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# Understanding Various Traditions of the Realism in International Relations

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**Abstract:** Realism is considered a very crucial theoretical approach which claims to represent the reality of international relations and it rejects the imaginative idealism. It created a place between war and peace; quarrels and moral standards; and national interests and national cooperation, it ultimately provides authenticity to the prior as compared to the latter respectively. Realist approach in International Relations emphasizes the constraints on politics imposed by human nature and the absence of the world government and together they make international relations largely an arena of power and interest. It also gives validity to selfish human nature, anarchic structure of the world, self-preservation, self-help, strategic military action, diplomatic conversations, balance of power/threat, cultural conflicts and after all violence. However, scholars who are working in this series have much to contribute to normative debates regarding international politics. But it is the need of hour to recognize the significant differences among realists. They offer conflicting results to many methodological political and ethical questions. It seems that realism is a flourishing research agenda in both international relations and political theory. This research article will theoretically and analytically examine the realism as an approach to international relations that has emerged gradually through the work-series of analysts in different continents in many ways of establishments that found logical as various traditions. In a conclusive way, it seems that realism is an inexhaustible and much timeless theory.

**Keywords:** Anarchy, Balance of Power, Human Nature, Military Action, Self-Help

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## 1. Introduction

Realism is a unique paradigm that emphasizes the role of the state, national interest, and military power (nowadays nuclear or technical/bio-chemical power) in world politics. As an approach, it studies International relations or world politics only with the power factor model. Realists believe conflicts are unavoidable and perpetual and so war is common and inherent to humankind. Realism claims to propose that state behavior and balance of power issue determinants of the policy process. It believes that human nature and its influence occurs over state foreign policies and it observes human nature as egoistic only which always desires more power, in this respect states are egoistic in nature (which creates an anarchic structure) and, in their defensive or offensive position, they try to maximize their power, and attempt to preserve their cultural dominance over the others. Thus, realism is derived from the monarchical's warring structure, got expansion in the conflictual medieval

age, and became young in the democratic age as clashes between the powerful actors or ideologies and known as *modern realism*. This paper tries to analyze the evolution of realism from the past to the present in the global scenario taking into account of their various traditions under the major arguments.

## 2. Evolution of Realism

The foundations of Realism have been too antiquated in the universe; it has been chronic in nature; it aimed to avoid artificiality in the treatment of human relations and emotions; it rejected the sentimental manner and countered the idealism and romanticism in the world. In the discipline of international relations realism came up with the observations of many revolutions and wars waged in the world. Desires for independence and lust for power also made realism one of the most influential concepts of international relations theory. It was based on Darwinism's theory of *survival of the fittest*.

On basis of Darwin's theory of *survival of the fittest* appeared to be applied to all states and societies. War became glorified as the only means to prove a nation to be fit in the arena of the world. This theory was used to justify war as a means of state survival. This idea was used to justify domination by those who claimed that some races are superior to others. Mostly this idea has been used to suppress or exterminate the "inferior" and "unfit" ones [1]. Based on mentioned theory, modern realism started as a serious realm of research after the Second World War. Hans Morgenthau's work "*Politics among Nation*" is generally considered a seminal work in the rise of modern realism. It has been molded into many traditions taking war and struggle for power as a reality in every corner of the world.

### 3. Greek Tradition of Realism

Although realism developed as a distinct theory in international relations only around Second World War, key realist concepts can be found in much earlier works. In 400 BC, Greek historian Thucydides observed in his text "*History of the Peloponnesian War*" that Justice, law (regulation), and society have no place in international politics because it is driven by an endless struggle for power and their roots exist in human nature. As he demonstrated that:

"War as evil is something that we all know, and it could be meaningless to go on cataloguing all the disadvantages involved in it. Nobody is forced into war by ignorance, nor, if he thinks he will gain from it, is kept out of it by fear, the actual fact is that one side thinks that the profits to be won outweigh the risks to be incurred, and therefore, the other side is prepared to face anger rather than accept an immediate loss"—[2, 3].

