Realist Stronghold in the Land of Thucydides? Appraising and Resisting a Realist Tradition in Greece

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Abstract

Given the integration of the discipline of International Relations in Greece into the global discipline since a few decades, the article addresses the reflection of the 'realism in and for the globe' question to this specific case. Although the argument doesn't go as far as to 'recover' forgotten IR theorists or self-proclaimed realists, a geopolitical dimension of socio-economic thought during interwar addressed concerns which could be related to the intricacies of realpolitik. Then again at current times, certain scholars have been eager to maintain a firm stance in favor of realism, focusing on the work of ancient figures, especially Thucydides or Homer, and on questions of the offensive-defensive realism debate as well as on the connection with the English School, while others have offered fruitful insights matching the broad constructivist agenda. Overall, certain genuine arguments have appeared, reflecting diversified views about sovereignty and its function or mitigation.

Keywords: International Relations, IR theory and historiography, Realism/realist tradition, Greece

Introduction

Who cares about 'realist strongholds'? Who cares about the 'land of Thucydides'? In the first place, is there such a land and what would it mean? More or less obviously, the term is used for a hopefully

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eloquent reference to Greece. However, it is not in the intention of this article's author to offer a geo-culturally reified concept, taking into account the multiplicity of 'Hellenisms' in terms of identity formation (Zacharia, 2008). With all its complexity and border variability, indeed, this piece of land –like several others– has emerged as the milieu for a variety of forms of socio-political organization: e.g. an inter-state system of city-states (the ancient classical era), an imperial system with broad cultural interaction (the Hellenistic world), an imperial system comprising it as both a political periphery and a cultural core (the Greco-Roman Synthesis), another one consisting of it eventually as both socio-political and cultural core (the Eastern Roman Empire or very later termed Byzantium) and yet another imperial system (the Ottoman Empire) and then a nation-state. Notably, the latter has found itself participating in an intriguing process of European integration during several decades; even so at this current moment in relation to challenges regarding the crisis of the Eurozone.

From the above cases, the city-states system has stood out for some scholars or politicians as quite familiar vis à vis the modern international system, especially in light of the Cold War period. In that sense, Thucydides' world has frequently come up to be seen as quite close to a Westphalia-based world and notably the two superpowers controversy (USA-USSR). This system's demise came with the outset of a destructive war which inspired an important piece of historical work (Thucydides' 'Peloponnesian War') and that by its turn the "tragic vision of politics" (Lebow, 2003). In this specific regard, the then Thucydides' land has been read or perceived as Thucydides' world and this as a version of the modern world. Moreover, being one of the first ones gaining independence out of an empire, the emerging state had to face many challenges concerning enlargement, national integration, formation of alliances, positioning within the international system and engagement in international organizations. Equally importantly, it has been noted as a typical example of facing restraints to sovereignty, due to the 19th century contractual arrangements involving sovereign loans (Krasner, 2001: 27-28), as well as of employing/handling traditional cultural recourses by relating to a civic-republican nationalism which was challenged and forced to accommodate earlier historical conceptions or alternative destinies drawn on a varied cultural tradition (Smith, 2008: 160-166). On top of that, the country's entry into the international society has been found to be a case which confirms the prevalence of a logic of anarchy over a logic of culture in the development of this society (Stivachtis, 1998).

In that complex process, the focus was on the concept of nation and its characteristics. Does this mean that realpolitik per se was absent? The answer is negative, in the sense that certain political figures embraced it as a mode of thought or practice, something which was principally manifested through the evocation of the national interest. In this regard, E. Venizelos –one of the country's most prominent early 20th century politicians– has been usually discussed as a respective example. However, the formation of a comprehensive realist tradition on behalf of intellectuals is another matter. During most decades of the aforementioned century, the discourse over foreign policy may at times have included national might or national interest but its basic component was frequently national right.

But at first, let's have a glimpse at the whole world of the International Relations discipline (IR). Generally, among a huge variety of themes and dimensions, recent developments in the latter have included a renewed and growing interest for the content of theoretical traditions (realist, liberal/pluralist, pre-colonial, etc.) as well as for what to make of them. An indicative example refers to research and analysis of older and often realist IR work by younger generations, with the aim of better understanding or illustrating IR (meta)theoretical issues and/or alternative paths. Such research has been mainly centered on the appraisal or evolution of realism and outright resistance to it (e.g. Williams, 2005; Molloy, 2006; Clinton, 2007; Bell, 2008; Booth, 2011; Guilhot, 2011). The issue has also been sharply presented as one

concerning the desirability and the degree of merging realist premises with non-realist concerns (Donnelly, 2000: 12-13). The complexity over definitions of a respective tradition as well as over its content, variants, challenges and criteria of evaluation doesn't refute the significance of this intellectual endeavor but actually attests it. Whether and how ''no one loves a political realist'' (Gilpin, 1996) or ''no one loves a realist explanation'' (Wohlforth, 2011) –as it has been succinctly put by realists themselves– is still an open issue, involving the fact that 'not everyone has been fed up with reading realism', whether she likes it or not (although it's usually a 'he').

