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**INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND THE
INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM: SYMBIOSIS OF
CONTINUITY AND CHANGE**

*ULUSLARARASI İLİŞKİLER VE ULUSLARARASI SİSTEM:
DEVAMLILIK VE DEĞİŞİMİN ORTAK YAŞAMI*

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Abstract

Although its origins may be traced back much further, the formal recognition of “international relations” as a separate discipline within the western academia dates back to the establishment of a Chair of International Relations at the University of Wales, Aberystwyth, in 1919. Nearly a century passed on its establishment, but there is still no consensus on the definition of the discipline, on international system and actors and forms of relations within the system. This is mainly due to an ongoing tension between the proponents of continuity (insisting on traditional actors and their forms of relations – nation state/power relations) and proponents of change (disregarding the role of states and insisting on new types of actors and new forms of relations – NGOs, transnational corporations, etc./cooperative relations). This article argues that a comprehensive analysis of international relations and international system is the one that regards (the former two) as domains within which traditional actors, structures and forms of relations coexist with new types of actors, structures and forms of relations; within which there is the symbiosis of continuity and change. Therefore, rather than “all or nothing”, a perspective settled on “not only but also” can provide a better and more comprehensive framework to understand and explain international relations and the international system. It shall be considered that the emergence of new actors and new issues does not mean that the role of the states in the international system shall be disregarded and within the same manner the crucial role played by the states shall not overshadow the increasing role of new actors and new issues.

Key Words: International relations, International system, Continuity, Change, Symbiosis

Öz

Kökleri çok daha eskiye dayanmasına ve bu alan çerçevesinde değerlendirilebilecek çalışmalar daha önce de yapılmış olmasına rağmen “uluslararası ilişkiler”in batı akademik camiasında ayrı bir disiplin olarak resmi kabulü Aberystwyth’deki Galler Üniversitesi’nde 1919’da bir Uluslararası İlişkiler Kürsüsü’nün kurulmasına dayandırılabilir. Kuruluşunun üzerinden neredeyse bir asır süre geçmiş olmasına rağmen hala disiplinin tanımı, uluslararası sistem ve aktörler ve bu aktörler arasındaki ilişki sistematığı üzerinde bir uzlaşma söz konusu değil. Bu durum sürekliliği savunanlar (geleneksel aktörler ve bu aktörler arasındaki ilişki formları üzerine odaklananlar – ulus devletler/güç mücadelesi) ile değişimi savunanlar (devletlerin rolünü önemsemeyerek yeni aktörler ve bu aktörlerin yeni ilişki sistematiği üzerine odaklananlar – NGO’lar, çokuluslu şirketler, vs./iş birliğine dayalı ilişki formları) arasında süregelen bir tartışmadan kaynaklanmaktadır. Bu makale, uluslararası ilişkiler ve uluslararası sistemin bütüncül bir analizinin her iki alanda da geleneksel aktör, yapı ve ilişki formlarının yeni tip aktör, yapı ve ilişki formlarıyla birarada bulunduğu/beraber yaşadığının kabullenimi; yani değişim ve devamlılık arasında bir ortak yaşam olduğunun kabulü ile mümkün olabileceğini öne sürmektedir. Bu noktadan hareketle “ya hep ya hiç” odaklı bir bakış açısından ziyade “fakat bu da olabilir” odaklı bir bakış açısının uluslararası ilişkiler ve uluslararası sistemi anlama ve açıklamakta daha iyi ve bütüncül bir çerçeve oluşturabileceği düşünülmektedir. Yeni aktörlerin ortaya çıkmasının uluslararası sistemde devletlerin oynadığı rolü ortadan kaldırmayacağı gibi devletlerin oynadığı kilit rol de yeni aktörler ve yeni konuların oynadığı rolü gölgelememelidir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Uluslararası ilişkiler, Uluslararası sistem, Devamlılık, Değişim, Ortak yaşam

Introduction

What is “international relations”? The question might be ingenuous, but most probably, the response to this question will not be that much ingenuous. International relations is a branch of social sciences, but without a consensus on its definition. This is a general problem correlated with the social sciences. The process of building up a theory and, necessarily or unnecessarily, finding a recipient or equivalent of the concepts in the practical discourse has been value-laden. In addition, any attempt to study international relations/international politics or world politics, in a wider context, willingly or unwillingly refers to an analysis of the international system to understand and explain its structure and functioning. The attempt may not be focusing on to set forth a definition for ‘international system’, but the outcome of the study, directly or indirectly brings out an approach of international system based on perception of the analyst. This brings out the question that whether an international system exists by itself or whether it is constructed through the perception of scholars.