As Thucydides is considered the father of scientific history but also of political "realism" which posits that interstate relations in the international arena are based on *might* rather than *right* [4]. Thucydides compiled his text based on the empirical study of the Peloponnesian war which was begun in 431 B.C. among Greek city-states [5].

According to Aristotle, 'man is a political animal'. Thucydides evaluates in effect that political animals have highly unequal powers and they have different capabilities to dominate others and to defend themselves. All states (whether they are small or large), with the reality of unequal power, conduct themselves accordingly. With different capabilities, they will survive and perhaps even prosper and with the different disabilities, they place themselves at risk & jeopardy and may even be destroyed. Ancient history is full of many examples of the kind of states and empires that were destroyed or got victory [6]

According to Thucydides, the mentioned war was the outcome of a systematic change. He analyzed that the main factor of war between Athenians and Spartans was the rise of the *military power* of the Athenian city-state and the insecurity which was created among the Spartans due to this increase of military power of the Athenians. This condition

made the *war inevitable*. Thucydides called it systematic change; which represents, "a change in the hierarchy or control of the international political system" [7]. He observed war as an imbalance of power in international politics.

Thucydides was a prime thinker who described international relations as *anarchic* and *immoral*. According to him, "Melian dialogue" was the best example, representing that interstate politics lack law and justice. He also asserts that in interstate relations, "*the strong do what they have the power to do and the weak accept what they have to accept*" [8]. The mentioned episode highlights that the strong should rule the weak, as they have the power to do so [9]. He emphasized in his text some themes such as the *balance of power*, *the security dilemma*, and *the lack of justice and morality*, which is quite necessary for international relations. Thus, in *History of the Peloponnesian War* Thucydides theorized realism which is considered timeless writing that has an impact on contemporary thinkers of international relations. As Robert O. Keohane [10] claims that Thucydides was among the first who fixed these three basic assumptions of *classical political realism*: (1) states are the prime units of action; (2) states seek power, either as an end in itself or as a means to other ends; and (3) states behave rationally.

### 4. Chinese Tradition of Realism

Another tradition of Realism can be traced to China where the Chinese philosopher and military strategist Sun Tzu contributed to realism in the 4th and 5th centuries before Christianity. Sun Tzu claimed, in his book "*Ping Fa*" or "*The Art of War – a thirteen-chapter Handbook*" [11], that when confronting armed and hostile neighbors exist, moral reasoning was not useful for state rulers. He developed theories regarding the use of power to improve their positions. According to him, all warfare is based on *deception* [12]. Sun Tzu also suggested to rulers how to use power to advance their *interests* and protect their *survival*. Giving importance to *war* and *state security* he advocated war contrary to Thucydides: "War is a great matter of the state, the place of life and death, the way of existence and destruction, it cannot be investigated" [13]. Therefore, Sun Tzu is not a supporter of peace or against war; he is rigidly a supporter of waging war intelligently because he believes it is a matter of life and death. Therefore, it is called the '*power politics*' school of thought. He also endorsed the role of *realpolitik* (Practical Politics) strategizing in states' behavior in his classic, *The Art of War*.

Sun-Tzu compiled his text during the Spring and Autumn period which is considered as Warring State Period (481-221 BCE). During this duration, Zhou Dynasty (1046-256 BCE) was getting a decline, and states were involved in fighting each other for *supremacy* and *control* of China. His text designed a clear military strategy of winning decisively in place of traditional warfare of stalemate by whatever means were necessary [14]. His theory was taken into practice by the king Ying Sheng (259-210 BCE) of the state of Qin who conquered the other states through this kind of policy and

established the Qin Dynasty (221-206 BCE) and declared himself the first emperor of China as Shi Huangdi [15].