In this regard and with all due respect to IR theory's variety and to the broader discussion of the discipline's/field's development (e.g. Jørgensen, 2003; Tickner & Wæver, 2009; Maliniak et al., 2012), it seems to still make sense of addressing 'realism in the globe and for the globe' or shortly 'realism in and for the globe' and referring to intellectual modes of thought and practice defending or redefining realism and attacking it. To be sure, a reasonable critique could be cast that this short of narrative (i.e. in terms of attack or defense) is realism-friendly in that it reproduces a realist logic. Then again, it could hardly be denied that discussions over the discipline's past and future have included the 'getting rid of realism(s)/keeping realism(s) in (and on top)' controversy. The latter can also be interpreted as one between the plausibility or desirability of transcending variably a classical IR imagery (may be it American, Western, realist or even liberal) and the insistence on its relevance.

So, how does the current version of Thucydides' land fit in that line of reasoning? Arguably in terms of the discipline's development, the Greek case is not one of forgotten IR theorists or experts and indeed self-proclaimed realists. To be sure, this is not to say that certain early and mid- 20th century intellectuals' work lacked any reference to IR related themes, even though points of such reference have turned out to be rather sporadic and marginal in relation to that work, nor that it could not be reconstructed as IR thought in terms of realism, liberalism, marxism and the English School (Makris, 2013: part 2). On the other hand, what to make of realism is indeed a feature of the discipline's evolution globally and locally. The latter's main characteristic is the integration of 'Greek IR' (i.e. IR in Greece) into the global discipline, since a few decades. This is combined with the fact that –in all its richness– this case has been hardly acknowledged as one offering a genuine or self-proclaimed 'modern Greek IR school' or something similar, as it has been the case with usual suspects such as France, Germany, the Nordic states (e.g. the Copenhagen School), Russia, the United Kingdom (Aberystwyth, the English School) etc. Needless to say that the formation of such a distinctive national 'school'/approach isn't necessary, however it has at times been the actual case or proven useful. Moreover, it wouldn't mean nor require the adherence to it of all one country's IR scholars neither a shared set of answers –but mainly common questions and distinct analytical tools– nor the exclusion of non-nationals.

Of IR sub-fields, only one was fully integrated globally during the whole of the previous century: International Law which is a complex case anyway, since it may also be regarded as another field's sub-field –Law– or indeed a 'bridge' between IR and Law. An inquiry of experts in this sub-field and of their international presence (notably at the Hague Academy of International Law) reveals –despite their diversity– a common interest in the role of the individual (Bredimas, 2012). International law and/or diplomatic history chairs aside, the first IR chairs were founded during the 1980s, along with a substantial growth of European Studies owed to the state's participation to European integration. Also, analysis of foreign policy and international politics could no more be denied meticulous attention, especially in light of the dramatic events which had shaken Greek foreign policy in the middle 1970s. The decade of the 1990s as well as the next was characterized by a distinct proliferation of various sub-fields and approaches as well as by the growth of the institutional framework (university departments and research centers). IR

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theory has undoubtedly a place in the curricula of the relevant departments; however the interest for research into the former has been noticeable yet rather limited, compared to the analysis of empirical or policy-related issues and hard facts (see Makris, Mikelis, 2008; Mikelis, Karabelias, 2013: 169-175). At the same time, great interest has been given to the theory-practice nexus and to the relevance of the field for the analysis of the respective foreign policy (Tsakonas, 2005; Ladi, 2007).

The discipline's development has been characterized by both the evocation of global standards and the somehow controversial discussions regarding theory or mainly the real world (may it be 'harsh' or 'under transformation'). Even so, some interest has fairly recently been given to meta-theory, while realism proved to be a point of contestation. In this regard, it makes sense to address the reflection of the 'realism in and for the globe' question to this specific case in terms of 'realism in and for Greece'. As it will be argued below, concerns which could be related to the intricacies of realpolitik were addressed during interwar on behalf of a geopolitical dimension of socio-economic thought. Then again at current times, certain scholars have been eager to maintain a firm stance in favor of realism, focusing on the work of ancient figures, especially Thucydides or Homer, and on questions of the offensive-defensive realism debate as well as the connection with the English School, while others have offered fruitful theoretical and empirical insights matching the broad constructivist agenda. Overall, certain genuine arguments have appeared, reflecting firm and diversified views about sovereignty and its function or mitigation.

2. A Forgotten Tradition: Interwar Geopolitical Thought

The Greek case may not be —as it has already been mentioned— one of forgotten IR experts and particularly self-proclaimed realists, however there is at least one forgotten or essentially neglected 'tradition'; namely geopolitics and particularly the interwar geopolitical/geoeconomic thought on behalf of intellectuals some of whom were engaged to politics. This body of ideas emerged in a series of books or articles, indicatively entitled:

a) ''Geoeconomy and economy. Methodological research'' (Sphyris, 1930),

b) ''In which circumstances is Greece sustainable?'' (Sphyris, 1931),

c) ''Neohellenic society and economy'' (Danielides, 1934),

d) ''Socialism and communitarianism'' (Karavidas, 1930),

e) ''Agrarian issues: Research over the economic and social morphology in Greece and neighboring Slavic countries'' (Karavidas, 1931), &

f) ''How I saw the Balkans. Political, social and economic research'' (Sofianopoulos, 1927).

