threatened and take measures in return.

believe in the collaborative power of international regimes, while neo-realists view them primarily as additional means of power projection used by states. Accordingly, when it comes to macro-modelling, liberals would advocate the establishment of a so-called mature anarchy system<sup>2</sup> induced through the empowerment of global international regimes backed by a common normative background, while realists would suggest to achieve a higher stability in the international system by means of a balance of power (BoP) system in which the world would be divided between a number of more or less equally powerful (externally) and stable (internally) geopolitical blocs.

If we now combine those models with Waltz's images of war, we can say that the federal world government model (model 1) would concentrate on the elimination of the *state* as the main cause for violent conflict in international relations, the mature anarchy model (model 2) would be induced through the *men*-dimension, while the realist balance of power model (model 3) would target the third image of war – the *international system*. Thus, the mechanisms required for the transformation of the current system structure in accordance with one of the three models differ substantially and approach the security dilemma from completely different theoretical angles.

Given the transformative tendencies currently visible in the international system,<sup>3</sup> the aim of this analysis shall be to find the answer to the question of which of the three structural models presented above is more likely to prevail in the system and to assess the potential of the dominant model to enhance the overall level of security in the international system through the mitigation of the security dilemma. Which development path the state and the international system can be expected to take in future can be estimated by identifying the main trends currently characterising the processes of the international system and correlating this data with the identified mechanisms required for the establishment of one out of the three identified structural models. While an upgrade in issue-related cooperation known from today is required by both models based on integration (models 1 and 2), such an upgrade when in line with the federal world government model would imply a transition from a state-based towards a global federalised system, whereas integration in accordance with the mature anarchy model would result in enhanced cooperation within global international regimes in an otherwise state-based system. The balance of power model, in turn, implies the formation of a multipolar

power system (MPS), in which power-determined coordination would regulate international affairs.

Model 1 was analysed by means of the two-level approach [5, p. 40] basically suggesting that in order to analyse the international structure, we need to understand the units of which it consists, and in order to understand those units, we need to analyse the structure. Hereby, the United Nations (UN) was studied with regard to its currently available competences and its potential to develop global governmental functions. The mind-sets of the basic agent-unit constituting the international structure – men – were analysed using a survey conducted by the author in 2013 by means of a questionnaire, which was aimed at verifying the prevalence of either national or cosmopolitan self-identification among the respondents, as well as their attitude towards the power international organizations should possess vis-à-vis national governments, whereby special attention was paid to the UN. Hereby, the answers given by UN officials were compared to those acquired from people not employed by the UN.

Models 2 and 3 were analysed using the Coleman scheme [6, p. 8] assuming a macro-proposition, which can be expected to develop through a micro-proposition, whereby the macro- and the micro levels are connected by so-called “bridge assumptions”. In order to hold true, macro-propositions require the other three linkages to, on and back from the micro-level [7]. In the upcoming analysis, the first macro-proposition to be tested is that globalization, which is to be seen as an intervening variable, leads to a mature anarchy system (dependent variable) through the creation of universal values (bridge assumption), which makes cooperation the dominant functional type of global regimes (micro-proposition), which results in the creation of a mature anarchy system (bridge assumption). The opposing macro-proposition to be tested is that globalization leads to a balance of power system through the strengthening of civilizational identities, which leads to global regimes functioning on the basis of coordination, which results in the creation of a balance of power structure.

Taking into account the complexity of the international system, the unpredictability of possible external shocks rapidly and drastically changing the system, it should be acknowledged that this analysis is not a precise prognosis of the outcome of the current system transformation, but the evaluation of the main trends determined by the verified independent variables representing the mechanisms required for each of the tested macro-models to turn into practise, and the assessment of their effects on the international system in general and the security dilemma in particular. The indicators established throughout this study are sufficiently precise as to be used for further research. The findings of this analysis are scientifically justified and, by this, can serve as a basis for subsequent studies to any student of international relations.

<sup>2</sup> Term by B. Buzan, 1983

<sup>3</sup> The fact that the current set-up of the international system is undergoing a change becomes tangible, predominantly, on the disturbances in the system well visible on both the re-established struggle over the spheres of influence by the major powers and the struggle for regional self-determination by the existing civilizational units, taking the most violent form in the Arab world.

## The federal world government model

Studying the phenomenon of integration in the European Union (EU), Filippo Andreatta [8] was able to sketch the typology of the main theories of European integration into a table with two variables for each of the two possible results of integration. Having adjusted his approach to the global dimension, the following typology of the classical theories of integration and international relations was summarized in Table 1.

Issue-related cooperation refers to the system structure as it is now. Hereby, the domain of high politics<sup>4</sup> is generally regulated by the realist tradition of thought with the primacy of the national interest, the focus on relative gains and relative power. On the international arena, this is reflected in coordinated policy outcomes, which demonstrates the respective power distribution among the relevant players and can graphically be illustrated by the so-called ‘Pareto frontier’ known from the ‘Battle of the Sexes’ model. The liberal tradition of thought, on the other hand, can rather be expected to be met in issues of low politics,<sup>5</sup> where information exchange and mechanisms of mutual control theoretically allow to achieve the optimum outcome, the so-called ‘Pareto optimum’ that is otherwise hindered by mutual distrust as known from the ‘Prisoner’s dilemma’.

The Federal World Government model bases its assumptions on the theory of federalism suggesting the “abolition of national independence and the fusion of different political entities into one” [8, p. 23] as a solution to the security dilemma. This assumption is based on the ideas of Kant and Rousseau seeing the problem of (in)security in the state as a societal entity. Indeed, the sources of national insecurity and the attempts to enhance national security are closely interrelated, as “an increase in one state’s security decreases the security of others” – an observation made by Robert Jervis and capturing the very essence of the security dilemma [9, p. 186]. Hence, one of the possible solutions to the problem to achieve peace among states would be to replace the state with what Kant refers to as a “federation of free states” in his famous *Perpetual Peace*. Here, Kant emphasizes that the “federation of nations” should not be constructed as a state, because a “state” implies the relation of one who rules to those who obey and, by this, to only one nation [10, pp. 128–129]. Instead, Kant suggests for a federal union, which other political entities would like to join out of free will.