Idea is the child of trouble. The trouble gives shape to the identification and definition of the problematique and affects the perception of the analyst while dealing with this problematique. Although scholars had devoted too much time and energy for long time, the formal recognition of international relations as a separate discipline within the western academia dates back to the establishment of a Chair of International Relations at the University of Wales, Aberystwyth, in 1919. It can be fairly argued that it is really difficult to separate the foundation of the discipline of International Relations from the intellectual reaction to the horrors of the First World War. The expressions of the realist approach to the field evolved out of the apparent failure of liberal principles to build and sustain a peaceful order in Europe, following the First World War. E. H. Carr’s *The Twenty Years’ Crisis* reflected the realist critique of liberal ‘utopianism’. The book was published in 1939, on the eve of the World War II and attacked the idea of collective security as it was enshrined in the League of Nations (Carr, 1939, pp.11-13). For realists, wishful thinking and the application of domestic political principles to the international system could not change the nature of international system and its character of endemic violence. The international relations, coming with the title, comprised of the relations of nation states, and by this way, international system becomes an arena where nation states are the primary, for some the only, actors struggling to maximize their power.

Since the very beginning of the establishment of the discipline, the most common objective of the members of international relations academic community has been; to entail the development of conceptual frameworks and theories to facilitate the understanding and explanation of events and phenomena in world politics, as well as the analysis and informing of associated policies and practices, either through focusing on nation states or through focusing on various actors other than nation states. To this end, Barry Buzan and Richard Little insist on three themes to characterize the conceptions in the field of international relations while analyzing the international system: It is argued that although the concept is central to the discipline, there is no standard definition of it and no agreed chronology for the emergence of a

global international system. Second, for them, conceptions of international system are overwhelmingly biased by the European experience. Third, they think that international relations theory and history need each other; a comprehensive understanding of history is necessary for a well-constructed theory, whereas history cannot be written without some organizing principles (Buzan and Little, 1994, pp.231-255). However, although Buzan and Little underline the strong correlation between international relations and history, K. J. Holsti's *The Dividing Discipline* announces that international theory is in a state of disarray. It is argued that the long-established consensus about the objectives and methodology, grounding the study of international relations, is under challenge from many directions (Holsti, 1987, p.1).

Moving forward from the perception of change, it is argued that today the scope and complexities of world politics demand an understanding of a much wider range of issues. Moreover, new conceptual frameworks and theories are required to improve the understanding of the dynamics, parameters and the functioning of the international politics and the interdependent international system. Especially, since the end of the Cold War, the structures and processes of world politics have been undergoing transformation, which in turn created more interdependence. The greater interdependence in world politics involves greater complexity and dynamism as more and more actors form more and more elaborate relationships with each other. The expansion of these relational networks increases the probability that any new development in one relationship will have ever more extensive and intensive rippling effects across the network of relationships. The proponents of the idea of change in international relations come to the conclusion that the mainstream approaches of international relations and the classical history understanding and concepts do not provide a sufficient framework to deal with transformation and complex web of relational networks within the international system. Therefore, for them change dominates over continuity and this necessitates a new and broader conception of international relations and international system.

This article will analyze the issue of continuity and change in international relations and the international system. The earlier accounts on international system will be outlined to provide how the state-centric character of the international system has been conceptualized by mainstream approaches. The end of the Cold War and its implications on the conceptualization of the international system will be approached to understand and explain the post-Cold War structure and to enable the analysis of continuity and change. It is aimed in this article to set forth that it is misleading to take positions or approaches in favor of continuity or change and neglecting the other (for theoretical consistency) within international relations. It is argued that the basic actors, structures and forms of relations still keep their prominence on the one hand; and on the other there are new actors, structures and new forms of relationships broadening and enlarging the content of the discipline. Thus, there is the need to develop a wider perspective covering the issue of continuity and change, based on the premise of their symbiosis.

