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RESEARCH ARTICLE

“MEASURABILITY IN IR THEORY AND GEOPOLITICS: ISSUES OF ORIENTATION”

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Abstract

The current paper gives emphasis on a neglected issue of IR theory analysis; measurability as well as whether and how this can be feasible within a qualitative analysis. Undoubtedly, the scientific main aim of IR theorists refers to their capability to measure and even predict specifying, in this way, their cause-and-effect analyses about international phenomena. Causality is fully identified with measurability and thus, it is added to the notions making the second a continuous scope to be reached. On this line of thought, certain questions are answered with regard to the ontology of the international system, the epistemological aims as well as the methodological context of IR theory and the potential contribution of an orientational approach setting aside the deterministic inclinations of mainstream IR theory but, at the same time, analyzing in correlation with the theoretical legacy of classical realist figures. In the term of “orientation” the whole spectrum of immeasurable aspects of interstate relations is summarized and so does states’ birth procedure.

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Introduction:-

The Background Epistemology:

The oxymoron regarding measurability in IR theory is that although it is such an important and undisputedly ubiquitous concept, scholars cannot converge into developing a common ground of definition and methodological contextualization. The field has been cultivated with an emphasis on qualitative analysis, since it is broadly accepted that political reality sets limits to scientific endeavors towards accurate determination and procedure into relevant predictions. As Stanley Hoffman remarked in 1959: “Attempts at treating political affairs as an equivalent of economics, at measuring power as if it were wealth, and at analyzing political processes as if they were an exchange of goods can only, like other borrowings, end in platitudes or in questionable hypotheses based on too small a selection of variables or too distorting a set of assumptions”.¹

Under this lens, the current paper intervenes into the debate of specification of cause-and effect analysis in IR theory, answering to questions such as: (a) Why is measurability considered critical in IR theory? (b) Is it feasible? (c) How does the ontology of international system limit any possible deterministic prospects? (d) How do these correlate with the epistemological and methodological aims of IR theory? (e) What is the contribution of orientational approach, as the one extending classical theoretical legacy, but not analyzing “out of the box”?

The afore-mentioned questions are answered in the following units referring to determinism and the specification of qualitative research, the synthesis of international system and finally, the evaluation of the orientational contribution in the analysis of international relations. This last one has been introduced in the scientific debate by Panayiotis

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Ifestos, a well-known scholar in the field of IR theory and strategic studies, with all the relevant influences of Greek reality and Eastern-oriented political thought.ⁱⁱ The same is observed in all the spectra of analysis of international politics; Professor of National and Kapodistrian University of Athens Ioannis Mazis's Systemic Geopolitical Analysis thoroughly encapsulates the need for quantification, determination and specification of invisible and difficult-to-be-measured variables – referring among others to cartography – concluding to an absolutely revealing definition:

It refers to the study, the description and the prediction of re-distributions of power and always concludes to the establishment of a relevant exemplar of trends. Thus, it reads the evolving trends and it predicts their dynamic in the space and in the – historically – homogeneous time; i.e. the time written in the framework of one and sole qualitatively homogeneous historical period. It does not aim to “dominance over ground”, neither has it recommended something like that to anyone.ⁱⁱⁱ

Measurability in Theory:

Before elaborating into the main research questions of the current study, it has to be clarified that, when referring to IR theory, this paper focuses on systemic theory as given by Kenneth Waltz^{iv} and all his spiritual successors. As far as science is defined “by the aim at maximizing truth and minimizing falsity in a large body of beliefs”,^v it is more than necessary to give emphasis on description as a diachronic Thucydidean legacy and thus, to hold at systemic level without deviating into ideations and any kind of subjectivities.