Being primary concerned with issues of high politics, federalists suggest for rather revolutionary measures to initiate global integration, such as the introduction of a federal world constitution. Starting from above, such type of integration

would require very strong incentives to occur, as it would have to overpower the realist logic prevalent for issues of high politics. In order for this to happen, two interdependent mechanisms need to be provided. The first one refers to heavy external pressure which might be caused by a global environmental disaster, a world war or alike. Such a traumatic event can be expected to bring about a rapid institutional integration. The other mechanism is societal pressure and it can either be triggered by the first mechanism, or by a naturally initiated and gradually occurring change in the mind-sets of world population. Drawing on the logic of structural theory, a shift in the self-identification of the agents constituting the structure will lead to the adaptation of the structure to a new social reality. The structural change, in turn, will bring about the effect of socialization, further influencing the agents.<sup>6</sup>

A gradual transformation of the international system, on the other hand, is the type of integration advocated by neo-functionalists and unlike the previous one, it starts from below. Just as federalists, proponents of gradual approaches to integration would find support in Kant’s *Perpetual Peace* suggesting that integration “from a State of Nations [...] would be ever increasing and finally embrace all peoples of the earth” [10, p. 136]. Gradual integration can occur through the interrelated spill-over and socialization effects. The socialization effect derives its logic from social constructivism suggesting for the mutually dependent and equal relationship between the agent and the structure just described in the preceding paragraph. Socialization is intertwined with the spill-over effect, as both parallel effects have to be active in order to generate integration. The spill-over effect implies a gradual delegation of functions from the national to the supranational level taking place as a result of the functional spill-over creating integrative pressures in one policy area through integration in another, and the political spill-over shifting the level of attention from the national to the supranational level. As Ernest Haas puts it, “integration brings loyalties, expectations and political activities towards a new centre, whose institutions possess or demand jurisdiction over the pre-existing national states” [12, p. 139].

The effectiveness of the spill-over and socialization effects was demonstrated in the European Union, where initial economic cooperation led to the Union transforming into one political entity willing to deepen its integration even further. The transformation from an issue-related, technical cooperation into a deep integrated geo-political entity was made possible, among others, by the bureaucracy and its capacity to rationalize and depoliticize issues through standard operating procedures, which led to an institutional spill-over. The socialization process among EU-bureaucrats, on the other hand, created a supranational mentality, which, in turn, further influenced the integration process. Thus, for the federal world government scenario to become true through a gradual integration from below, the

<sup>4</sup> Domain of politics occupied with issues that are considered central for a state’s survival, such as security policy.

<sup>5</sup> Domain of politics occupied with issues that are not directly associated with the survival of a state.

<sup>6</sup> See agent-structure problem, A. Wendt, 1987 [11]

**Table 1** Federal world government vs. issue-related cooperation

Result of integration	Issue-Related Cooperation Federal World Government	Policy fields	
		High Politics	Low Politics
		Neo-Realism	Neo-Liberalism
		Federalism	Neo-Functionalism

technical spill-over effect has to be accompanied by the socialization effect turning the minds of officials within an international organization towards a deeper integration.

Thus, following the logic established above, the scenario of a federal world government can turn into reality as a result of two sets of interdependent mechanisms, each set constituting the independent variable leading to the dependent outcome which is the initiation of a global integration process either from below or from above (Table 2).

The variables initiating the formation of a federal world government from above were identified as external pressure and societal pressure. While the ability of external pressures to initiate integration processes could be confirmed – the foundation of the Security Council after World War II –, it was difficult to estimate whether another dramatic external event will occur in the next future and whether such an event will result in a deepening of integration or will rather have the opposite effect. To make an example, the terrorist attack of 9/11 did not lead to a sudden boost of the global integration forces. On the contrary, the ‘War on Terror’ that has resulted out of this external pressure has led to the securitization of almost all spheres of international migration. That caused a drastic degradation of global integration, while revived national tendencies gained in power. Thus, due to its unpredictability, the variable ‘external pressure’ was rated negative with regard to its effect on global integration processes.

The other variable that was sought to trigger integration from above is societal pressure. This mechanism is backed by the logic of social constructivism suggesting that the agents – in our case world society – construct the structure – in our analysis the international political system composed of states – thus, they can change it. The agents’ mind-sets, more concrete, their basic self-identification as a national or a cosmopolite and attitude towards the power international organizations should possess vis-à-vis national governments, were analysed by means of a survey. Hereby, special attention was paid to the United Nations as the only currently available platform for international exchange incorporating all states of the Earth and being regarded

as generally legitimate by world society. The results demonstrated no tendencies towards a further empowerment of the UN by the public, while revealed a societal approval of interstate cooperation on issues of low politics, the environment in particular. This data provides evidence for the likelihood of the deepening of the current form of issue-related cooperation in low political issues, which prevails over the scenario of a full integration with a final abolition of the state-dominated system.

The two interdependent effects of spill-over and socialization were expected to lead to a gradual global integration taking place from below. A spill-over effect similar to that established in the European Union could not be verified within the UN. The occasional cooperation between states that takes place under theegis of the UN remains strictly within the limits of the issue concerned, whereby the level of governance is clearly that of the state, as the UN lacks any means of effective enforcement. Whether or not the spill-over effect might set in in future, however, could depend on the other variable – the socialization effect. This is because in accordance with the social constructivist predictions, the socializing forces prevalent in international organizations change the mind-sets of the bureaucrats working there. Those officials become increasingly detached from their national governments and initiate a transition of governmental functions from the national towards the supranational level. This effect was proven to have considerably contributed to the integration process in the European Union. The same effect was expected to be found among UN officials.

The data obtained by means of the survey applied throughout this analysis did indeed reveal a socialization effect within the UN, but one that influenced the bureaucrats through professional ethic, rather than stimulated a change in their self-perception from a national towards a cosmopolitan identity. It is unlikely that this verified type of socialization will trigger the spill-over effect, as the survey revealed a tendency of the UN officials to incline towards a preservation of the current state of affairs within the UN and in the international system in general. Based

**Table 2** Federal world government

Dimension	Mechanisms		Federal world government
High politics	Federalism		
	External pressure	Societal pressure	Integration from above
Low politics	Neo-functionalism		
	Spill-over effect	Socialization effect	Integration from below

on these findings, the UN can be expected to remain an advisory body, while cooperation on selected issues can be anticipated to continue taking place among states on a voluntary basis. This outcome confirms the results obtained by the analysis of the integration mechanisms operating from above in the beginning of the section.

Summing up, so far we have established that the foundation of a world government is extremely unlikely to set in in the foreseeable future. Whether or not the issue-related cooperation of today can be expected to intensify, spread to the domain of high politics and activate the mechanisms of integration reforming the system in accordance with the mature anarchy model or whether the systemic pressures will rather evoke forces of segregation transforming the system in accordance with the balance of power model remains the concern of the next section of this article.