## 5. Indian Tradition of Realism

Kautilya (350-275 BCE, also known as Chanakya and Vishnugupta) was considered the first Indian strategist who evolved the theory of realism in international relations from the Indian perspective. He was prime minister under the reign of Chandragupta Maurya (321-297 BCE), and founder of the Mauryan Empire (322-185 BCE). Kautilya's realism is different from western realism; his text "*Arthashastra*" is considered a prior work to the western thinkers such as Thucydides, Machiavelli, and Hobbes who tried to explain realism through their texts. According to him, 'Artha' means 'the earth inhabited by men, and *Arthashastra* is the science which is the means of acquisition and protection of the earth. Kautilya's training manual '*Arthashastra*' is considered a text by which he transformed Chandragupta from a citizen to a monarch. The notions of the *Arthashastra* not only enabled Chandragupta to seize power but to maintain it, which was passed down to his son, Bindusara (297-273 BCE), and after that to his grandson Ashoka the Great (268-232 BCE) whose basic success can also be attributed to the *Arthashastra* until he grew disappointed by war and converted to Buddhism.

Kautilya's legacy for realism can be discussed under the major following heads. His major concern in *Arthashastra* is how the ruler can acquire and consolidate his power. And the state was a 'focal point' of his writings. He described the nature, power, and functions of the state by '*Saptang theory*' (theory of seven constituents of the state) as *Swami* (King), *Amatya* (Minister), *Janapada* (Territory and Population), *Durga* (fort), *Kosh* (Treasury), *Danda* (Army) and *Mitra* (Friend). He suggested the use of all available means for acquisition and maintenance of power by four diplomatic solutions/tools: *Sama* (conciliation), *Dama* (Gift), *Danda* (Punishment), and *Bhed* (divide and rule). Kautilya was a proponent of warfare of the state but encouraged war for preserving the power of the state. He described that *possession of the power* and happiness in a state make a king superior, hence, a king should always strive to augment his power [16]. Kautilya believed there was a "science" of warfare; rather than a larger science of politics [17]. He believed that goal of science was power. He pointed out that "*Power is strength and strength changes the minds*" [18]. Hence, he used power as a tool to control his society as well as his enemies. Kautilya highlighted a detailed description of the '*Mandala Theory*' (circle of states - just like Immanuel Wallerstein's center-periphery/world system theory) which describes how the ambitious king (*Vijigishu*) could plan his moves towards his enemy (*Ari*). Mandala theory describes who will be your friend and the enemy in the world, for instance, the neighboring state is the enemy; the enemy's neighbor is the friend; the enemy of the enemy is a friend. This theory has been identified by Modelski for its elements that contribute to perceiving of the balance of power in international relations [19].

## 6. Italian Tradition of Realism

In the same line of Kautilya, the Italian author and statesman, Niccolo Machiavelli (A.D. 1469-1527) is another influential realist. Machiavelli wrote his classic "*The Prince*" (1513) serving as a guide for acquiring and maintaining political power because Italy then was not a united nation and he wanted to unite it again by the *power factor* [20]. He demonstrated in his book how the accumulation and judicious use of power is necessary for *political survival* and attainment of social and political goals. For him, how power is acquired is not a crucial issue, and issues such as justice, morality, and right and wrong are as idle as they are not needed in the acquisition of power and the survival of the state. The Prince must be willing to switch to *force* and *violence* was necessary to maintain power [21].

He described that a prince must not rely on his luck but should shape his own fortune by Charisma, Cunning, and Force. He disclosed two variables of life as fortune and *virtu* (bravery or power and the ability to impose one's own will). He scripted that "...fortune was like a 'violent river' that can flood and destroy the earth, but when it is quiet, leaders can use their free will to prepare for and conquer the rough river of fate. An effective leader maximizes *virtu* and minimizes the role of fortune. In this way, "*fortune favors the brave*" [22].

According to Machiavelli, a leader's first concern is to promote national security; to preserve national security a leader requires to be alert and should face effectively the internal and external challenges to his rule. He should have the virtues of a *lion* and a *fox*. *Power* (virtue of the Lion) and *Deception* (virtue of the Fox) were considered crucial tools for the conduct of foreign policy and international behavior. Here he seems to copy Kautilya where he said kings should emulate the behavior of the lion and the fox. He had also written "*The Art of War*" (1521), a text in the form of a dialogue between a military expert and citizens. He noted in this text how deception and intrigue are valuable military strategies to conquer other states just like SunTzu.