Looking to measure in mathematical terms causes and effects in international politics comes to a stalemate due to the fact that “structural realism is by definition an “inflexible” and “heavy” structure, a whole political theory, which encapsulates and embodies some strict foundational assumptions / hypotheses”.^{vi} This is exactly its scientific contribution identified, however at the same time, with its incapacity to measure. It chooses deduction in order to be able to analyze the whole spectrum of international politics safely, but this provokes problems at the level of measurement and prediction or to be more accurate, it indicates the self-proven problem of immeasurability and unpredictability of IR theory. As John Mearsheimer thoroughly notes:

Theories encounter anomalies because they simplify reality by emphasizing certain factors while ignoring others [...] Structural factors such as anarchy and the distribution of power are what matter most for explaining international politics. The theory pays little attention to individuals or domestic political considerations such as ideology. It tends to treat states like black boxes or billiard balls [...] Social scientists say that a theory is “indeterminate” in such cases, a situation that is not unusual with broad-gauged theories.^{vii}

The afore-mentioned problematique is identified with the debate on positivism, its legacy and its limitations. The essence of international politics is difficult to be depicted in such a positivist mechanism presuming that deduction is the sole solution for having the best possible description of interstate environment. A strictly positivist view of international arena cannot offer the practical ground for a theoretical explanatory mechanism of any possible specialties beyond the Western typology. Inter-paradigmatic IR theory lacks the necessary flexibility as positivism adheres to four criteria.^{viii}

First, it highlights “the unity of science thesis”. Since the ontological subject matter is multidimensional and multifactorial, a unified science thesis is a difficult endeavour to be reached cohesively. Second, it defines “the distinction between facts and values” as a precondition. This process is identified with the prioritization of descriptive analysis contrasting to subjective evaluation and it is similar to what Jacqueline De Romilly correctly notes about Thucydides's magnus opus “Peloponnesian War” and the epistemological precondition the ancient Greek historian sets there:

[Thucydides] wishes to approach a reality in its essence which is beyond his era and it is valid and useful for the next generations [...] “However, I will be satisfied if my work is evaluated useful by anyone desiring to have accurate knowledge of facts happened and those going to happen in the future which, in terms of human nature, are similar or approximate. I wrote my history for being an eternal possession of humans and not as a work of temporary competition for a temporary audience” [...] The idea of an “eternal possession” does not mean exclusively that his work will be read with interest even some centuries later. It means that it will be useful for understanding also the method of handling the events following in the centuries after the publication of the work. How does he succeed in this aim? [...] A first way for explaining the causes of was

would be to highlight the responsibilities not only of Pericles but also of Aspasia, his spouse, citing spicy stories about prostitutes. Such an explanation, however, would decrease the significance of the facts [...] He distinguishes the “causes”, the “accusations” and the “claims” which he could cite, in order to refer to what he names “the real cause”.^{ix}

Third, it believes “in regularities”. Perhaps this is the most crucial remark when referring to Ifestos’s orientational approach, since he reasons his contribution as a conceptualization overriding Eurocentric regularities according to the observation of Panagiotis Kondylis that “the new ages has a Eurocentric content, both in terms of Weltanschauung and politics-economics”.^x Fourth, it is committed to “an empiricist epistemology” and thus, it is based on factual data. AsIoannisTh. Mazis states, “science in the positivist context represents a system of research and knowledge production, which is considered valid when established on empirical, observable and determinable data in order to be able to make assumptions, to create explanatory mechanisms and through them to create theory representing a generalized extension of scientific facts and data”.^{xi}

Under such epistemological conditions, measurement by IR theory is unfeasible although it is the crux of the matter when analyzing human collectivities’ behaviors. Nevertheless, the main obstacle is related to the ontology of the international system itself. Its complexity and in principle immeasurable variables – such as human behavior or for a more specific example religious fundamentalism – do not allow us to proceed into a clear description in terms of a mathematical-like approach. Therefore, how is the ontology of the international system described and how does this limit any possible deterministic prospects under the lens of dominant IR theory?