### Mature anarchy vs. balance of power

Unlike model 1, models 2 and 3 are state-based models. The Balance of Power (BoP) is a system model constructed in the realist tradition of thought, based on the assumption that the anarchy in the system is a given and deriving its logic from the notion of relative power. One could even argue that this model is maintained by the anarchic nature of the system. As reasoned by Buzan: “the balance of power and the international anarchy are opposite sides of the same coin. If we accept Vattel’s classic definition of the balance of power as ‘a state of affairs such that no one power is in a position where it is preponderant and can lay down the law to others’, then it becomes simply another way of describing the basic structure of anarchy” [13, p. 103]. In order for this to happen, certain criteria need to be fulfilled, though. So, among others, the relevant players need to be internally stable status quo powers with a defensive security doctrine and of a roughly equal relative power.

The Mature Anarchy model bases its logics on the tenets of liberalism and requires an increased delegation of the state’s governing functions to specific international organizations acting on behalf of respective international regimes. The core precondition for this to happen is that the benefits of cooperation outweigh the costs of deception [1, 9]. The calculations of the costs of deception differ among states depending on their relative power,

the operating security doctrine, the nature of relations they have with other relevant actors in the respective regime, etc. Overall, those factors can be divided into two groups. The first variable is related to relative power of the participants vis-à-vis the degree of interdependence in the system, the second – to the operating normative basis. Consequently, those two variables can be regarded as the determinants of the success or failure of regimes (Table 3).

Thus, in case the interdependencies in the system coincide with a common normative basis, the respective regime can be expected to function on the basis of cooperation. In case the existing interdependencies necessitate the maintenance of a regime despite a lack of a common norm, the regime can be expected to generate coordinated outcomes based on the participants’ relative power. Logically, when there are no interdependencies at all, the regime loses its relevance and is likely to dissipate. Thus, the variable of interdependencies is responsible for regime formation, while the variable of a common norm – for the prevalence of either coordination or cooperation as its functional type.

There is more or less general consensus on the fact that technology can be regarded as the major force shaping the organizational type of society in its cyclical development. The technological progress has created global interdependencies and pressures embracing all domains of human activity – society, economy and the environment, and affecting both their physical and mental dimensions. This process is also known as globalization – a complex and fluid concept, which yet turned out to become tangible through the identification of the more or less static mechanisms by means of which it functions. While the variable of global physical interdependencies – which can be identified as one of the two core mechanism through which globalization acts – constitutes a vector directed towards a higher degree of interdependence in the system, the mental interdependencies – the other core mechanism – can have twofold repercussions: they can either exert a unifying effect on the system through the creation of universal values, or lead to its segregation as a result of generated systemic pressures. Hereby, both mechanisms act interdependently and simultaneously. Thus, in order to find out whether globalization will lead to the formation of a mature anarchy system or induce a segregation of the world into blocs in accordance with the balance of power model,

**Table 3** Cooperation vs. coordination

	Regime formation			
Interdependencies	yes	yes	no	no
Common norms	yes	no	yes	no
Functional type of regime	cooperation	coordination	no regime	no regime



the variable of mental interdependencies needs to be studied vis-à-vis the existing physical interdependencies (Table 4).

Thus, globalization turned out to constitute the intervening variable the analysis of which shall provide the answer to the question, which of the two remaining models can be expected to dominate in the system. Acting through the Waltzian *men-*dimension by means of the interrelated mechanisms of physical and mental interdependencies, globalization can either unify the system through the creation of a link between the state and the IR system and overcome the so-called ‘Great Divide’ – a concept introduced by Ian Clark in his *Globalization and International Relations Theory* and referring to the different natures of the system of the state and of the International Relations [14], or act in the opposite direction and induce a power-based BoP-system as a result of created pressures. Thus, the general tendencies within the system need to be correlated with the formulated mechanisms of transformation.

The assumption that globalization could create a set of universal values which might unite the world in a global moral community lies at the core of the normative debate between communitarians and cosmopolitans. In this discussion, Michael Walzer’s contribution might provide a useful insight. He suggests for a division into ‘thick’ and ‘thin’ moral codes. Hereby, thick moral codes refer to those present within a specific community, while thin ones – to a universal moral code, which entails a minimum set of humanizing values common to all people. He further suggests that the thick moral code is not a next stage evolved from the thin one, but that those two coexist [15].

This theory finds support in the analysis conducted in the framework of this article, which confirms that no set of universal values could be verified in the system and argues that any attempt to artificially create such is dangerous in its potential to generate conflict. This is because such an act would imply that the set of values of one group is superior to those existing in other ethno-cultural communities and needs to be imposed on them in the name of the common good. This will inescapably result in inter-civilization conflict, and in case one civilization would succeed in imposing its value system upon another civilization, this will inescapably lead to the destruction of the latter, because each civilization represents a closed moral community existing in its specific scale of coordinates [16]. In this respect and in reference to the fact that

universalism is the idea of the so-called ‘Western’ world, Samuel Huntington rightfully commented that “imperialism is the necessary consequence of universalism” [17, p. 310].

The idea that the values of the Western liberal democracy have ‘won’ the ideological battle on the planet and became universalized – advocated, among others, by Francis Fukuyama [18], was proven wrong by reality. The discrediting of Fukuyama’s study was the result of his mistake to base all his arguments on two indicators: the growth of Western consumerism and the restructuring of the economies of previously socialist governments in accordance with liberal principles. What he failed to realize, though, was that those two criteria were indicators of one and the same, namely, the downfall of the Soviet Union with the resulting temporary political and economic dominance of the previously bipolar system by the United States. Hereby, he further disregarded this restructuring’s obviously forced nature resulting out of the shift in power relations in favour of the United States, whereby he overestimated the role of ideology vis-à-vis the historically determined differences between the existing socio-cultural communities and their natural struggle to preserve their respective unique cultures. This important factor was, however, acknowledged by Samuel Huntington, who argued that after the Cold War, the world has become both multipolar and multicivilizational and is now divided between today’s dominant civilizations along which the new fault lines can be drawn [17].

Those identified causes for inter-civilizational conflict can hardly be eradicated, as they lie at the heart of the ethno-cultural differences between groups of people determined by history. The relevant question to ask is, thus, under what circumstances those differences result in violent conflicts. The analysis revealed that there are two mechanisms that activate those processes: the dissolution of a central authority – be it a result of a failed state or the process of decolonization –, and the artificial relocation of national boundaries and random resettlement of people.

The second variable influencing the result of the current structural transformation was found to depend on the nature and functional type of global regimes. Table 5 summarizes the findings of the conducted analysis under consideration of the type of regime by Levy [19], as well as in relation to the regimes’ effects on the system and with regard to its inclination towards either cooperation or coordination. The aim of this analysis was to establish whether the regimes created by the interlinkages of the system display a potential of the system to integrate in accordance with the mature anarchy model despite a verified lack of universal values, or rather indicate a movement towards a balance of power system, which would be consistent with the findings of the analysis of mental interdependencies, which turned out clearly in favour of a multicivilizational world.