The Early Systems Approach

In the Oxford English Dictionary, the first definition of system was: "An organized or connected group of objects; a set or assemblage of things connected, associated, or interdependent, so as to form a complex unity; a whole composed of parts in orderly arrangement according to some scheme or plan" (Oxford English Dictionary, 1989, p.496). A system, then, is a set of parts which itself forms an entity having its own identity distinct, but not separate, from the parts of which it is composed (Yurdusev, 1994, p.147). A system with its own identity becomes an entity through the interrelation or interconnectedness of the elements within, but it is more than the mere sum of its parts. The parts and their interrelations

are therefore the main elements of a system, which makes it inevitable to analyze these two elements for a comprehensive analysis of the system. Although there are some earlier accounts on definition of the concept of system and attempts to set forth a definition for international system (as we use it today), the realist conception will be mainly approached for practical reasons.

The root of the realist understanding comes from some kind of theory about human nature that is categorically characterized by the realists to be plainly bad. *Homo homini lupus* – *Man is a wolf among men* said the Roman poet Plautus (Plautus, *Asinaria*, Act II. 4. 88) and Sigmund Freud was contributing to this view through saying that “the tendency to aggression is an innate independent instinctual disposition in man...the greatest obstacle to civilization is the constitutional tendency in men to aggressions against one another” (Freud, 1939, pp.55-77). Following this logic, Thomas Hobbes was stating his view about the human nature as:

“In the nature of man, we find three principal causes of quarrel. First, competition; second, diffidence; third, glory.

The first, maketh men invade for gain; the second, for safety; and the third, for reputation. The first use violence, to make themselves masters of other men’s persons, wives, children, and cattle; the second, to defend them; the third for trifles, as a word, a smile, a different opinion, and any other sign of under-value, either direct in their person, or by reflexion in their kindred, their friends, their nation, their professions, or their name.

Hereby it is manifest, that during the time men live without a common power to keep them all in awe, they are in that condition which is called war; and such a war, as is of every man, against every man” (Hobbes, 1946, p.81).

The above-mentioned ‘War is of every man, against every man’ finds its equivalent as ‘Bellum omnium contra omnes’. It is no doubt that Niccolo Machiavelli had a similar view about human nature. He was saying:

“Because this is to be asserted in general of men, that they are ungrateful, fickle, false, cowards, covetous, and as long as you succeed they are yours entirely; they will offer you their blood, property, life, and children, as is said above, when the need is far distant; but when it approaches they turn against you...[and he follows as] A wise lord ought not to keep faith... If men were entirely good this precept would not hold, but because they are bad, and will not keep faith with you, you too are not bound to observe it with them” (Machiavelli, 1928, pp.134-142).

A.J. P. Taylor, in a concrete analysis, was writing of Otto von Bismarck:

“Though Bismarck lacked humbug, he did not lack principles. Only they were not liberal principles. They were principles founded in distrust of human nature, principles of doubt and restraint. When men dislike Bismarck for his realism, what they really dislike is reality. Take his most famous sentence: ‘The great questions of our time will not be settled by resolutions and majority votes – that was the mistake of the men of 1848 and 1849 – but by blood and iron’. Who can deny that this is true as a statement of fact? What settled the question of Nazi domination of Europe – resolutions or the allied armies? What will settle the question of Korea – majority votes at Lake Success or American strength? This is a very different matter from saying that principles and beliefs are ineffective. They can be extremely effective

if translated into blood and iron and not simply into resolutions and majority votes” (Taylor, 1952, p.44).

Moving forward from this perception of human nature, realists characterize the international system in the same manner. Realists believe that the nation-states act in the international system for the pursuit of national power as a natural drive. For Carr, the pursuit of power by individual states takes the form of promoting national interests. The concept of national interest is more broadly defined as the foreign policy goals of the nation but is perceived by the realists specifically to mean strategic power. As each state aims to defend its interests and increase its strategic power, then clashes of national interests become inevitable and realists strongly argue that it is futile and dangerous to suggest otherwise.

Since the pursuit of interests, and therefore, the clashes of interests are the inevitable features of the international system, the only way to minimize such clashes, and therefore the incidence of war, is to ensure that a rough balance of power exists between the states in the international system. The logical outcome of this explanation is that the best possible mean or safeguard against an international conflict and war is taking steps to prevent one state emerging with predominant power. Through such an understanding, realists argue that far from being a cause of international conflict, the balance of power system resembles the laws of nature: it becomes the normal expression of international power and the best guarantee of peace (Burchill, 2001, pp.74-75).