## 7. English Tradition of Realism

English philosopher Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679 AD) in his work, "*Leviathan*" (1651) contributed to realism by his philosophical analysis of the *state of nature* and *man*. His *Leviathan* showed that, the state of nature is characterized by "continual fear and danger of violent death; and the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short" [23]. For him men are by nature evil creatures and selfish, therefore, he wrote that in terms of controlling the excesses of man and protect citizens from each other they need to vest power in the hands of a leviathan—a monarch or king or ruler or a supreme state who can enforce law and order and transform the state of nature into consensus and compromise.

He describes the 'state of nature as 'state of war' or state of anarchy. He believes that the state of nature actually occurs between persons of sovereign authority. Hobbes' theory is

also utilized in order to describe the present international relations. By describing his theory of the 'state of nature' he believes that there is no world government that's why state of anarchy exists in the world and of "a war as is of every man against every man" [24]. In other words, there was no higher authority to regulate the actions of people. Hobbes' vision of anarchy provides adequate opportunities for cooperation (covenants) in a state of nature. Under anarchy, even inherently ethical group of people would soon transform into a gang of brutes. However, Hobbes does not believe that in this condition, the strong will determine the order of the international system rather he asserts that everyone is equal in the state of anarchy and weakest as strength enough to kill the strongest by an overt machination/ confederacy with others those who are in the same situation with himself. Now the order is maintained by a *general rule of reason* that every person ought to seek peace. This story supports the realist claim that there is a *moral and value-free international system*. Hobbes calls them "general rules of reason" (a rule of nature found out by reason) and these rules generally apply to everyone in the international system which would create some form of moral standard that are to be obeyed by everyone for *self-preservation*, in first percept of reason is that every state would be, in the word of Hobbes, to "seek peace and follow it" [23]. Thus, people institute a sovereign with the power to enforce law and order to exit this state of nature [24].

With this Hobbes' argument that states must acquire power and be fully prepared to beat defence from external aggression. The English tradition, especially Hobbes' interpretation, Vincent tells us, characterizes international relations as such: 'International politics is a struggle for power; war is inevitable in the international anarchy; there is no right and wrong, only competing concepts of right; there is no society beyond the state; international law is an empty phrase' [25]. However, supporters of realism believe that while the individuals in Hobbes' state of nature institute a social contract to form a state with a government to mitigate anarchy, such a government is not possible at the international level, and therefore it always remains the *arena of conflicts* and power politics. However, the reason behind this interpretation of Hobbes was a history of Britain where he had experienced that a powerful Oliver Cromwell, Commander-in-Chief removed the British monarch with being ruthless in battle performed as Lord Protector, or head of state, of the Common wealth of England.

By inspiring this realist approach English historian Edward Hallett Carr analyzed the twenty years era of world politics from 1919 to 1939 and presented a powerful critique of the idealist thinking in international relations in his book "*The Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919–1939: An Introduction to the Study of International Relations*", published in 1945. He argued how the urge to acquire power among states results in wars of aggression and power factor might not be ignored in international politics. He considered that in the absence of higher authority, there is no natural harmony of interests, only national interests that repeatedly clash [26]. His text is considered a classic in international relations theory and his

realism has often been characterized as *classical realism*. He argues that international politics is defined by power politics and not by idealism or utopian thinking. He criticized the interwar period of idealism where a peaceful international order was established by Woodrow Wilson's fourteen points' resolutions which were supposed to be free of politics of 'balance of power' but the international situation escalated into the outbreak of World War II. K. W. Thomson [27] writes that E. H. Carr laid 'the foundations for political realism'.

## 8. German Tradition of Realism

A German (Prussian) general and military thinker Carl von Clausewitz contributed to realism with his military strategy in his creation "*On War*", published in 1832. He states that "War is thus an act of force to compel our enemy to do our will...Force is thus the means of war; to impose our will on the enemy is the object" [28]. Here it can be observed that for Clausewitz, the *use of force*, is the ultimate source to defeat the enemy; he further stated that force is conceived as "physical force, for moral force has no existence save as expressed in the state and the law-is thus the means of war; to impose our will on the enemy is its object" [28]. Here he emphasized that *maximizing the military power* or force is considered a strategy to defeat the enemy and make them weaker. The power politics in the international system can be understood by his definition of war as he addressed "War is merely the continuation of policy by other means...The political object is the goal, war is the means of reaching it, and means can never be considered in isolation from their purpose" [28]. He admitted that the state should perform two things to balance the power of the enemy: (1) disarm the enemy and (2) maximum exertion of strength [28].