The *environment* displayed the highest potential to generate cooperation on a global scale. This is because both regimes

**Table 4** Mature anarchy vs. balance of power

		Type of system	
		Mature anarchy	Balance of power
Globalization	Global regimes	cooperation	coordination
	Universal values	yes	no

**Table 5** Global regimes

Domain	Source of threat	Security regime	Type of regime	Cause for threat
Society	Foreign power	Rules of war regimes	Classic regime 	Revisionist states; status quo powers with an offensive security doctrine
	Terrorism	Counter-terrorism regimes	No regime 	Class division; religious/nationalist/political radicalism
	Civil war; humanitarian intervention	Humanitarian regimes	Tacit regime 	Weak states; non-adherence to international law
Economy	Global free trade	Free trade regimes	Classic regime 	Current set-up of the global economic system
	Protectionism	Regulations on trade barriers	No regime 	
	Market manipulations	Bilateral/Multilateral contracts	No regime 	Uneven distribution of resources
Natural environment	Natural disaster	Disaster management regimes	Tacit regime 	Natural force
	Technological disaster			Human factor
	Environmental degradation	Environmental regimes	Dead letter regime 	Overuse of natural resources
<b>Key:</b> : regulative effect     : cooperation : neutral     : neutral : destabilizing effect     : coordination				

governing this domain are already established globally and show some preconditions required for a transition towards a mature anarchy. The presence of those preconditions is determined by the fact that the three threats generated by this domain (environmental degradation, natural and technological

disasters) require collective action to be successfully approached and are menacing enough to encourage international cooperation, while technical enough to stay outside of the general struggle over power governing the international system. The remarkable property of this domain is that the

majority of security threats generated by it are caused by the interacting other two dimensions: society and economy.

Even though disaster management regimes lack a legally binding basis, the expectation that the principles of the regimes will be complied with, are high. By this, it represents a global tacit regime. Due to their hardly strategically usable and non-politicized nature, disaster management regimes may be seen as truly humanitarian instruments conducting collective action by means of cooperation. Environmental preservation regimes, on the other hand, do have a globally binding legal basis, so-called MEAs (multilateral environmental agreements), while – as all international legislation – they lack any hard means of enforcement. Hereby, the expectations of convergence on the international level are rather low, as all environmental acts are carried out on the national or regional levels. Therefore, they have been classified as a global dead letter regime. This is mainly caused by the very different economic and political characteristics of the regimes' participants, which leads to disparities in the willingness to devote resources to environmental preservation. Due to the prevailing national character of implementation resulting in their overall global inefficiency, environmental preservation regimes were rated neutral with respect to both cooperation and coordination.

As was expected, the domain of *society* is governed by the competitive logic of the security dilemma, yet the existing global security regimes provide for some regulation in the otherwise anarchical system by means of international law on dispute regulation, the normative relevance of the UN Charter and the role of the Security Council as well as the established rules under which force can be used formulated by the Geneva Conventions and its additional protocols. Despite a lack of a supranational authority, the recognition of the established normative framework for the use of military means in old wars by virtually all states and a voluntary adherence to at least some of its principles indicate a globally established classic regime and provide evidence for the experienced need for a regulative framework in the system. This acknowledgement is already a big step towards a diminishing level of anarchy in the system, although not through cooperation in line with the mature anarchy scenario, but by means of coordination.

The verified minimal stability provided by the existing status quo and its theoretical guarantee under international law can be threatened by revisionist states<sup>7</sup> or states with an offensive security doctrine, as those are most likely to violate the principles of the rules of war regime. The overall amount of threat to international, national and individual security posed by these categories of states depends on their relative power. The more powerful a state is, the more threat it can pose. The

<sup>7</sup> Revisionist states are those trying to undermine the legitimacy of hegemonic status quo powers, which define the system. Revisionism can be orthodox, revolutionary, or radical in character [see 13, pp. 179–186].

adoption of an offensive security strategy or a revisionist position by a powerful system actor will inescapably decrease the overall level of security in the system. The resulting struggle over power can be expected to be carried out not through the instrument of old wars<sup>8</sup> as it used to be before the era of nuclear weapons, but by means of new wars<sup>9</sup> waged on the territories of secondary states most likely weakened by internal dispute.

In this case, humanitarian intervention mutates into a disguised instrument of power projection and, consequently, constitutes a threat to the national integrity of weak states, as well as to the international security on the whole. Humanitarian intervention constitutes a globally established tacit regime, because there is a clear discrepancy between its legal basis and actual application, which invalidates the regime's otherwise provided legal framework. Due to its application as an instrument of active power projection, humanitarian intervention, unlike rules of war regimes, was rated as a destabilizing feature of the system. The presence of weak states in the system also constitutes a destabilizing feature of the international system due to the fact that weak states are likely to become either revisionist in nature or breeding places for armed conflicts and illegal activities of every kind, while their very existence may evoke a desire to conquer in strong states with offensive security strategies. One way or another, weak states constitute a persistent source of systemic instability. As Kalevi Holsti puts it: “the relationship of state strength to war [...] is emerging: since 1945 most wars of all types have originated within and between weak states. Strong states have warred against weak, but not against each other” [22, p. 91].

Albeit not established as a global regime, anti-terrorist measures do certainly exist as a practice undertaken within regional voluntary coalitions of states and, therefore, occupy a security niche within the society domain. Hereby, there exist two major groups of states treating terrorism either as a military threat or a criminal activity. Due to the absence of an established global anti-terrorism regime and the diverse and regional character of current anti-terrorist undertakings, it was rated neutral in relation to both the facilitation of cooperation vs. coordination and the effect it has on the system. While within one coalition, cooperation on anti-terrorist measures can exert a stabilizing effect on the relations between the participating actors, at the same time it can antagonize non-participants, destabilizing the system. Furthermore, it is well

<sup>8</sup> War in the classical understanding of the concept as defined by C. Clausewitz: “an act of violence intended to compel our opponents to fulfil our will” [20, p. 5] and following the rules formulated by the Geneva Conventions and the additional Protocols.

<sup>9</sup> Term by Mary Kaldor referring to violent conflicts typically based around the disintegration of states and mainly focused on identity. Just like the old wars can be said to have been linked to the creation of states, new wars result out of the opposite process – the degeneration of the state [21].



possible that within such an anti-terrorist coalition, coordination determined by power relations turns out the dominating functional type.

Summing up, the domain of society was found to favour coordination over cooperation, while revealing both stabilizing and destabilizing regimes. The main threats generated by this domain turned out to be caused by revisionist states, states with an offensive security doctrine and by the existence of weak states.