Moving forward from the realist premises, the early systems approach became a new way of analyzing the relations among the states in the international system, with the primary aim to explain the system-wide phenomena rather than to study the foreign policies of individual states. Understanding the conditions and patterns of international peace and (in)stability, conflicts and alliances, balance of power and defining character of the international system (bipolar, multipolar or unipolar) have become the central concern of the early systems approach (Tayfur, 2000, p.5). As James Rosenau mentioned about the new understanding “... that interaction sequences (among the states) have a logic of their own and that their outcomes can thus be explained – and perhaps even anticipated – by examining the patterns they form rather than the actors who sustain them” (Rosenau, 1969, p.289).

Although looking for patterns of interaction within a system-wide manner, the early systems theorists referred to the internal forces of individual states to explain the patterns of the international system. In this understanding, the foreign policies of states were assumed to reflect internal attributes of these states, which were regarded as the sources of system-wide patterns and their outcomes. The basic claims of the early systems approach were (Tayfur, 2000, pp.5-6) :

First, the main actors of the international system are nation states, and the international system is the aggregate of these nation states and their interactions.

Second, there are regularities and patterns in the interactions of states.

Third, there are different types of international systems and they are characterized by hypothesized patterns of interactions. Thus, each system has its own interaction patterns.

Fourth, interaction patterns and outcomes are greatly affected by the domestic forces within the states. Accordingly, the foreign policies of national political units are to be studied in order to understand and explain international systems. In other words, they are the causes rather than the effects of the systems.

Finally, superpower and/or great powers, rather than small states are central to the interactions in these systems. Hence, there has always been an implicit hierarchy among states.

The End of the Cold War: A New Phase

In 1985, in his *The Dividing Discipline: Hegemony and Diversity in International Theory*, Kalevi J. Holsti lamented that “International theory is in a state of disarray”. The “intellectual consensus” that guided research and learning for over three centuries had, in Holsti’s view, “broken down”. No longer was there “a consensus on the subjects of inquiry and theorizing. The view that international theory should be organized around the structures and processes of the states system, the activities of the great powers and their decision-makers, particularly as they relate to war and peace, is no longer accepted by a significant number of scholars” (Holsti, 1985, pp.1-2).

Only few years after Holsti’s book, the Cold War ended with the dissolution of the Soviet Union and gave birth to a new world order or “new world disorder”. The end of the Cold War brought with it the criticism that neither neo-realists nor neo-liberals could predict or adequately comprehend the systemic transformations reshaping the world order. The undermining of the explanatory pretensions of early theories thus opened a space for alternative approaches and prompted critically-inclined scholars to move away from narrowly-defined metatheoretical critique. Compatibly, the early 1990s witnessed a new generation of young scholars embracing many of the propositions of critical approaches, but who identified the potential for innovation in conceptual elaboration and empirically-informed theoretical development (Reus-Smit, 2001, p.216).

In his *Turbulence in World Politics* James N. Rosenau argues that since enough collectivities have been experiencing change to produce a global system that is turbulent (with the process of globalization), it would be difficult to appraise the bifurcation of global life from the perspective of international politics. Due to the fact that much of the politics or interactions extend across national boundaries and do not refer to state-to-state relations, the term “international” does not contain every level of global politics. In other words, according to Rosenau, to continue referring to the field as “international politics” is awkward and the notion of “international relations” seems obsolete in the face of an apparent trend in which more and more of the interactions that sustain world politics unfold without the direct involvement of nations or states. Thus, he thinks that the term *postinternational* politics would be a suitable label to explain the very nature of new structures and processes. The new concept clearly suggests the decline of long-standing patterns in world politics and at the same time indicates a process where the change is leading. It suggests flux and transition even as it implies the presence and functioning of stable structures, it allows for chaos even as it hints at coherence and it mentions that “international” matters may no longer be the dominant dimension of global life or at least that other dimensions have emerged to challenge or offset the interactions of nation-states (Rosenau, 1990, p.6).

Besides Rosenau, Keith Krause presents the basics of the post-Cold War system and actors as (Krause, 1998, pp.316-317) :

- The principle actors in world politics whether states or other agents, are socially constructed through both ideational and material resources.
- The actors and subjects in world politics are constituted and endowed collective meanings and identities through practices and representations. The practices can be composed of both discursive and non-discursive elements.

