



HOPELESSLY BOUND TO THE STAKE.

THE CLASH OF REALISM AND LIBERALISM

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We need to understand what is happening to us and around us. To do this, common sense is not enough; there must be methodologies. So, let us consider the SMO (the Special Military Operation in the Ukraine), in the context of a discipline like International Relations (IR).

There are two main schools of thought in international relations: realism and liberalism. These we will discuss, although there are others; but these two are the main ones. If you are not familiar with these theories, don't try to guess what is meant here by "realism" and "liberalism." The meaning of the terms is taken from the context.

Thus, realism in IR is based on the recognition of the absolute sovereignty of the nation state. This corresponds to the Westphalian system of international relations that emerged in Europe as a result of the 30 Years War that ended in 1648. Since then, the principle of sovereignty has remained fundamental to the system of International Law.

IR realists are those who draw the most radical conclusions from the principle of sovereignty and believe that sovereign nation states will always exist. This is justified by the realists' understanding of human nature: they are convinced that man in his natural state is prone to chaos and violence against the weakest, and that a state is therefore necessary to prevent this. Furthermore, there should be no authority above the state to limit sovereignty. The landscape of international politics thus consists of a constantly shifting balance of power between sovereign states. The strong attacks the weak; but the weak can always turn to the stronger for help. Coalitions, pacts and alliances are formed. Each sovereign state defends its national interests on the basis of cold, rational calculation.

The principle of sovereignty makes wars between states possible (no one can forbid someone from above to wage a war, because there is nothing higher than a state); but at the same time peace is also possible, if it is advantageous for the states; or in a war there is no unambiguous outcome.

This is how realists see the world. In the West, this school has always been quite strong and even prevalent. In the US, it remains quite influential today: about half of American politicians and IR experts follow this approach, which during the Trump presidency dominated. Most Republicans (except neocons) and some Democrats lean towards it.

Now consider liberalism in IR. Here the concept is very different. History is seen as a continuous social progress. The state is only a stage, on the road to progress; and sooner or later it is bound to fade away. Since sovereignty is fraught with the possibility of war, one must try to overcome it and create supranational structures that first limit it and then abolish it altogether.

Liberals in IR are convinced that a world government must be established and humanity united under the most 'progressive' forces—i.e., the liberals themselves. For liberals in IR, human nature is not a constant (as it is for realists) but can and must be changed. Education, indoctrination, media, propaganda of liberal values and other forms of mind control are used for this purpose. Humanity must be turned liberal and everything illiberal must be exterminated and banished. These are the "enemies of the open society," the "illiberals."

After the destruction of the "illiberals," there will be global peace—and no one will be at war with anyone. For now, war is necessary, but only against the "illiberals" who "impede progress," challenge the power of the liberal global elites and are therefore not "human" at all, and can therefore be dealt with in any way—up to and including total extermination (including the use of artificial pandemics and biological weapons).

In the near future, according to this concept, states will be abolished and all humans will intermingle, creating a planetary civil society, one world. This is what is called "globalism." Globalism is the theory and practice of liberalism in IR.

The new version of liberalism has an addition: artificial intelligence will dominate humanity; people will become first genderless and then "immortal;" they will live in cyberspace and their consciousness and memory will be stored on cloud servers. New generations will be created in a test tube or printed by a 3D printer.

All this is reflected in the [Great Reset](#) project of the founder of the Davos Forum, Klaus Schwab.

Liberals make up the other half of politicians and international relations experts in the West. Their influence is gradually growing and sometimes exceeds that of IR realists. The current Biden administration and the majority of the US Democratic Party are liberals in this sense. Liberals are also dominant in the EU, which is the implementation of such a project, as it aims to build a supranational

structure. It was IR liberals who conceived and created the League of Nations and then the UN, the Hague Tribunal, the European Court of Human Rights, as well as the IMF, the World Bank, the WHO, the Bologna education system, digitalisation. All globalist projects and networks are all the work of liberals. Russian liberals are an integral part of this global sect, which has all the characteristics of a totalitarian sect.