All three regimes identified for the domain of the *economy* were found to generate coordinated outcomes reflecting the current economic power relations in the system, whereby the resulting actions were found to have a destabilizing effect on the system. This conclusion coincides with the Marxist school of thought arguing for the conflict embedded in the capitalist system. This is because the global free trade system is built around an exploitative relation on both the national (class division) and the international (centre-periphery structure) levels. This problem is intertwined with the problem of weak states, which is a direct consequence of the uneven distribution of wealth.

When following the Marxist line of thought suggesting that communism is the highest form of societal development in which oppressive mechanisms of the state are no longer needed and scientific management of things replaces the management of people [23], the idea of communism seems to resemble the idea of mature anarchy, which is institutionalized through global regimes functioning on the basis of cooperation in the framework of universal values. Considering the verified destabilizing effect capitalism has on the system, the consequence is that the current set-up of the global economy entails the greatest obstacle to the establishment of a mature anarchy. By this, the establishment of a mature anarchy system turned out to depend on the economic dimension, which is unlike the other two society-determined models. This finding is contrary to the initial assumption suggesting that mature anarchy can be a result of globalization acting through the men-dimension.

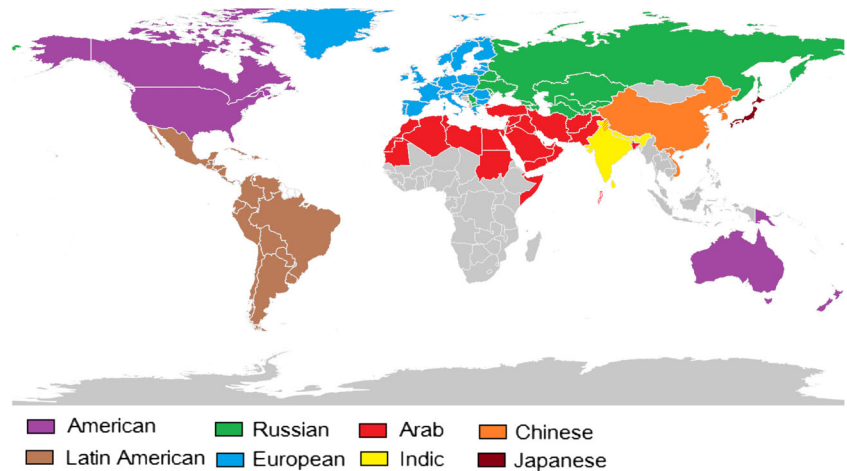
In the Manifesto of the Communist Party it is argued that the forces unleashed by the global market – we should not forget that Marx and Engels wrote their article in 1848 when the term ‘globalization’ was yet unknown – lead to the vanishing of initially class and finally national differences and antagonisms: “In proportion as the exploitation of one individual by another will be put an end to, the exploitation of one nation by another will also be put an end to. In proportion as the antagonism between classes within the nation vanishes, the hostility of one nation to another will come to an end.” [23, p. 25]. By this statement, the authors basically reformulate my claim made above – the forces of globalization will only lead to a unification of the world under the aegis of universal values when the set-up of the global economy changes. By this, we have to assume that the mechanism required for the establishment of

a mature anarchy is the transition from the current capitalist to a higher mode of production.

The final threat entailed in the domain of the economy is connected to the use of economic instruments as means of power projection. This source of insecurity is not governed by any type of regime, but regulated in bi- or multilateral agreements between countries provided that such have been concluded. In case they exist, those agreements often reflect the established alliances subordinated to their respective centres. The sensitivity and high polarization of that domain stems from the fact that it is used as one of the instruments of modern warfare – alike humanitarian intervention. Such a utilization of economic means coupled with an absence of any globally formulated rules turns this domain into one of the major destabilizing factors in the international system.

Thus, economy in its current form stands against any attempt to establish a mature anarchy system, while it also impedes coordination due to a lack of a regime regulating economic warfare, and exerts an overall destabilizing effect on the system forcing it towards bloc competition. Society constitutes a better-regulated domain, in which power-based coordination clearly dominates cooperation, thus, also implying the prevalence of the balance of power model. The environmental domain turned out to generate cooperation as far as disaster management regimes were concerned. Environmental regimes, in general, also displayed features in favour of a mature anarchy system, yet – mainly due to the very different socio-economic characteristics of its participants – were still subjected to the national interest hindering cooperation. By this, the second determining variable ‘global regimes’ was found to clearly favour coordination over cooperation as the functional type of most existing regimes.

Summing up, both mechanisms through which the identified intervening variable of globalization acts turned out to clearly indicate a transformation of the system in line with the balance of power model. The mental dimension attacked the values of people and the assumption that globalization might have a unifying potential through the creation of universal values turned out wrong. Instead of unifying the world, it has reactivated the sense of ethno-cultural affiliation dividing the world into civilizational blocs absorbed in inter-civilizational conflict. The physical dimension of globalization entailed interlinkages, which have affected the three domains of human activity: society, economy and the environment. Apart from the environment, which constitutes a low political issue not governed by the security dilemma, both other domains revealed a clear inclination towards limited coordination on core security issues in the framework of a multipolar power system. Overall, it can be anticipated that regimes rated as having a regulative effect on the system will continue to exist as means of international regulation on core issues, while those identified as destabilizing can be expected to either disappear or to transform.

**Fig. 1** Civilizational blocs

### The balance of power model

Based on the conclusions reached in the preceding analysis, it can be inferred that the units between which the power is going to be balanced in the system will be of a higher hierarchical level than the state and established on the basis of a civilization, which can be defined as the highest form of ethno-cultural community (Fig. 1).

The states can be expected to remain the major organizational unit within the federative civilizational blocs. Thus, what we will deal with in this section are regional federations of states sharing a number of criteria making them stable geo-political entities internally and powerful externally. As in line with the tenets of realism, the security dilemma will continue to govern the system, yet it can be expected to mute due to a stabilizing effect exerted on the system by balanced power relations given that the blocs manage to adopt a defensive security strategy and settle on the new status quo in a regulative framework provided by means of a globally coordinated, nuclear arms-backed rules-of-the-game regime. Cooperation on non-politicized issues can and has to continue taking place as in line with the results obtained from the analysis of models 1 and 2, yet without inducing a deeper integration between the units.