• World politics is not static and its structures are socially constructed. Change is possible but also difficult because these structures are relatively stable.

• The attainment of objective knowledge of the subjects, structures and practices of world politics is difficult because the facts are only grasped through mediation. They are collectively meditative facts.

• The appropriate methodology is interpretivism. The research interests are to examine how the agents see and understand the world; the subjects, practices and how they attach meanings to them.

• The purpose of theory is neither explanation nor prediction with a view to transhistorical or ahistorical generalizable causal claims but to better understand the outside world within a given time and space framework.

Today, the number of state actors participating within the international system has multiplied by at least four times since the United Nations was set up in 1945. Throughout the time new actors have emerged with increasingly more influence on international relations. Besides the international agencies those are capable of changing their surroundings, a series of transnational forces expressed with particular strength in multinational companies and non-government organizations have become part of the system. Within this new framework, it is argued that the state – the main actor – has less power and control over the system. States ceased to enjoy monopolistic control or to have the capacity to establish and promote actions in six basic areas (Aravena, 2010, p.7):

• Communications are no longer controlled by the state. The internet, television and radio are considered as the best examples.

• Technological developments depend more on the private sector and non-government organizations rather than on the states.

• Financial transactions flow around the world and generate regional and global crises with states having little capacity to intervene or control.

• Although states reinsure investments, their capability to control decisions about where to invest and from where to get investments is limited.

• International migration and the ability to control the movement of people is another issue.

• Trade is increasing day by day and it has become extremely difficult for states to control and impose restrictions.

Far From Chicken-Egg: The Symbiosis of the Continuity and Change

Does chicken come from egg or does egg come from chicken? The question is insoluble but has become an issue of debate in the daily life human beings. Taking a position regarding the issue seems to take the respondent to nowhere. Whatever the position, the only true fact with the issue seems to be that the biological circulation is continuing.

The academic debate in international relations discipline, especially in theoretical discussions, has not been so far from the chicken-egg discussion mostly. The theoretical approaches, to a great extent, have positioned with a choice on either side, without a focus on the overall process and dimensions of the issue that they aim to analyze.

The biased thinking has colored the theoretical approaching. Mostly the analysts have followed the methodology of selecting an approach and then aiming to explain the focused

issue through the lens of the selected approach. This has caused a neglect or disregard of other approaches. Rather than providing a comprehensive and analytical analysis of the issue under focus, the strict choice-based studies have remained one-sided and leaving aside the strong points of other approaches, in the name of theoretical consistency, have lacked capability of a better analysis of the issue.

In the field of international relations, one of the basic aims of studying a wide variety of the theories has been to make international politics, events and phenomena more understandable. To this end, the methodological considerations have become the main point of divergence among the scholars of international relations:

Some studies have insisted on testing hypothesis, proposing causal explanations, describing events and explaining general trends and phenomena, with the objective of constructing a plausible image of international system and events. These have been categorized as *explanatory* theories. The explanatory views tend to approach the international system through givens: a given international system with a clearly defined structure; rational and unitary states acting in an anarchic international system seeking for survival through self-help mechanism; and to sustain the interest of survival through gaining power, power that is primarily defined in military measures.

On the other hand, *constitutive* theories and *constitutive* presentation of international system and actors within the system is similar to its perception of the analyst. The givens are neglected and rather treated as structures formed through political, economic and cultural processes, shaped by identity, culture and norms. It is mentioned that the analyst or researcher comes to the study of international relations with different way of looks, beliefs, experiences and preconceptions. The characteristics of the society, education system and family shape our way of thought and factors like language, culture, religion, ethnicity, class and ideology affect our world view. Thus, it becomes only possible to understand and interpret the world within particular social, cultural and linguistic frameworks. Thus, theory enables the analyst or researcher to see the events and phenomena through his/her own lenses.

The earlier accounts presented in this article, mainly, fall under the category of explanatory theories. Empathetically, the desire to construct a recognized field of science might have been the most important factor for the early theorists to focus that much on factual findings. The post-Cold War perspectives, on the other hand, set forth constitutive presentation of the field. As the perspectives of a discipline that has proved its maturity, the post-Cold War perspectives have been far from the scientific anxieties.