Of course, it may be reasonably suggested that the very titles affirm this body of ideas as primarily political economy, admittedly mingled with a little bit of sociology; certainly not IR proper. Evidently, the aforementioned body is (and it has been discussed as) basically economic work as well as a precursor to sociology. Nevertheless, it has also been construed as a geopolitical discourse or the very least a geopolitical dimension of socio-economic thought (Vergopoulos, 1978; Meletopoulos, 1999). After all, even a slight familiarity with research in disciplinary identity (of IR or of other social sciences) and generally the history of ideas is enough to confirm that disciplinary purity/straitjackets is rarely a proper method/guide to view ideas and their emergence, evolution, complexity or effects. Although thinkers over economic issues did not lead to the development of a distinct IR discipline nor they had to do so, they were aware of varied intellectual strands and tools. So it is indeed the case that several decades later an IR core was established in terms of political science and it was expanded in the name of various subfields, but this process was definitely preceded by relevant yet incomplete intellectual efforts.

Those texts certainly did not translate into the beginnings of a self-consciously formed and continuous IR discipline or tradition. However, their importance stems out from the fact that they

reflect/represent a conscious attempt to address the geopolitical/geoeconomic determining/crucial factors, issues and challenges that the Greek nation and state would be facing in the aftermath of the long 2ond decade of the 20th century (including participation to various wars). This development is crucially connected to the historical-geographical context. The passing of that decade had marked and consolidated a new geopolitical reality: a sizeable majority of the nation resided now inside the state which by its turn no longer had a land border with one empire (containing a significant part of the nation) but it shared a border with four states. One of them was the successor of this empire (Turkish Republic - Ottoman Empire) with whom Greece had essentially just fought and lost a war and eventually agreed on a population exchange. With golden moments/circumstances (territorial expansion due to victory in the Balkan Wars; 1912-1913) or darker ones (failure of the Asia Minor expedition; 1919-1922), national integration had been achieved on a significant although not absolute degree. The point of interest regarding the Northern neighbors was no more the stance vis à vis an empire but the bilateral relations of states now sharing common border. And all these were complicated by shifts of power in the whole continent and the repositioning of European powers, so it made sense to take notice of them and to make respective decisions. Differently put, concerns about the Eastern Question's resolution −in terms of territorial claims or even of greater political transformations in the broader area− would now largely give place to concerns about the prospects of Greece's survival and development within the Balkans, in which extra-systemic forces also operated. New questions arose. Which powers or regions would now present great interest for Greece? How would its alliance and development policies be affected by a specific and remarkable socio-economic morphology of the whole Balkan region? Somebody noticed and it would benefit contemporary IR join other fields and also notice thoroughly that somebody had noticed.

It is not necessary to expand now on varied policy recommendations; for example some views privileged an opening to Central European powers and yet there was a strong British connection. Here it is underscored that what mostly mattered then was less the expansion of the state or the fate of the nation per se but specifically Greece's development and security as well as its consolidation, which now seemed to be mitigated by geographical and economic factors leading to serious socio-political effects. Emphasis on the nation's grandeur/greatness would give noticeable space −at least for the moment− to an orientation on issues of collective poverty and security in terms of seemingly objective factors. An exploration was needed into the country's capacity and potential or alternatives to cope through both internal and external policies with new geography and to handle its economic growth and foreign policy, as affected by the new geopolitical challenges and dynamics. After all, what had already been territorially gained had to be secured, kept intact and utilized. In essence, it was a 'technocratic' answer to the decline of irredentism and to new economic and political facts. According to this answer, Hellenism's problem was now a predominantly economic one. So this new reality was actually taken seriously into account by this emerging body of thought. This was done less in history or other disciplines, although an interest especially on military history should be remarked.

Present times IR scholars have noted the preeminence of historical and cultural arguments for the emergence or consolidation of Greek national identity and the justification of the Greek state's existence and territorial claims vis à vis geographical ones; differently put, the role of geographic argumentation in the understanding of the Greek nation has been peripheral (Huliaras & Tsardanidis, 2006: 478 quoting Prevelakis, 1996: 143-144). Interwar intellectual developments do not refute the whole/general picture; however they do provide a certain instance of its qualification. This is also the case with another scholar emphasizing the role of the Aegean as having been increased in national imagery since the interwar (Heraclides, 2010: 237 drawing on/quoting Sofos & Özkırımlı, 2009: 29). Again this needs not be wholly

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refuted, but still the geopolitical tradition illustrates major interest in concepts such as land, agriculture and the Balkans.

The points of focus of this strand of thought were furthermore explored through an inquiry towards international and indeed Balkan organization, as evidenced by texts entitled "the Customs Balkans Union" or "towards the Balkan Union"; both are books in French prepared by renowned politicians: a would be one, E. Averrof (1933), and an established one, A. Papanastasiou (1934). And then again, an abstract and non-Greece-centered perspective of international affairs was offered by work focusing on the "sociology of imperialistic phenomena" and "imperialism: its nature, the means of its prevalence and its most important manifestations". Both are books written respectively by the ontologically idealist sociologist (and later enlightened right-wing politician) P. Canellopoulos (1927) and the economist D. Stephanides (1927). On the other hand, a contemporary historian would locate certain of the aforementioned set of geopolitical ideas within the greater context of the emergence of some short of "peasantist nationalism", eloquently presented as an issue of "land and memory in the Balkans" (Ploumidis, 2011; 2013). In this context, from the middle 1920s until the middle 1940s emphasis was given on behalf of Greek intellectuals and of the rising group of agronomists along with agricultural economists to the prioritization of agriculture and to self-sufficiency, yet in a an essentially non-rational manner, as well as to the necessity of reacting to the then revisionism by certain northern neighbors.