Ontological Obstacles in the Way to Determinism:

The core aim of the analysis is related with the establishment of causal relations and finding of a certain correlation among actors’ behaviors and subsequent effects. On this line of thought, it can be derived that theory tries to become as much deterministic as possible, but this is a self-evident vicious circle due to the ontology of the international system and the way it is shaped. Obviously, ontology is identified with the elaboration on what truly exists and it is contrasted to what is defined as a desire or simply a utopia. In the international system there are core notions characterizing its ontological substance; international anarchy, state sovereignty, societal heterogeneity and the multifactorial essence of power.

The international system is anarchic in the sense that there is no supreme power governing the relations among the actors and “while this anarchy continues, the struggle between States will tend to assume a certain stereotyped form. One will endeavor to acquire supremacy over the other for motives at once of security and of domination, the others will combine to defeat it, and history will turn upon the two poles of empire and the balance of power”.^{xii} Thus, anarchy provokes uncertainty since no one can guarantee anyone’s security and this results to continuous antagonisms among entities desiring to survive and consequently achieve their well-being. International anarchy represents the most important observation when referring to international politics, while it determines every perception regarding balance of power.

These entities are the states and they are those structures offering the institutional framework for self-determination achievement. To put it bluntly, state is that structure identified with an identity capacity to self-exist; in these terms, it depicts the necessary mantle of freedom and independence. If state is put in the historical diachrony, it can be seen that it is the institutional heir of all the relevant collective structures since the antiquity. In Robert Gilpin’s words:

In a world of scarce resources and conflict over the distribution of those resources, human beings confront one another ultimately as members of group and not as isolated individuals. Homo sapiens is a tribal species, and loyalty to the tribe for most of us ranks above all loyalties other than that of the family. In the modern world, we have given the name ‘nation-state’ to these competing tribes and the name ‘nationalism’ to this form of loyalty.^{xiii}

Therefore, state refers to society and in reverse, society refers to state. In other words, the institutional structure dominating the internal order is a product of social demand linked to individual characteristics shaping nation. This is valid both in Western legacy (construction of nation from above in the aftermath of state establishment) and more or less Eastern legacy (establishment of state structure as a result of national demand).^{xiv} What has to be remarked is that national homogeneity is an element of power determining the survival prospects of an entity and thus, it reflects

the capacity of a collectivity to self-exist and to be represented autonomously in the margins of the international system. Besides, when referring to nation we elaborate onto:

Every established historical institution acquires vested interests and stakes out of itself which must from time to time, and especially in periods of crisis, be submitted anew to the test of first principles. The challenge to nationalism does not exclude recognition of the place of nations in an international order; it clears the way for a better understanding of what that place is. The nation is not a 'natural' or 'biological' group – in the sense, for example, of the family. It has no 'natural' rights in the sense that the individual can be said to have natural rights. The nation is not a definable and clearly recognizable entity; nor is it universal. It is confined to certain periods of history and to certain parts of the world.^{xv}

Last but not least, power is the means towards the achievement of all the above. According to Klaus Eugen Knorr, "on the first view, power is something that powerful states have and can accumulate; power is a means. On the second, power is an effect, that is, the influence actually enjoyed. It is generated in an interaction that is an encounter. On the first view, power is something that an actor can hope to bring into play in a wide range of future situations. On the second, power is created and shaped only in a particular situation; its measure is the amount of influence that is actually achieved".^{xvi} Power is the amalgam of all those tools contributing to successful strategy-making.

The afore-mentioned notions represent the crux of the matter when debating the ontology of international system. It is profound that they give emphasis on human activities and from another point of view, men give essence to all these notions, while their immeasurability is proven due to the fact that insights from philosophy – and other non-positivist methodological domains – are combined. The so-called Great Debates of IR theory indicated the epistemological deficit of the field, since it was broadly recognized that accurate determination in the way to a clarification of causalities was not possible through a one-dimensional insistence on measuring GDP or military units. However, they finally kept analyzing at that level certifying in a positivist way that anything impossible to be accurately measured, it is ignored. Besides, according to that perception, it is better for a theory to be deductive and to lose some of its explanatory dynamic, than spilling over into unknown and undeterminable case studies.