The primary purpose of biased and one-sided analyses have been to correct the position they have hold, rather than a concern of providing a comprehensive and analytical analysis of the issue under focus. Thus, as the selected perspective has been taken as an eternal way of looking at the academic studies within the field, without giving the studies a contextual base, the other approaches have been neglected and, if not, have been targeted as views to incorrect. The earlier accounts and their neo- neo- versions and post-Cold War accounts and their post- post- versions, on international relations and the international system, are not doing much different. Therefore, the key question of each side to correct or falsify a new book or article becomes: Either explanatory or constitutive? The answer of this article is: Why not both for a comprehensive analysis, no doubt depending on the context of the issue selected. The symbiosis of explanatory and constitutive ideas and factors may provide a better framework for the analysis of international relations and the international system.

The symbiosis of explanatory and constitutive ideas and factors brings the symbiosis of continuity and change in the international system. With the end of the Cold War and especially throughout the very first years of the twentyfirst century new types of problems such as; currency crises, environmental pollution, terrorist attacks, ozone depletion and a host of other problems that transcend national boundaries started to reflect the limits of effective action available to national governments. In the recent decades, technological developments came so swiftly that they overwhelmed long-established institutions designed to manage the pace of change. Under conditions in which it took hours to send messages and money abroad and weeks to move people and goods from one part of the world to another, the national and local systems were able to absorb and channel the complexity and dynamism and the parameter values of the global system could contain the subsystemic fluctuations within acceptable limits. However, when the time required to transmit ideas and pictures was reduced to seconds, and the transportation of people and goods to hours, interdependence became increasingly unmanageable, national governments increasingly ineffective, national boundaries increasingly permeable, and the durability of the global parameters of the past increasingly questionable (Rosenau, 1990, pp.111-112).

In addition, the ethnic and religious problems in the Balkans, the civil wars (such as Darfur, Sudan) brought further discussions on non-interference into states' internal affairs and state sovereignty. On the other side of the coin, although states are increasingly circumscribed by domestic and foreign constraints, they continue to be key actors on the global stage. Most of the states still enjoy considerable authority and legitimacy and their foreign policies are still conspicuous components of international relations and the international system. They still have command of many mechanisms for bargaining, synthesizing and playing demands off against each other and maintaining their identities as collectivities. Although less effectively than in the past, they still exercise control, obtain compliance and meet challenges (Rosenau, 1990, p.402). In an inquiry in the US, when asked to the respondents, over 90 percent of them replied that they regard one country as "home". When asked in another question, over 65 of the respondents replied that patriotism is of continuing major importance. Also, when the respondents were asked that if a vital choice involving your company or organization could not be avoided, would you put its interests ahead of those of your country, over 60 percent replied as no and those who said yes were approximately 10 percent. When the respondents were asked that how would you rank the role actors can play in world affairs, over 80 percent checked the US as very important (Earnest et al., 2005, pp.11-29).

Rather than "all or nothing", a perspective settled on "not only but also" can provide a better and more comprehensive framework to understand and explain international relations and the international system. The emergence of new actors and new issues does not mean that the role of the states in the international system shall be disregarded. The states are still the primary actors of the international relations discipline and the most influential players of the international system seeking to maximize their power and wealth and thus to realize their national interests. The content of most of the academic books and articles, the columns in the newspapers and the daily programs on tv cover traditional foreign and security policy issues (US Foreign Policy, Iran's nuclear program, Syrian regime, Arab-Israeli conflict, Russia's new perspective on Eurasia, etc.) and state conflicts. In the same manner, the crucial role played by the states shall not overshadow the increasing role of new actors and new issues. The actors other than states and even the organizations formed by states (such as EU) play a prominent role in the international system. Today, the budgets of some multinational or transnational corporations exceed the GNPs of some states and some media companies (such as CNN and Al Jazeera) play more influential role than some governments do.

Moving forward from the above-mentioned facts, international relations and the international system shall be regarded as domains within which traditional and new actors operate together and are interrelated. In the past and today, most of the academics of international relations, in the name of theoretical consistency, uphold one and disregard other. This hinders a comprehensive analysis of the international system and constricts the analytical capacity of analyses to understand and explain the ongoing events and phenomena within the discipline. Therefore, international relations and the international system shall be regarded as domains within which traditional actors, structures and forms of relations coexist with new forms of actors, structures and forms of relations. International relations and the international system shall be regarded as domains within which there is the symbiosis of continuity and change.

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