As to be able to assess and compare the blocs' internal stability and external relative power, criteria for both dimensions were defined. So, internal bloc stability was found to depend on socio-cultural homogeneity and intra-regional trade relations,<sup>10</sup> while geographic criteria, such as geographic proximity, a continuous border and the availability of natural barriers between the blocs, turned out key to both internal stability and external relative power. As for the external relative power of a bloc, sufficient size, general military

capabilities and nuclear weapons with second-strike capability, potential economic self-sufficiency and the presence of a core state were identified as key criteria. Table 6 visualizes the findings of the analysis of the internal strength and the external relative power of the delineated potential blocs, which verified 3 *major blocs* (American, Russian, Chinese), 2 *stable blocs* (Indic, Latin American) and 3 *unstable blocs* (European, Arab, Japanese).

As already touched upon above, in order to be stable, Balance of Power systems require a number of criteria. So, all participants have to be stable status quo powers with a defensive security doctrine. In order for this to happen, there need to be no weak or unaligned states in the system, while nuclear weapons shall be at the disposal of all major powers. This is due to the fact that the availability of nuclear weapons allows the deterrence logic to upgrade the defence as to make it prevalent over the offence in the national security strategy of an actor. In case a power has nuclear weapons with means of delivery and second-strike capability at its disposal, its opponent is not likely to directly attack it, but will attempt to invade a weak state within the sphere of its adversary's influence. This leads us to the precondition of the absence of weak or generally unaligned states within the new balance of power system as to exclude the option of proxy wars.

Thus, if the system is globally divided between clearly defined territories belonging to nuclear armed status quo blocs, the probability of new wars to take place sharply decreases. As a result, the defence gains an overall comparative advantage over the offence among all rationally calculated security strategies, which solves the problem caused by otherwise offensive security doctrines. This logic does not apply to revisionist states, though, which, by definition, will attempt to change the status quo despite rational calculations that would otherwise have favoured the defence.

Apart from that, the number of actors in a BoP system also plays a role in determining its level of stability (Fig. 2). The rationale for the relationship between the number of

<sup>10</sup> adapted from Russett's factors of internal stability of international regions: social and cultural homogeneity; political attitudes or external behaviour; political institutions; economic interdependence; and geographical proximity [24]

**Table 6** Internal strength and external relative power of potential blocs

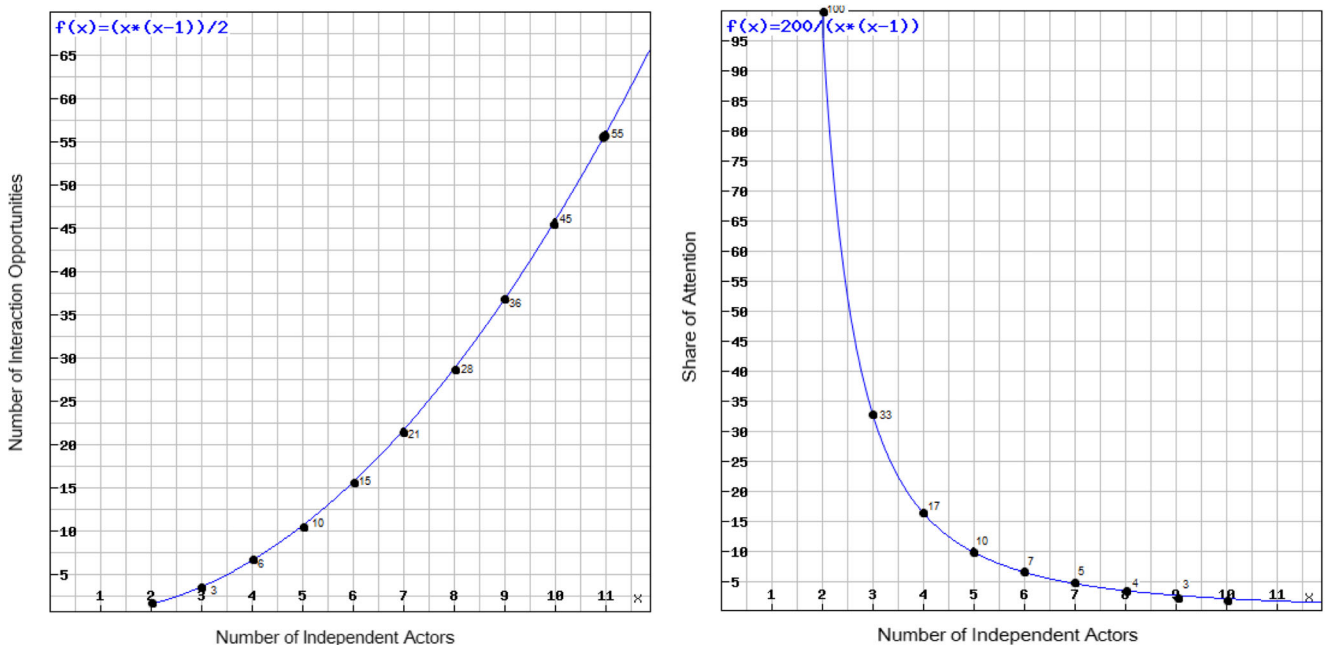
Blocs	Internal strength			External relative power					Results	
	1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	Internal	External
American	3	2	1	3	3	3	2	3	2	2,8
European	1	3	3	2	1	2	1	1	2,3	1,4
Russian	2	3	3	1	3	3	3	3	2,7	2,6
Arab	1	1	2	2	3	1	1	0	1,3	1,4
Indic	2	2	3	2	1	1	2	3	2,3	1,8
Chinese	2	3	3	2	2	3	2	3	2,7	2,4
Japanese	3	3	3	2	0	0	0	3	3	1
Latin American	2	2	3	3	3	0	2	2	2,3	2

Key: Internal Strength: 1. Socio-cultural homogeneity, 2. Intra-regional economic interdependence (Free Trade Areas), 3. Geographic proximity; External Relative Power: 1. Existence of natural barriers, 2. Sufficient size, 3. Possession of nuclear weapons and second-strike capability, 4. Potential economic self-sufficiency, 5. Core state; Score: 0. No or negligible, 1. Weak, 2. Medium, 3. Strong.

independent actors in the system and its stability rests upon three arguments formulated by Karl Deutsch and David Singer [25]. The first refers to the positive effect of the reduction of the number of dyadic relations through additional actors brought into the system. This argument is based on the logic of the pluralism model indicating a cross-pressuring and self-correcting effect of a multipolar system, in which the increasing range of possible interactions increases the flexibility of the actor’s behaviour through a greater number of available choices and, by doing so, constrains the probability of violent conflict escalation.