Empiricism but What Kind?:

The case studies cited in international relations theory have been drawn basically upon European history and in this sense there is a reference to international politics without a globally empirical view. In retrospect, Eurocentric history has been created due to the emergence of the general phenomenon of Eurocentrism, while the European perspective has maintained a central role towards this process. In general, Eurocentrism refers to "the traditional tendency of European authors to regard their civilization as superior and self-contained, and to neglect the need for taking non-European viewpoints into consideration".^{xvii}

Many scholars, believing in this argument, have tried to write and support ideas demonstrating that Europeans have been historically superior to all the rest civilizations. According to this view, Europeans are considered advanced and modernized while the rest of the world is considered backward or less developed with the term "Eurocentric diffusionism" to describe this belief. This term describes the way cultural processes tend to move over the surface of the world as a whole tending to flow out of the European sector and toward the non-European sector.^{xviii}

Undoubtedly, such methodologies encapsulate certain policy directives and they are often considered parts of an attempt of ideological legitimization of European states' policies throughout history. Hegel refers to many cases of expedience of scientific thought and especially of historiography and attacks to historians who "construct" history for specific reasons and do not write purely. In particular, he advises that "in every treatise that is to be scientific, Reason must not slumber, and reflection must be actively applied. To him who looks at the world rationally, the world looks rational in return. The relation is mutual".^{xix}

On this line of thought and often for the same reasons, international relations theory more or less has followed the path of Eurocentric historiography, in the sense that "the state" is described as a bureaucracy making decisions rationally. Accordingly, rationalism responds directly to materialist prioritizations as well as the utility maximization for the sake of "the state". Eurocentrists emphasize on "the state", since this has been identified historically with Western collectivities' capacity to self-exist and to achieve self-determination. Therefore, IR scholars – assuming

correctly that survival of collectivities' is their upmost aim – refer to “the state” as the relevant upmost institutional structure securing survival prospects, while this institution is described in a specific rationalist terms.

However, does this cover the whole spectrum of the international system? It is an undisputed fact that the tendency is towards Eurocentrism, since colonization and mimesis are inclined to homogenize state institutions on how they function, how they perceive threats and how they shape their bureaucracies. Moreover, “the state” comes to swallow any heterogeneities and as history goes, it tends to be more concentrate throughout the world. The idea of “the state” has been encapsulated, but the way it is constructed is different depending on the legacies and the prioritizations of each collectivity.

The Muslim World represents an indicative case. Does Islam implement a decisive role in several states' decision-making processes in the Greater Middle East? Perhaps it is not a determining factor itself, but isn't it a decisive intervening variable? How is rational criterion shaped when Islam intervenes in the decision-making process? Although Westernization has affected the interstate sub-systems throughout the world, it is also clear that in the case of the geographical zone of the Muslim World:

The distinction between church and state, so deeply rooted in Christendom, did not exist in Islam, and in classical Arabic, as well as in other languages which derive their intellectual and political vocabulary from classical Arabic, there were no pairs of words corresponding to spiritual and temporal, lay and ecclesiastical, religious and secular [...] Even in modern usage, there is no Muslim equivalent to “the Church”, meaning “ecclesiastical organization”. All the different words for mosque denote only a building which is a place of worship, not an abstraction, an authority, or an institution. One might perhaps discern, in the postclassical evolution of the professional men of religion, some approximation to a clergy, and such terms as “ulema” and “mullahs” almost acquire this sense. But there is no equivalent to the term “laity”, a meaningless expression in the context of Islam. At the present time, the very notion of a secular jurisdiction and authority – of a so-to-speak unsanctified part of life that lies outside the scope of religious law and those who uphold it – is seen as an impiety, indeed as the ultimate betrayal of Islam.^{xx}