Now let us apply this explanation to the NWO (New World Order). After the collapse of the USSR, Ukraine became a tool of both liberals and realists in IR—precisely a tool of the West. The liberals in the MoD encouraged Ukraine's integration into the global world and supported its aspirations to join the European Union and NATO (the military wing of globalism). The realists in the MoD used Ukraine in their interests against Russia. To do so, it was necessary to make Ukraine a nation-state, which contradicted the purely liberal agenda. This is how the synthesis of Ukrainian liberalism and Nazism, against which the SMO fights, was formed. Nazism (Extreme Right, Azov and other structures banned in Russia) was necessary to build a nation and a sovereign state as quickly as possible. Integration into the European Union required a playful and comically pacifist image (Zelensky). The common denominator was NATO. This is how liberals and IR realists achieved Russophobic consensus in Ukraine. When necessary, they turned a blind eye to Nazism, liberal values and gay pride parades.

Now to Russia. In Russia since the early 1990s under Yeltsin, Chubais and Gaidar liberalism has firmly dominated IR. Russia then, like Ukraine today, dreamed of joining Europe and joining NATO. If this had required further disintegration, the Kremlin liberals would have been willing to do that too. But at some point Yeltsin himself and his foreign minister Yevgeny Primakov adjusted the agenda slightly: Yeltsin resented separatism in Chechnya; Primakov deployed a plane over the Atlantic during the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia. These were weak signs of realism. Sovereignty and national interests were invoked, but only hesitantly, tentatively.

Real realism began when Putin came to power. He saw that his predecessors had weakened sovereignty to the extreme, caught up in globalisation; and that the country was consequently under foreign control. Putin began to restore sovereignty. First of all, in the Russian Federation itself—the second Chechen campaign, the deletion of sovereignty clauses from the Constitution, etc. Then he began to deal with the post-Soviet space—the August 2008 events in the South Caucasus; Crimea and Donbass in 2014. At the same time, it is indicative that the international expert community (SWOP, RIAC, etc.) and MGIMO continued to be completely dominated by the line of liberalism. Realism was never mentioned. The elites remained liberal—those who openly opposed Putin and those who reluctantly

agreed to submit to him.

The SMO has, like a flashback, illuminated the situation in the Russian Ministry of Defence. Behind Ukraine there is an alliance of liberals and partly realists in the Ministry of Defence, i.e., the forces of globalism that have turned against Russia. For liberals (and Biden and his administration, like Clinton and Obama before him, belong precisely to this school), Russia is the absolute enemy, because it is a serious obstacle to globalisation, to the establishment of a world government and a unipolar world. For American realists (and in Europe realists are very weak and barely represented), Russia is a competitor in controlling the space of the planet. They are generally hostile; but for them supporting Ukraine against Russia is not a matter of life and death. The fundamental interests of the United States are not affected by this conflict. It is possible to find common ground with them; not with liberals.

For IR liberals, however, it is a matter of principle. The outcome of the SMO will determine whether or not there will be a world government. Russia's victory would mean the creation of a fully multipolar world in which Russia (and China and, in the near future, India) would enjoy real and strong sovereignty, while the positions of the allied entities of the liberal West, which accept globalisation and are willing to compromise their sovereignty, would be dramatically weakened.

In conclusion, liberalism in IR is changing to include gender politics, information and hybrid warfare, artificial intelligence and post-humanism. But realism is also changing: confirming the logic of S. Huntington (incidentally, a proponent of realism in IR), who spoke of the "clash of civilisations;" the main actors are not states but civilisations, what he calls Big Spaces. Thus, realism is gradually shifting towards the theory of the multipolar world, where the poles are no longer nation-states, but states-continent, empires. This is also clearly visible in the course of the SMO.

In terms of various theories of international relations, the SMO is simultaneously a conflict between:

- unipolarity and multipolarity
- realism and liberalism in IR
- small identity (artificial Ukrainian Nazism) and large identity (Eurasian brotherhood of Russia)
- the civilisation of the land (Land Power) versus the civilisation of the sea (Sea Power), in the battle

for the coastal zone (Rimland), which geopolitics claims

- the failed state and the resurgent empire

Before our eyes, and with our hands and blood now—right now—the great history of ideas is being made.

Alexander Dugin is a widely-known and influential Russian philosopher. His most famous work is [The Fourth Political Theory](#) (a book banned by major book retailers), in which he proposes a new polity, one that transcends liberal democracy, Marxism and fascism. He has also introduced and developed the idea of [Eurasianism](#), rooted in traditionalism. This article appears through the kind courtesy of [Geopolitica](#).

[Featured image](#): "Monopoly" by Bernhard Gillam; published in 1883.