Bismarck and von Moltke followed these writings of *On War* created by Carl von Clausewitz. They applied Clausewitz's theory in the Wars of German Unification (1864 to 1871). Clausewitz had also a great impact on Adolph Hitler in the 20th century and it can be observed in Nazi strategy [29].

## 9. American Tradition of Realism

German-born American political scientist and historian Hans Joachim Morgenthau is the leading post-war scholar who tried to provide a shape to realism in international relations through his classical text "*Politics among the Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*", published in 1948. He commonly has known for the classical realist approach to international politics. For him, politics is governed by distinct immutable laws of nature, and states could deduce rational and objectively correct actions from an understanding of these laws. He developed a pervasive international theory that like society in general, politics is governed by laws which rooted in human nature [30]. The nodal point of Morgenthau's theory was the concept of power as the dominant goal in international politics and it

defines the national interest in terms of power. His state-centered approach rejects the moral ground of state aspirations with the objective moral laws which employ to govern the universe and maintained that all state actions seek to keep, demonstrate and increase power. Morgenthau interpolated an approach that emphasized *power over morality*. According to him morality, in a sense, should be avoided in policy making. The idea is that idealism or morality-based policy might lead to the destruction or supremacy of a state by a competitor, or ultimately lead to incapability or weakness. In this sense pursuing the national interest is *'amoral'*. Thus, Edward Hallett Carr and Morgenthau claimed that there was no natural harmony of interests among states and it was foolish and even dangerous to hope that *the struggle for power among states* could be tamed by international law, democratization, and international commerce. Both writers examined why the *League of Nations* failed to stop the outbreak of World War II and why Adolf Hitler nearly succeeded in conquering Europe. P. K. Gautam emphasized that Morgenthau used the same method in his text for adjusting the balance of power just like Kautilya, for instance, he adopted the four methods as (a) Divide and Rule; (b) Compensation; (c) Armaments; and (d) Alliances. These four methods are very similar to Kautilya's concepts of *bheda* (divide and rule), *dama* (compensation), *danda* (armaments); and *sama* (alliances) [31].

John H. Herz was an American thinker of international relations. He coined the concept of the security dilemma in his book *"Political Realism and Political Idealism"* (published in 1951). A *security dilemma* is a situation where an action by a state to increase its security causes action from other states, which leads to a reduction rather than an increase in the state's security [32]. He argued that with investigating the history-an anarchic society has existed on some level, this *homo hominilupus* (a Latin proverb meaning "A man is a wolf to another man") situation does not allow social cooperation and there has arisen what may be called the "security dilemma" of men, or states, or their leaders. States or individuals living on such a planet must be, and usually are, concerned about their security from being attacked, dominated, subjected, or annihilated by other states and individuals. Trying to attain security from such attacks and domination, they are driven to acquire more and more power to escape the impact of the power of other states. This, in turn, makes the others more insecure and compels them to prepare for the worst. Since no state can ever feel entirely secure in such a competitive world as competing units, power competition occurs, and the vicious circle of security and power accumulation is on [33]. A similar security dilemma existed between the United States of America and the USSR in the post-1950s Cold War.

Thus, neo-realism's roots are also seen in insecurity and Rousseau's theory. Geneva-born Jean Jacques Rousseau established another approach in his book *"The State of War"* (1750), that there is an anarchical system that fosters fear, jealousy, suspicion, and insecurity in men however it is not

rooted in human nature to regulate power because men are neither good nor bad, however, as men come together, there occurs a clash between individual interests and the common good. It means a structure is responsible for the same or international anarchic system that compels the state to struggle for power. By inspiring Rousseau's concept Kenneth Waltz, an American political scientist invented a new paradigm in realism, called *'neo-realism'* or *'structural realism'*. In his book *Theory of International Politics*, published in 1979, he believes that a state's decisions and actions are not based on human nature but rather based on the 'structure' of the international system. In his sense, all states are constrained by existing in the *anarchic system* or a structure and every action of the states whatever they pursue is based on the irrelative power when measured against other states.