The second argument implies that “as the number of independent actors in the system increases, the share of its attention that any nation can devote to any other must

of necessity diminish” [25, p. 396]. The stabilizing effect of the decreasing share of attention a nation can devote to another is explained by the authors by means of communication theory recognizing that if a signal drops below a certain signal-to-noise ratio, it becomes essentially undetectable. The same logic can be applied to social interaction. Thus, each state will treat messages from its most prominent adversary as the relevant signal and all other messages become the noise. As a minimal attention ratio is required to provoke a conflict, the increasing ratio of ‘noise’ has a pacifying effect on the system as the likelihood of conflicts to occur declines with the decline of the average attention that one actor can devote to any other actor in the system.



**Fig. 2** Interaction opportunities & allocation of attention [adapted from [25]]

The third argument for a higher stability of balance of power systems with multiple actors rests upon the Richardson model of arms race, which assumes that the conflict behaviour of each of the two parties in a bipolar power system grows at an exponential rate. The growth rate is determined by the competitive logic of the system, in which an increase in the armaments of one actor is perceived as a threat by the other actor and motivates a reciprocal response as to keep the previous ratio of arms budgets. This leads not only to a growth in absolute amounts of arms, but also to increases in arms spending on both sides. When adapted to multipolar systems, one has to assume that “a country [– or a bloc in our case –] is most likely to respond to an increase in the arms expenditure of a rival only in regard to that part which appears likely to be deployed or directed against itself” [25, p. 401]. Thus, the adjustments to arms expenditures one power has to undertake in case of an increase by its adversary in order to keep the balance of power are less than in a bipolar system due to the possibility of allying with second- and third-rank powers. So, as long as the powers are free to move from one coalition to another and provided that their self-interest goes in favour of keeping the balance of power in the system, the arms race logic also favours a multipolar system over a bipolar one.

To sum up, for the balance of power model to turn out stable, it needs to be multipolar and globally established as to withdraw the destabilizing presence of weak or unaligned states from the system. This will have a stabilizing effect provided that nuclear weapons allow for the adoption of a defence-based security strategy as a result of the double effect of the deterrence from a direct attack on an adversary power, while simultaneously excluding the option to compensate for old wars through the use of the instrument of new wars as a result of the absence of weak and unaligned states in the system. Those criteria allowing for the defence to gain the upper hand over the offence generally do not apply to revisionist states, as the rational logic established above loses its validity with regard to powers attempting to change the status quo. By this, the stability of a Balance of Power system depends upon four major criteria: multiple actors, global establishment, nuclear weapons, no revisionist powers.

The validity of these criteria can be verified by means of historical examples. So, history has known two major Balance

of Power systems: the Balance of Power system of 19th and early 20th century Europe and the Cold War system. Both systems broke up after periods of relative longevity – the former lasted for about 100 years starting with its establishment after the defeat over Napoleon and its demise as a result of World War I, and the latter came into being in 1947 with the empowerment of the Truman doctrine and the succeeding foundation of the NATO and lasted until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. The reasons for the downfall of both BoP systems can be verified by means of the established criteria (Table 7).

The European BoP system consisted of 5 actors, was regionally established, the major powers had not yet acquired nuclear weapons, while the German Empire, and Austro-Hungary to a lesser extent, were revisionist powers. By this, the only criterion fulfilled by the European balance of power system has been the numerical one. As a result of the lacking other criteria, an offensive security strategy was given priority by the majority of participants, which resulted in the First World War and a consequential demise of the BoP system.

The Cold War system, on the other hand, was a bipolar, virtually globally established system, in which the major actors had a sufficient nuclear arsenal at their disposal as to be used for deterrence and could generally be seen as settled status quo powers. Apart from its global character, the system yet entailed weak and pending states, in which the affiliation to one of the two powers was unclear or could be changed with relative ease by military, economic or political means. This factor upgraded the offence as to turn an otherwise settled status quo power into a revisionist position. Despite, as established above, bipolar systems are prone to escalation by definition due to the highest available share of attention given in two-actor systems.

As for the multipolar power system anticipated to be established in the coming years, eight potential civilizational blocs of unequal internal strength and external power could be delineated (see Table 6). Hereby, Japan could rather unequivocally be expected to cease to count as a separate power, because of it being too small, too deprived of resources and too militarily weak to survive in a world of civilizational blocs. Instead, it is likely to join

**Table 7** Stability of balance of power systems

BoP systems	Criteria for stability of BoP systems			
	1. Multiple actors	2. Global establishment	3. Nuclear weapons	4. No revisionist or weak powers
European BoP	5	No	No	No
Cold War system	2	Partly	Yes	Yes
MPS	7	Partly	Yes	No

the Chinese bloc due to geographic closeness and ethno-cultural similarity between the two.

The European bloc's future is ambiguous: it can either retain as a distinct bloc through internal socio-cultural integration, which is rather unlikely to occur in the face of both a lacking core state and motivation for further EU-integration by the public, or dissolve into two or three spheres of influence divided between either the American and the Russian blocs, or the former two plus the Latin American bloc provided that it can assert itself as an independent power in the system through an increase in its external relative power. In that case, the dissolution will come as a result of the European bloc's counter-civilizational composition and, resulting out of it, a lack of a common identity, as well as a missing core state, which might have compensated for this shortcoming through institutional substitution.

The Arab bloc's future is even more difficult to predict due to the heavy contradictions haunting the bloc: on the one hand, its members are to the major part the descendants of one and the same civilization and share the same religion, which is an important factor with regard to this specific civilization, while on the other hand, the internal division of the bloc is not likely to be overcome any time soon primarily due to a lack of a core state and in particular combined with an inherent disregard for a centralized authority in general. A legitimate, both internally and externally, centre, however, is one of the major preconditions for power acquisition – a factor directly dependent on internal stability.

If we, nevertheless, assume the best case scenario for both the European and the Arab blocs with regard to their ability to retain as distinct blocs through internal stabilization at least in the short-run, we will find a world divided between seven blocs: three major ones, two stable and two potentially unstable second-rank powers. With seven powers in the system, the number of interaction opportunities would amount to 21 and the share of attention – to 5 (see Fig. 2). To make a comparison, in a bipolar system there is only one possible dyad for interaction and, as a consequence, the share of attention amounts to 100. Thus, a multipolar power system fulfils the first established stability criterion.

The second criterion is a global establishment of the Balance of Power system. It is given only partly primarily due to the dispersed and largely unaligned Africa all consisting of weak states, as well as the unaligned states in South-East Asia. This deficiency provides a source of instability of the balance of power system due to the dangerous presence of easy-to-conquer states, which potentially turns the defence-offence ratio in the national (bloc) strategy calculation in favour of the offence, by this, re-sharpening the security dilemma and reviving competitive behaviour between the major powers.