This intrusion of metaphysics into polity determines undisputedly the way an “Islamic state” forms its interior and consequently, it affects to some extent its international positioning even if this is not an undoubted causality. Nevertheless, what truly shapes its rational criterion is the strategic image it adopts, which is correlated with its Islamic substance. To put in other words, in a cost-benefit analysis breaking-off relations with another Islamic state is more costly only because it is Islamic and reversely. This due to the fact that the convergence of strategic images on the basis of Islam produces beneficial outcomes for each part (either via OIC or via other institutional schemes), which are difficult to be ignored. For example, the choice of Turkey to become a peer hegemon of the Muslim World makes its possible good relations with Israel extremely costly, while the convergence of interests with other Muslim-majority states is chosen – strangely for the European standards – even with a higher materialist-like cost.

The afore-mentioned situation is characteristic of parameters being unknown in Western epistemology and neglected by American or European scholars. These have correctly evolved their argumentation via empiricism, but this is imposed by specific case studies of European Great Powers as well as the European exemplar of “the state”, the basic establishing factors of which are purely measurable. Hence, even if the realist thought in IR theory still offers the major explanatory mechanism, this has to be enriched with a broader view of analysis always in accordance with the traditional paradigm; i.e. international anarchy and state-centrism. This would further the ground of description contributing to which parameters should also be kept into consideration and not to how the system is analysed.

The Orientational Approach:

Such a kind of analysis, which finds itself in the paradigm,^{xxi} has been proposed by Emeritus Professor of International Relations and Strategic Studies Panayiotis Ifestos. What he is inclined to suggest is that even if deterministic analyses and accurate predictions are impossible in international relations theory, the general trend can be depicted on the basis of Thucydidean theoretical legacy.^{xxii} In other words, instead of a mathematical-like accuracy, the description of orientation can be a feasible scientific aim. Such an orientational “prediction” is derived from an objectively-described empiricism based on macrohistory; i.e. century-level trends mainly emphasizing on a pendulum movement between imperium and self-determination.^{xxiii}

For instance, the limitation of the US operational commitment in the Greater Middle East is a fact helping us to foresee that new pivotal players are about to arise in this region and others are going to counterbalance them. Hence, the relevant sub-systemic stability tends to be disrupted. This kind of “prediction” does not encapsulate the exact time this is going to take place, neither has it suggested which actors will lead. However, it is offered by an indigenously classical explanatory mechanism, which is deductive; i.e. classical analysis offers the substance of approaching several case studies. While structural realism neglects any possibility of prediction,^{xxiv} orientational approach extends it referring, for instance, to specialties of Eastern anthropological sub-systems.

In Karl Popper’s words, “historicism [is] an approach to the social sciences which assumes that historical prediction is their principal aim, and which assumes that this aim is attainable by discovering the 'rhythms' or the 'patterns', the 'laws' or the 'trends' that underlie the evolution of history”.^{xxv} At the opposite of this, orientational approach underlines that immeasurable aspects of international politics are worth to be analysed and extends the theoretical legacy of realism into immaterial elements of power, even if it ignores their specific parameters. Nevertheless, their orbit is described and it is not neglected in the margins of analysis of international phenomena. Besides, this is exactly the contribution or innovation of orientational approach and this is the way how Waltz and Mearsheimer’s theories could become even more useful.^{xxvi}

On the line of the orientational approach, three preconditions are worth to be mentioned.^{xxvii} Firstly, the orientational substance of the approach does not mean an escape from the content of paradigm. In contrast, it is highlighted scientifically by its compatibility to it, since it is the only way for it to acquire ontological reference and thus, a scientific basis. Hence, it is considered some kind of metaphysics, but a description of “being” and more specifically, of the philosophical view of its mission. This mission is not identified necessarily with a Western-like materialist rationalism, but it fully responds to the demand for collectivities’ heterogeneity as well as the anarchic structure of the international system.