Waltz stated that under anarchy, states cannot trust one another (security dilemma), and this produces a *'self-help system'*. According to Waltz, international politics should be best understood by analyzing the structure of the international system as reflected in alliances and other cooperative arrangements between states. Like Rousseau, Waltz believes that human beings are capable of being good and bad in different situations, and both war and peace are the outcomes of human nature. So, every action of the state is understood by the *'levels of analysis'* or at the unit, group, and universal level. For example, he believes, that no higher authority over the units or states and all states (at the group level) perform the same function resulting in self-help due to *insecurity* from others and due to this structural situation or defensive mode changes in the *distribution of capabilities (power)* across states lead to different kinds of the international system (it may be multi-polar or bipolar). He considered a bipolar system is more stable rather than a *unipolar* system which prevailed in international politics after the decline of the USSR to be a more unstable or dangerous configuration because it left one superpower which is free to engage in foreign adventures and it also leads to destroying the balance of power mechanism [34]. Some more scholars are in support of the neo-realist approach to IR or a systematic approach to international relations such as Stephen Walt, Robert Gilpin, Randall Schweller, John Mearsheimer, Robert Jervis, Joseph Grieco, and Robert J. Art.

Stephen Walt developed a *'Balance of Threat'* theory on account of 'defensive realism' in IR. As he believes that it is the threat that determines the state behavior rather than the distribution of power, but he did not properly reject the distribution of power. According to Walt, the friendship behavior of states is determined by the threat that by the other states. The state seeks a balance of power only when there is a threat before them, with increasing fear, weak states become bandwagon and add themselves as an alliance. They do this for their *safety* and *security*. For example, European states did this activity before the First and Second World Wars when most of the European states formed alliances befriending each other because of the threat of Germany. He further believes

that certain criteria may be considered by the state to create a threat to other states. Thus, Walt just includes another perception variable in the theory of IR that states can be threatening to depend upon power mobilization (e.g. state size, population, and economic potentiality), geographic proximity, and offensive intentions. Walt claims that due to the increasing qualities of a state, it becomes a threat to other states and other states balance it. He published this theory in his first article titled “*Alliance formation and the Balance of World Power*” published in the journal, “*International Security*” in 1985, and further this theory was produced in detail in his book “*The Origin of Alliances*” published in 1987” [35].

New York-born American scholar of international relations John Joseph Mearsheimer contributed a new perspective to the neo-realism, called ‘*offensive realism*’ in his book “*The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*”, published in 2001 and he is highly critical of the Iraq war (2003 to 2011). On the one hand, Kenneth Waltz saw the cause of war in the structure of international relations. He created his theory about the absence of a higher authority above states that creates an anarchical condition that compels the states to make alliances in order to contain the threats posed by a rival power. Therefore, the international order is determined by the balance of power between the states, and the requirement of security leads states to support the *status quo* and to adopt a defensive position toward their competitors.

On the other hand, Mearsheimer believes that the need for security, and ultimately for survival, make states aggressive power maximizers. *States are power maximizers* because, in an atmosphere of mutual suspicion and distrust, it is difficult to know how much power is enough for survival (sufficient security). Therefore, they seek to diminish their competitors’ power and enhance their own power constantly and do not cooperate, except during temporary alliances. Thus, states are never satisfied; they always keep reaching for more power, and this power urges seem bound to collide [36].