But, what eventually happened to this body of ideas, in the end of the interwar period? The answer is given by another present times historian, who has eloquently summarized the evolution of Greek strategic beliefs during the 1940s, tracing two categories:

a) one strand of thought raised by politician G. Papandreou and certain others, which emphasized the new security challenges in terms of geopolitics and power, and

b) another one which grew up immensely in the middle of the decade and understood the respective dangers mainly in terms of racial threat or in alarmist manner, often related to a mystical evocation (Chatzivassiliou, 2007).

In fact, the second variant has been considered as the last phase of the aforementioned peasantist nationalism. This same variant was expressed mainly by then intellectuals −not necessarily by state officials− and it has been boldly described as maximalist and as manifesting some short of imperialism at the time (Ploumidis, 2011: Ch. 5). In any case, it largely coincided with the discourse of national vindication of the middle 1940s. This discourse comprised of ethical, historical and legal arguments put in the service of securing the country economically, politically and territorially. At the same time, it involved a suspicion towards diplomacy, manifested a forensic reasoning and a disappointment for the foreign insensitivity to Greece's security agenda. So there was a continuation (albeit not self-conscious, nor explicit) of interwar concerns, although it was not a systematic and scientifically expressed body of ideas. At the end of the day, diplomatic phenomena in terms of power and interest was perceived to consist of some short of pathology (Mikelis, 2012 as well as Leventakou, 2007).

Even though a fatalistic venire soon gave way to a more optimist one in light of economic reconstruction, the marginal role of power and interest-based analysis was reflected to the absence of a coherent body of realist ideas for nearly three decades thereafter. In this regard and as far as scholars were concerned, the western and Atlantic orientation of the Greek foreign policy seems to have defied the need for justification on such intellectual basis. The Cyprus issue (including its pre-independence phase) would reveal the challenges of having to oscillate between the harsh imperatives of international politics and the achievement of ideals/visions (see Chatzivassiliou, 2005; Papapoliviou et al., 2013 and especially Kourkouvelas, 2013; Christidis, 2013). Notably and theoretically-wise, a significant lost chance was the

forgetting of a treatise of a young man, who became a renowned Cold War politician, on international society (Papaligouras, 1941). He had defended a sociological understanding of international relations in a liberal yet not deterministic manner, thoroughly discussing the distinction between heterogeneous and homogeneous international societies; a feature which influenced R. Aron. This forgetting owed to his personal choices of following a political carrier. The thorough exploration of his contribution, in reference to perceptions of international society, took place more than half a century later (Chila, 2010: 16-18 & 288). A similar concern was also expressed in certain remarks made by another intellectual (who later became president of the Hellenic Republic: C. Tsatsos), reflecting the English School's reasoning (Makris, 2013: Ch. 8).

3. Back to the Present... and Forth…Towards a Thucydidean Turn?

The late 1970s and the 1980s marked the rise of a few IR subfields. Theory-informed textbooks made their appearance at the time, offering rather neutral descriptions of the respective evolution and status. Privileging outright and exclusively a specific theoretical perspective was less an issue, while they included the presentation of realist concepts and modes of analysis. An explicit/distinct interest in realism was shown in few books thereafter such as ''the new international system: realist approach of international relations'' or ''the preconditions for a Greek realpolitik'' or a ''international relations: realist perspective, theory and practice'' (Platias, 1995; Mourtos, 1997; Spyropoulos, 2010a). The 1990s were characterized by often sharp discussions on foreign policy which at times included the role of realism, reflecting a diverse understanding of the nature of international politics and some short of ordeal about the discipline's status and role (Mikelis, 2003: parts 3 and 4). This variety usually came down to a controversy between: a) the reliance on Euro-Atlantic orientation and institutions as a European state's choice in a world of change, whereby interdependence justified active and confident participation to international organizations or collective security systems, & b) the emphasis on self-help in an anarchic system as the prime guide for states in light of the break-down of Cold War 'certainties'; here a genuinely assertive policy would focus hardly on regional engagement or appeasement and more on the capacity for deterrence and containment (c.f. Veremis & Couloumbis, 1994; Ifestos & Platias, 1992). New impetus was given through the emphasis on the specific characteristics of the institutional framework concerning strategic planning and crisis management (Dokos & Tsakonas, 2005) as well as the intelligence sector (Liaropoulos & Konstantopoulos, 2014). This is also the case with the exploration of the possibility for a re-orientation of the respective foreign policy, focusing on non-Western emerging powers (Kotzias, 2010).