Secondly, the deductive establishment of structural realism becomes the sole capable to cultivate causal relations, since its substance refers to general. Therefore, several parameters are examined, which are neglected by Western epistemology, without this meaning that inconsequential is analysed. On this issue, the emphasis on macrohistory and not side history is the sole secure option, something also noted by Panagiotis Kondylis:

My core interest in my historical works is to tangibly explain the explanatory value of my general overview of human issues. If a specific theory can define over a common denominator and perceive in a common way issues and phenomena, which are distanced from each other on a first view, then this produces many advantages.^{xxviii}

Thirdly, it is an undisputed fact that derail from the core assumptions and the mistaken definition of variables of the first and the second image^{xxix} may lead to fully misperceived causal relations, exactly because immeasurable variables are introduced. The orientational approach refers to variables such as morale, national cohesion or the intrusion of religious criteria, but it does not define them in a mathematical order. It notes the value as well as their capacity to become intervening variables, but it does not evolve out of paradigm with subjective evaluations. It refers to national cohesion as a parameter towards internal balancing, but it does not define it as an independent variable. For instance, it does neglect to describe the procedure of nation-state establishment and the level of internal cohesion as factors of state (de)stabilization, but this is always in correlation with terms such as “elements of power”, “state-centric analysis” and “rationality”. For this reason, orientational approach is strictly endo-paradigmatic and it is not conceived as an autonomous theoretical recommendation.

Conclusion:-

Without any doubt, new and tremendous challenges seem to appear ahead due to the rising multi-polar system. The rise of new poles of power in the international system characterized by their non-Western structure boosts the need for a different reading – and not a change – of the neorealist theoretical legacy. To this aim, orientational approach comes to contribute setting the limits of international politics analysis beyond the classical standards. Otherwise, how could the Kurdish stake in Turkish politics could be analysed vis-à-vis Ankara’s international position? How could Islamic fundamentalism be read comparatively to the Iranian strategic behavior in the Middle East? How could China’s internal cohesion challenge fit in a structural analysis?

Systemic Geopolitical Analysis has also made relevant steps forward. Describing and reading the tendency, it endeavours into predicting setting civilizational criteria at the front of its analysis. Its emphasis on seemingly immeasurable parameters is the common ground it moves on with the orientational approach of IR theory. Both are looking forward to depicting orientation of phenomena and evolutions; Systemic Geopolitical Analysis introduces a cohesive methodological tool on this line of thought, while orientational approach defines the problematique on the philosophical roots of Constantine Cavafy, Homer and the century-long tradition of the East.