The distribution of nuclear weapons is uneven in the system. So, the three major powers have sufficient arsenals at

their disposal as to profit from the deterrence logic theoretically allowing to apply a defence-oriented security strategy. The EU, India and Pakistan (representing the only nuclear power within the Arab bloc), also possess nuclear weapons, but their number and/or means of delivery are comparatively insufficient. Latin America does not hold nuclear weapons at all. Such a distribution supports the division of the system into first- and second-rank powers, while puts Latin America into a comparative disadvantage vis-à-vis the other second-rank powers, which increases its level of insecurity. As for the Arab bloc, its – although comparatively insufficient – arsenal of nuclear weapons and military capabilities in general represent a destabilizing systemic factor. This is due to the fact that the Arab bloc currently contains many radical revisionist actors attempting to change both the power distribution in the system and its organizing principles. This factor is most likely to induce that the defence-over-offence logic rationally calculated by status quo powers in a global Balance of Power system backed by nuclear weapons will not apply for this actor.

Another potentially revisionist actor in the system is the European Union. Its revisionism differs from that of the Arab bloc by the fact that it does not aim at a restructuring of the organizing principles of society, but a re-distribution of power and resources, by this, making its revisionism of an orthodox nature. This manifests itself through continuous attempts to change the existing status quo through expansionist policy carried out by non-military means of enlargement, which threatens the status quo of the Russian civilizational bloc since the enlargement rounds of 2004 and 2007 when states traditionally belonging to the Russian sphere of influence were included in the EU, and decreases the overall level of security in the system as a result. So, the tragic events currently taking place in the Ukraine are, among others, a product of the European enlargement and neighbourhood policy. In this case, the Ukraine constitutes an illustrative example of how a weak state becomes a source of destabilization for the entire international system. However, evidence suggests that the enlargement of the EU has finally come to an end, which would imply that its revisionist behaviour has so as well. This would leave the Arab bloc as the only revisionist player in the system. Unlike the EU, though, its destabilizing role seems not to end any time soon. Overall, both revisionist powers in the system turned out to be internally unstable geopolitical entities, which might indicate a correlation between the two factors.

Summing up, the multipolar power system fulfils the numerical criterion of stability as well as the precondition of the availability of nuclear weapons, although those are only sufficiently available to the three major powers in the system. Yet, this factor shall not disturb the overall integrity of the BoP system, as secondary powers are not supposed to be of the same power level as the major powers for the system to be stable, but need to be sufficiently independent to freely switch



coalitions as to make the first criterion of the number of actors work. While this precondition might be achieved in the short-run, though, in the long-run, the coalitions are likely to solidify. This weakness manifests itself in the fact that once joined an alliance, it might appear extremely difficult for a weaker power to leave the coalition [25]. Thus, the system is prone to lose flexibility in the long-run, which might constitute its downfall due to the mathematics of a reduced number of powers leading to a reduced number of opportunities for interaction and a renewed concentration of the share of available attention increasing the possibility of conflict escalation similar to the situation described on the Cold War example.

The other factor of long-run instability of multipolar power systems was also identified by Deutsch & Singer [25] and concerns the Machiavellian zero-sum assumption prevalent in the international system and referring to a continuation of highly competitive behaviour between the actors in the system despite the lacking rationale to do so. This can come as a result of the presence of unaligned weak states in the system potentially altering the defence-offence strategy of a relevant actor in favour of the latter, or a revisionist attitude taken up by one of the powers. This will decrease the level of security of the other actors and force them to also revise their security strategies. Historical evidence of such behaviour in a multiple-actor system is the European BoP system of the 19th and early 20th centuries, although the fatality of such miscalculations in a nuclear-backed system can definitely be seen as an additional restraining factor.

Still, in the long run, the multipolar power system can be expected to lose its efficiency. The resulting systemic pressures combined with additional pressures created by problems of overpopulation, the decrease of resources and general environmental degradation most likely having become more pressing by that time, might induce the beginning of a new historical cycle and, following the trend towards the emergence of ever bigger geo-political entities, either result in the establishment of a new balance of power system with bigger geopolitical entities than civilizational blocs, or finally lead to the emergence of a global federalized government as in line with model 1. As for now, it can be concluded that the security dilemma can be expected to mute in a multipolar power system due to a stabilizing effect exerted on the system by balanced power relations given that the civilizational blocs manage to adopt a defensive security strategy and settle on the new status quo in a regulative framework provided by means of a globally coordinated, nuclear arms-backed rules-of-the-game regime.

## Conclusion

This analysis sought to address the question of how the set-up of the international system can be expected to develop in the

near future and what implications it will have on the security dilemma. In order to achieve this goal, the mechanisms required for the transformation of the system in accordance with one of the three archetypical systemic macro-models – Federal World Government, Mature Anarchy, Balance of Power – were identified and correlated with the verified systemic trends.

The study revealed that the mechanisms of global integration required for the establishment of a federal world government are insufficient to transform the system structure in accordance with that model. The verified interdependencies in the system, however, pointed in the direction of the forces of globalization, which, in light of the acknowledged interdependent relation between men, the state and the international system identified by Kenneth Waltz, has led to the assumption that acting through the men-dimension, globalization might provide the link between the state and the international system, which has been absent so far. By doing so, globalization would act as a unifying force and induce global normative-based cooperation in international regimes as in line with the mature anarchy model. It can, however, do the opposite and tear the system apart as a result of created pressures.

The analysis of the two interdependent mechanisms through which globalization acts – the creation of physical and mental interdependencies – revealed that the very assumption of a universal set of values is utopian and verified a solid trend towards the re-establishment of the sense of ethno-cultural affiliation, whereby the hierarchical level of a nation was found to increasingly shift upward towards that of a civilization. As for physical interdependencies, the existent global regimes required in the modern global system proved to generate power-determined coordination instead of cooperation, which could be found in low political issues only. Apart from that, the entire domain of the economy turned out to provide a destabilizing force being primarily responsible for the created systemic pressures as in line with the Marxist theory. Accordingly, the establishment of a mature anarchy was surprisingly found to depend primarily on the economic system and to overall resemble the model of Communism.

By this, the trend towards which the system is currently drifting is the creation of a multipolar power system balanced between civilizational blocs and regulated by means of power-determined coordination. Such a system structure appeared reasonably stable in the short-run due to a sufficient number of participant blocs reducing the conflict potential, the presence of nuclear weapons allowing to adopt a defence-oriented security strategy and the overall rationality behind the prevalence of the defence over the offence in a global balance of power system. In the long run, however, the multipolar power system is likely to demise as have its predecessors due to a

solidification of the existing alliances and a resulting decrease in the number of regime participants leading to an increased probability of conflict escalation requiring a new transformation. This logic is supported by the idea of historical cycles, which periodically restructure the system.

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