Furthermore, from a certain point of view it was claimed that this controversy between Euro-Atlantic orientation and reliance on self-help could theoretically be perceived as inner-realist; i.e. as taking place between a multilateral and rather optimist or 'hedged' realist variant –in terms of soft security and power or of a Ulyssean mentality– and a unilateral and rather pessimist or 'stronger' realist one in terms of hard security and power or of an Achillean mentality as well as of power politics (Couloumbis, 1997; 2003). Giving an illustrative example of their difference, the former would allow for an emphasis on a strategy of conditional rewards vis à vis neighboring countries instead of classical strategic instruments as well as on the possibility for the transformation of the security dilemma in the Aegean, insofar there was a redefinition of interests leading to a convergence of strategies and yet a clear balance of power rendering the cost of a conflict quite high (Couloumbis, 2003: 38-40; Couloumbis & Ifantis: 2002). Moreover, from an overtly dialectic angle it was suggested that specific dimensions of Greek foreign policy were adequately explained by a variety of approaches such as realism, constructivism and institutionalism (Tziampiris, 2003: 57-63 & 127-139). A response has lied in dismissing the controversy in such terms and perceiving it as an extra-

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realist one, whereby the first side refers to liberalism and cosmopolitanism. In this case, the latter were succinctly perceived as "fetishist internationalism" (Ifestos, 1997), although there was also a less polemic understanding of such debate (Constantinides, 1996). In this foundationalist line of reasoning, it made sense to emphasize the need for setting and specifying rules on the IR community's function and the role of a value-free mode of analysis, unequivocally privileging a practical notion of realism (Ifestos, 2003) and illustrating the field's fragmentation (Tsirigotis, 2013). Moreover, offensive realism has proven to be a popular analytical lense for explaining various issues regarding international politics, while the debate with defensive realism has caught some attention (Voskopoulos, 2009; Litsas, 2012a; Karagiannis, 2013; Evaghorou, 2014). This is also the case with highlighting the intricacies and controversies of 'democratic peace' (Chila, 2012; Litsas, 2012b) and illustrating the potential of a rationalist (Litsas, 2010) or a neo-positivist (Mazis, 2012) account of IR, including the formation of a modern systemic geopolitical analytical framework (parts 3 & 4). At the same time, it made sense to offer a conceptual history of the reason of state, including the concept's link to realism (Tziampiris, 2009).

An explicitly theory-oriented move had to do with the choice of a considerable number of scholars to turn to Thucydides as a source of inspiration or a Thucydidean reading of international politics. Paraphrasing C. Gray's claim that "Clausewitz Rules, OK?" (Gray, 1999), those would largely assert a similar dictum; that 'Thucydides rules, OK?' For example, such perspective has been appraised for offering a varied explanation of state behavior combined with the systemic explanation of the causes of war as well as for reflecting central concepts of realism such as anarchy, interstate competition, survival and the search for security, national interest, power and the balancing dynamic (Platias, 1999). In this regard, emphasis is given to the refinement of the logic of conflict through the study of strategy and to the reconstruction of the historical context of Thucydides' work through strategic theory, focusing on the causes of war, balance of power and the juxtaposition of the two major adversaries' strategies. The strategic thought of the time is thus perceived in terms of models of policy "that have thereafter influenced the evolution of war-making and national security strategy overall" (Tsakiris, 2006, 173. Also see Platias & Koliopoulos, 2006). Attention was similarly raised on the connection with realism (Spyropoulos, 2010b), on hegemony and its function (Kouskouvelis, 2004: ch. 5.1) and on the "theory of decision in Thucydides". In the latter case, light is shed particularly to the processes concerning decision making. A multi-causal Thucydedian theory of decision is thus found to focus on objective factors in the name of necessity but also on subjective ones. At a first level, Man seeks power and makes decisions based on fear, honor, interest, nature and necessity. At a second level, those may be proven wrong in light of the function of factors such as arrogance, daring, hope, luck and passion (Kouskouvelis, 2015).

On the other hand, this Thucydidean turn reflects a more general one –i.e. classical. The latter involves the broader reconstruction of a "Hellenic approach of international relations", which would include classical thought and practices concerning the city-states system (Varvarousis, 1999: ch. 1). In a similar vain, a varied (ancient) Greek genealogy is claimed to consist not only of Thucydides, as having set the philosophical and theoretical basis of what was later termed political realism, but also others such as Aristophanes, for having highlighted the ideal of peace, and Demosthenes for having raised issues regarding balance of power and democratic peace (Makris, 2013: part 1). Most recently, a similar and extensive turn to Homer was offered. In particular, the Heliad has been set as the ground for a theoretical reflection and for the study of war as well as of the organized use of violence and politics connection, in the framework of realist theory and particularly in light of the defensive realism-offensive realism controversy. Thus, various scenes and events are analyzed mainly in terms of hard power, plundering, the political and institutional underpinnings of treaties, the concept of freedom in the framework of international political theory, logistics, special operations and finally the use of war as a method of containment (Litsas, 2014).