Endnotes:-

1. ⁱStanley H. Hoffman (1959), 'International relations: The long road to theory,' **World politics** 11 (3), p. 363.
2. ⁱⁱSee indicatively: Panagiotis Ifestos (2013), 'Strategic confrontation in the post-Cold War era and immeasurable anthropological factor of the post-colonial era' [in Greek], in Ioannis Th. Mazis and Kyriakos Nikolaou-Patragas (eds.) **The Arab revolts and the reshaping of the Arab-Islamic world** [in Greek], Athens: Leimon, pp. 109-212. Panagiotis Ifestos (2009), **Nations' weltanschauung: States' composition and restraint in Europe and the world**[in Greek], Athens: Piotita. Panagiotis Ifestos (2005), **History, Theory and Political Philosophy of International Relations** [in Greek], 7th ed., Athens: Piotita.
3. ⁱⁱⁱ Ioannis Th. Mazis (2012), **Metatheoretical critical approach of international relations and geopolitics. The neopositivist frame**[in Greek], Athens: Papazisis, p. 354.
4. ^{iv} Kenneth Waltz (1979), **Theory of International Politics**, Reading: MA: Addison–Wesley.
5. ^v William P. Alston (2005), **Beyond 'justification': Dimensions of epistemic evaluation**, Ithaca: Cornell university press, p. 29.
6. ^{vi} Ioannis Th. Mazis, Markos Troulis and Xanthippi Domatioti (2019), **Structural Realism and Systemic Geopolitical Analysis: Convergences and Divergences**, Athens: Leimon.
7. ^{vii} John J. Mearsheimer (2001), **The tragedy of Great Power politics**, New York: W. W. Norton & Company, pp. 10-11.
8. ^{viii} Colin Wight (2006), **Agents, structures and international relations: Politics as ontology**, New York: Cambridge university press, p. 20.
9. ^{ix} Jacqueline De Romilly (2010), **The human grandeur in Pericles' century**[in Greek], Athens: Oceanis, pp. 33-35.
10. ^x Panagiotis Kondylis (1998), **The invisible chronology of thought: Answers to 28 questions** [in Greek], Athens: Nefeli, p. 140.
11. ^{xi} Ioannis Th. Mazis (2012), **Metatheoretical critical approach of international relations and geopolitics. The neopositivist frame** [in Greek], Athens: Papazisis, p. 87.
12. ^{xii} Lowes Dickinson (2008), **The European anarchy**, London: Dodo press, p. 1.
13. ^{xiii} Robert Gilpin (1986), 'The richness of the tradition of political realism' in: Robert Keohane (ed.) **Neorealism and its critics**, New York: Columbia university press, pp. 304-305.
14. ^{xiv} See: George Contogiorgis (2006), **Nation and modernization**[in Greek], Athens: Enallaktikes publications.
15. ^{xv} Edward H. Carr (1945), **Nationalism and after**, London: MacMillan, pp. 38-39.
16. ^{xvi} Klaus Eugen Knorr (1975), **The power of nations: The political economy of international relations**, New York: Basic books, p. 9.
17. ^{xvii} Norman Davies (1996), **Europe: A history**, London: Pimlico, p. 16.
18. ^{xviii} James M. Blaut (1993), **The colonizer's model of the world: Geographical diffusionism and Eurocentric history**, New York: The Guilford Press, p. 1
19. ^{xix} Hegel (1986), **Introduction to the philosophy of history**, Indianapolis & Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, p. 14.
20. ^{xx} Lewis, B. (1988) **The political language of Islam**. Chicago: The University of Chicago press. Pp. 2-3.
21. ^{xxi} In Thomas Kuhn's words, "a paradigm consists of a set of fundamental assumptions about the subject matter of science. A paradigm, like a worldview, is both enabling and constraining. On the one hand, it helps to define what is important to study and so a paradigm is indispensable in simplifying reality by isolating certain factors and forces from a multitude of innumerable possibilities. On the other hand, a paradigm is constraining since it limits our perceptual field (what we 'see' as the most important actors and relationships in a particular field of study)". Martin Griffiths (2007), 'Worldviews and IR theory: Conquest or coexistence?' in Martin Griffiths (ed.) **International relations theory for the twenty-first century: An introduction**, London: Routledge, p. 3.
22. ^{xxii} See: Ioannis Th. Mazis, Markos I. Troulis and Xanthippi Domatioti (2019), 'The Thucydidean legacy of systemic geopolitical analysis and structural realism,' **International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention (IJHSSI)** 8 (10), pp. 45-50.

23. ^{xxiii} See: Adam Watson (1992), **The evolution of international society**, London: Routledge.
24. ^{xxiv} On this issue, see: Ioannis Th. Mazis and Markos I. Troulis (2019), 'Systemic geopolitical analysis and structural realism: Parallel routes and common challenges,' **IOSR Journal of Business and Management** 21 (10), pp. 1-6.
25. ^{xxv} Karl Popper (2002), **The poverty of historicism**, London: Routledge, p. 3.
26. ^{xxvi} Markos Troulis (2019), 'Orientation and international relations theory' [in Greek], **Political and social sciences** 8, p. 38.
27. ^{xxvii} These three preconditions are correlated with relevant Panagiotis Ifestos's remarks in: Ifestos (2013), pp. 160-161.
28. ^{xxviii} Kondylis (1998), p. 14.
29. ^{xxix} See: Kenneth Waltz (1954), **Man, the state and war: A theoretical analysis**, New York: Columbia university press.