Moreover, a distinct attempt on theory building came from a firm proponent of political realism yet not in the latter's name but via the advancement of a ''cosmotheory of the nations'' (Ifestos, 2009). This approach's starting point is the linkage of nations' freedom to their capacity for survival and development. Freedom is thus used as a criterion for national success. A nation is capable of universally notable spiritual and political achievements in its own perception. This process is safeguarded through the respect of principles which have been associated with the Westphalian model: non-intervention, interstate equality and self-determination. Nevertheless, nations have often degraded their own freedom and deprived other nations of theirs, especially under the prevalence of the logic of anti-spiritual dogmatism, materialism and hegemonism (ch. 1 & 2). In other words, the political community is recognized as a principal agent, which is based upon sovereignty but is also endangered by a materialist mentality that is concomitant with hegemonic, imperialist and non-democratic practices. In that regard, phenomena such as the chauvinist and racist view of politics, colonialism and genocidal practices are linked to an anti-spiritual stance. While blame is put on the analysis of politics merely in terms of power, critical approaches are also put under heavy critique on the grounds that they essentially contribute to a hegemonic situation. Finally, despite the defense of the Westphalian model, it is acknowledged that the crux of the matter lies in the failure of modernity. However, the solution is deemed to be the anti-hegemonic role of spirit for political meaning and practice, as long as this spirit produces freedom and is in turn produced by it. This strand of thought is influenced by a 'cosmosystemic' approach in the framework of political science; whereby a cosmosystem is defined as a set of societies with common foundational characteristics (Contogeorgis, 2006; 2014).

Moreover, an extensive appraisal of realism vis à vis the liberal and post-positivist critique has been offered in the name of the ''charm of realist discourse''. This includes a reconstruction of the debate between realist variants and contenting perspectives. It is particularized at the conceptual (both epistemological and ontological) compatibility of the realist theoretical framework with the evolution of international politics even in light of the globalizing processes as well as concerns regarding (post)modernity. Here, historical change and structural transformation, which have often been declared at realism's opposite side, are not refuted. Instead, they are claimed to be addressed by realist theory or at least variants of it which are less committed to a positivist epistemological background, than they have been criticized so far, and open to questions regarding the form of political community. In this sense and also taking into consideration the contestation of Waltzian neorealism's commitment to rationalism, considerable margin is left for the analysis of temporal acceleration and spatial restructuring; but the latter are considered elements which can be accommodated through dynamic accounts of sovereignty and balance (Ifantis, 2012). The extensive acknowledgment of the role and importance of change and transformation in international politics has allowed for the respective author's participation to the post-Westphalian intellectual endeavors presented in the next part of this article. The relevance of post-positivist thought was also explored in terms of a ''dialectical realism'' (Fakiolas, 1999).

Finally, the assumption that an international system in transformation doesn't necessarily mean the retreat of sovereignty was confirmed from another standpoint, namely the study of the international society. In particular, state sovereignty should in any case remain at the epicenter of analysis as the basic element of interstate order, in the absence of a project of homogenization of a heterogeneous society combined with selective policies based upon geostrategic interests (Chila, 2008: 289). An analysis informed by both realism and the English School also discusses the issue of order and the ideological homogenisation of the international system, raising caution about the inherent dangers in the respective efforts to bring such result through violence (Papasotiriou, 2012). The connection of the two approaches was further explored in terms of understanding the early English School work as a varied form of realist thought (Makris, 2008).

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4. Towards a Post-Westphalian Challenge of Realism?

Taking into account the fact that 'Westphalia' represents an anarchic system of states whose sovereignty is presumed to be typically respected, certain of IR theory's paths have been 'Westphalia-friendly' and usually of a realist shade, while others have pointed to a reconstruction of the Westphalian order and model, thus showing a post-Westphalian anxiety. This general controversy has also been reflected to the Greek case. So the eagerness of certain scholars to maintain a firm stance in favor of realism is a feature complemented by a reverse one regarding insights on a post-sovereign potential of world politics and the European Union. Having already pointed out that the late 1970s and the 1980s marked the rise of a few IR subfields and certainly European Studies, a pluralist perspective emphasizing interdependence was pursued at the time and also continued a little bit later (Ioakimidis, 1980; Kinnas, 1980; Canellopoulos & Frangonikolopoulos, 1995). A similar emphasis on a variety of actors and processes relating especially to Europeanization and affecting Greek foreign policy in the mid'1990s is reflected on a special issue of *Etudes Helléniques/Hellenic Studies* (Tsakonas, 2007). In this line of reasoning, it made sense to raise caution concerning ''oversimplified ethnocentric stereotypes of international politics which are based on narrow power politics'' (Frangonikolopoulos, 1995: 26). More recently, the respective concerns seem to have been essentially filtered through the familiarity with the broad constructivist agenda, on behalf of certain scholars mainly belonging to younger generations (e.g. Antoniades, 2003; Tzifakis, 2004; Akrivoulis, 2008; Galariotis, 2009; Gofas & Hay, 2010).

In this regard, contesting sovereignty through processes of internal fragmentation and of socio-economic interdependence, combined with the transfer of legitimized control to non-state institutions, was succinctly discussed as an issue of ''threats and challenges'' to the former. Those processes' effects were specifically located to a considerable margin for the subversion of traditional or established forms of international political organization. An indicative example would include the reconstitution of the international system, depending on the form of dominant units (Tsinisizelis & Ifantis, 2000). In a similar vain lies the proclamation of the current era as one which is subject to a radical reexamination and redefinition of the content of stateness as well as of the nature or characteristics of an anarchic yet structured/ordered form of international symbiosis. In this regard, attention is recommended on the effects of globalization and on the institutional pluralism concerning the development of international systems; specifically the circumstances regarding their transformation as well as their understanding in terms of inter-sovereign and post-sovereign relations (Lavdas et al., 2010a; especially Lavdas et al., 2010b, 24 & 28).

The aforementioned problématique has been particularized to an extensive inquiry into the ''new forms of sovereignty and synarchy''. The latter term refers to the transformation of state sovereignty in late modernity and evidently to the institutionalized co-exercise of shared sovereignty, structured on the basis of mutually acceptable guarantees. It is thus a concept consistent with the hybrid nature of political reconstitution generally in world politics but especially in Europe's case, projecting a system of political co-disposition in composite, mixed and polycentric forms of governance. The crux of the matter then comes down to a system's capacity to perform public political functions and forms of public authority in shared sovereignty, regulating the terms of the collective symbiosis of the constituent and highly interdependent states. The synarchy framework embraces a participatory culture of governance and a post-state-centric mode of governance. In that sense, it is juxtaposed to a sovereignty model and a condominium one but also a post-sovereign one as well, in spite of their common departure from state-centricity, since it disavows a post-state teleology. Despite offering a subversion of sovereignty as a nation-centric dogma, a warning has been made so that synarchy is not to be confused with the abolition/obliteration of sovereign

state entities or their legitimizing function in democratic politics. So, this approach doesn't equal to the end of the nation-state as a distinct political entity nor to the substitution or assimilation of sovereign entities; it does refer though to their political reconstitution through their relocation on a different collective basis in a post-state political sphere, in terms of common regulative norms and consociational mechanisms for managing common sovereignty (Chryssochoou, 2006; 2007; 2009; 2010).

Similarly the issues, concerning the relation between global transformations and the world system's political structures, have emerged succinctly in terms of "system and units in an ordered plurality", whereby the pace and range of global arrangements are furthered through novel forms of organized-shared rule promoted in the global system, even if states remain prominent in the conduct of world politics. Here, a balance is appraised between avoiding idealized projections of a single or congruent global setting and discussing the structured and symbiotic forms and patterns of interaction in the global order (Chryssochoou & Xenakis, 2012). From this vantage point, ontological explorations of the international system shift from zero-sum notions of politics to an emphasis on "states negotiating collectively mutually rewarding outcomes and investing in reciprocal activities that would allow them to survive the tides of fragmentation… through, rather than despite their active engagement in the global plurality" (p. 237).

An equally characteristic example, discussing the transformative potential of international politics in relation specifically to geography, refers to the attempt of unfolding the "geographical myths of international politics" in the name of critical geopolitics. Here, the latter is appreciated as a method of illustrating the elusiveness of the notion of states as unitary entities in terms of objectively determined national interests (Huliaras, 2004. Cf. Mazis, 2004).

On the other hand, as it seems, the most explicitly dismissive approach towards realpolitik has treated it as a participant to the construction of national identity. In this line of reasoning, realism would be perceived as some form of "scientific nationalism", i.e. a conservative, nation-centric and even dangerous perspective which presumably hardly offers a critical stance towards the national image (Heraclides, 2001), although there has also been a less polemic reference to realism's conservatism (Sarigiannidis, 2012: 47-48). Unfolding those concerns particularly to the Turkish-Greek controversy and especially the Aegean dispute, a strong recommendation is made for emphasizing the subjective dimension concerning fears and needs as well as the processes of otherness, boldly put in terms of "imagined enemies" (Heraclides, 2010). From this point of view, the redefinition of relations would involve: a) a shifting way from the "more traditional Realpolitik paradigm, still in vogue in Greece and Turkey" as a factor perpetuating antagonism and enmity & b) an emphasis on elements such as the factual accuracy of perceptions, misconceptions and comparison of suspicions (p. 241. See pp. 241-242).

This strand of thought is fairly compatible with concerns over the ideational framework that underpins the understanding of national identity and the respective foreign policy. In that framework, a noticeable feature is the juxtaposition of Greece as a nation of and in Europe to other narratives. As far as scholars are specifically concerned, the Europeanization of Greek Foreign Policy has been assessed variably, yet with a tendency of viewing it as a positive development (Stavridis, 2003). An analysis of the competing approaches in public discourse especially regarding post-Cold War Greece's role in the Balkans attests the domination of geographical rather than historical line of reasoning and particularly the emergence of three set of geopolitical ideas or else codes on behalf of the political elite about the region which successively dominated Greek views and policies. Those are: a) a menacing 'Muslim arc' reflecting a perceived decline of Greece's geopolitical importance, b) the Balkans as a Greek 'natural hinterland' in which this state would come up as a power and finally c) the Balkans as an undisputed part of Europe, whereby Greece was engaged to a project of contributing to the Europeanization of the northern neighbors

Kyriakos Mikelis: "Realist Stronghold in the Land of Thucydides? Appraising and Resisting a Realist Tradition in Greece"

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(Huliaras & Tsardanidis, 2006. For a comparison with other European cases, see Guzzini, 2012). The role of Greece in Europe is also included in other typologies of understanding the nation's international role. In this regard, the foreign policy discourse adopted in societal groups, namely civil society actors, has been described in terms of an ideological contrast between Europeanism and nationalist populism (Kalpadakis & Sotiropoulos, 2007). From a more diversified angle, a reconstruction of the conceptualization of Greece's identity, position, role and relation with the world has included four types, i.e. Greece as 'European country', as "the centre of civilization", as a 'dependent state' and as a "poor and weak state" (Ioakimidis, 2007: ch. 1). Of those types, the respective author appraises the European potential of the country.

On the other hand and given the fact that Europe anyway constitutes a highly complex governance phenomenon, Greece's involvement to the Eurozone crisis has given new impetus to research over the mechanisms that have posed a growing challenge for sovereignty and its mitigation. In light of recent developments, this case has served as a source of inspiration for introducing concepts to denote such restraint, like the notion of "stateness under strain" regarding the impact of conditionality and of adjustment to reform demands (Lavdas, 2013). A similarly characteristic example is the "Greece, debt colony" argument, which has been set forth by Greece's Foreign Minister and it relates to colonizing mechanisms and effects of European governance. Following this argument, the management of the respective crisis is not a typical case of the challenge of European integration to sovereignty but a particular set of conditions and methods of undermining sovereignty in a way regrettably reminiscent of the colonial ruling system (Kotzias, 2013). Specifically, it is claimed that the imperial rule entailed an 'imperial triangle' consisting of corporations, administration and states. In the EU and the Eurozone context, this triangle is reflected to a 'European imperial triangle' comprising of markets or multinational enterprise, European administration/Brussels bureaucracy and a hierarchical chain of states (pp. 18-19). Regarding a normative stance and compared with other arguments presented in this part of the article, this specific one explicitly addresses the respective challenge to sovereignty as actual though not inherently positive.

5. Concluding Remarks

In this article, an effort was made to offer a reconstruction of the scientific discourse in Greece over a realist logic in international politics and the implications for sovereignty and anarchy. As suggested here, the Greek case in its current status is not one of a single and unified realist or anti-realist stronghold, nor (in other words) a pro-sovereign or pro-post-sovereign one. Present times IR in the country has been characterized by the emergence of various and diverse answers to the question regarding the relevance and the potential for transcending the realist imagery (i.e. defending or attacking it respectively), thus reflecting the integration of Greek IR into the global discipline during the last decades vis à vis the feature of appraising and resisting realism.

Oversimplifying the issue about realism in and for Greece, if the question was rephrased as whether 'Thucydides rules?' a certain group would –as already stated– give an affirmative answer. I.e. they would emphasize the affinity of a specific form of Thucydides' land (the city-states system) with the Westphalian world as an anarchic system of sovereign states, possibly leaving some room for the societal features of the respective interactions. The Thucydidean legacy may be heavy but it does not necessarily relate to narrow conceptualizations, as far as a certain degree of variety is recognized. That stance is not adopted though by other scholars, who pinpoint the challenges for the modern form of Thucydides' land (and other 'lands' for that matter), i.e. the nation-state, in light of a presumed reconstruction of the Westphalian order and model. In this sense, they are primarily interested in the post-sovereign potential of world politics and the reconstitution of international structures and forms of socio-political organization.

The first part of the 20th century marked significant landmarks for the evolution of national identity. Those did not include the formation of a distinct and comprehensive realist tradition. The interwar geopolitical thought offers probably the closest to such tradition or at least a conscious effort to address the crucial factors and issues that the Greek nation-state had to face. The neglect of the former during the early Cold War reveals the respective intellectual and political restraints at the time. Evidently, nationalism as ideology was not directly linked to an IR realism; so there should be caution not to confuse too readily the former with present time realist views and approaches which are anyway relatively varied. The period beginning with the restoration of the democratic regime (1974) marked multiple developments concerning social science, including a double move; the emergence of IR as a national science (in the sense of having to say something meaningful/useful about the nation's international position and role) and the growing interest for putting Greek nation(alism) into serious scrutiny (Mikelis, 2003: part 4). While the latter endeavour (i.e. a critical stance) turned out to be quite popular especially in the field of History, IR concerns about nation-centricity were expressed mainly in terms of European integration as well as globalization and the respective potential and challenges.

Noticeably, a few specific and genuine arguments, which offer firm and diversified views about sovereignty and its function or mitigation, have recently appeared; namely the arguments about 'the cosmotheory of the nations' (emphasizing the linkage of nations' freedom to their capacity for survival and development), 'synarchy' (focusing on the transformation of state sovereignty in late modernity), 'sovereignty under strain' (pinpointing the intricacies of conditionality and the need for reform) and 'debt colony' (analyzing/questioning the colonizing effects of European governance). Given after all the fact that from the respective authors only the one in the first case has been closely associated with the appraisal of realism in a foundational shade, those arguments have not been presented as realism-specific. They may not consciously constitute a single school of thought but they do demonstrate a deep interest in the mechanisms relating to socio-political organization and its forms.

Reconstructing those arguments as sharing some basic concerns and particularly as some short of a problématique around (post)Westphalia may help in the discussion of the sovereignty/anarchy nexus, without necessarily having to be trapped to a realism-antirealism controversy; or at least it would illustrate the latter's points of concern. In this regard, further exploring the characteristics of previous forms of Thucydides' land might prove useful and thought-provoking. For example, despite some interest given in the diplomacy and strategy of the Eastern Roman Empire (Byzantium) per se, this case seems to be quite promising for offering relevant insights over socio-political imagination and organization. After all, history and theory informed intellectual endeavors would serve as a crucial criterion for the (re)positioning of Greek IR in the global discipline.

Acknowledgements

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