Randall L. Schweller is best known for his ‘*Balance of interest*’ theory. Schweller argues in his article “*Tripolarity and the Second World War*”, published in *International Studies Quarterly* (March 1993) and “*Deadly Imbalances: Tripolarity and Hitler’s Strategy of World Conquest*” (published in 1998) that a full theory of IR regarding the foreign policy should include the nature of states’ goals or interests. He believes that due to these interests they are supporters of the status-quo or revisionism and they are satisfied or dissatisfied with the existing distribution of international diminish, ‘the reputation, resources, and principles of the system’. He provided another perspective of “underbalancing” in international relations. According to him, underbalancing happens when states fail to recognize risky threats and have a choice not to react to them or respond in “paltry and imprudent manners.” States whose elites are constrained by their domestic politics are more likely to be underbalanced as fragmented and incoherent. Schweller evaluates the implications of the underbalancing behavior of states for structural realist theory—specifically, its focal

prediction that states as coherent actors will balance when encountered with dangerous threats, forming alliances or expanding their military powers, and, in some cases, a combination of both. Thus, Randall Schweller comes under the class of “*Neo-classical realism*”. Gideon Rose coined him as a neoclassical realist because he behaves like an archetype of Thucydides [37].

Fareed Zakaria, an Indo-American realist, attempted in his book “*From Wealth to Power*” (published in 1998) to contribute to contemporary realist theory, as a defender of aggressive realism or *offensive realism*. He presents a detailed critique of *defensive realism* and focuses on a modified version of offensive realism. He rejects state-centric realism which is often called *classical realism* and he admitted that states respond to systemic incentives, state expansion is often a rational response to international incentives, and the position of a state in the international system (i.e., its relative capabilities) determines a state’s behavior. He argues that states will expand “in a rational way, measuring risks, opportunities, costs, and benefits” [38] and contending that state strength vis-à-vis society determines how much *national power* can be used for foreign policy purposes. He also argues that some factors must be taken into account in assessing the impact of changes in national power such as scope, autonomy, cohesion, and extractive capabilities of the state as state power [38]. He examined the United States’ magnitude of expansion that was slow to expand in the 19th century because it had a weak state due to an absence of consensus among decision-makers in comparison to the 20th century.

To certify realistic thought, in the earlier stage of globalization, Samuel P. Huntington, an American political scientist, constructed a theory of “*Cultural Realism*” in his influential article “*The Clash of Civilizations?*” (Published in *Foreign Affairs* in 1993), and provides a theoretical framework for post-Cold War conflict. The article informs the end of the era of ideological conflict, proposing that future conflict will be the product of cultural rivalry. Huntington’s article identifies seven to eight cultural amalgams, which he labels “*civilizations*” such as Confucian, Islamic, Latin American, Japanese, Hindu, Slavic-Orthodox, and possibly an African civilization [39]. These civilizations, he holds, will vie for dominance of global politics because they differ from each other on conceptions of the fundamental meaning of being human. Huntington’s argument is grounded in *realist theories* of *rivalry* between *powers* under conditions of *anarchy*, but in his thesis, the constituent states of civilization are inclined to act collectively in the interest of their own civilization. Huntington paints these civilizations as monolithic competitors for global power because of their heterogeneous natural cultures. Huntington’s model incites that cultural difference is more intrinsic to human beings than political association [39]. Furthermore, he focuses on the cultural identity that is more fundamental to human beings than race and ideology. Therefore, conflict is more likely between civilizations than within them. Recent clashes between

religious groups during the post-cold war and post—9/11 era highlights Huntington's ability to claim that civilization, not the nation-state, will probably become the fundamental source of *global conflict*.

More recently a new realism has emerged which can be called “*ethical and moral realism*”. Ethical realists believe that ‘We shouldn’t punish innocents.’ Ethical realists state that such moral claims are objectively true: their truthfulness does not depend on one’s particular opinions, beliefs, preferences, or characteristics. They reject *relativism*, according to which there are only non-objective ethical facts, and they reject *nihilism*, according to which there are no ethical facts and perhaps there is no moral claim of any kind. John Hulsman and Anatol Lieven are the only realists who have written a book named “*Ethical Realism: A Vision for America’s Role in the World*” (published in 2006). Halsman and Lieven are an unlikely pair. Halsman is a conservative, but Lieven is a liberal. But they find common ground in a world view that was most effective in the 1950s when Presidents Harry Truman and Dwight Eisenhower successfully controlled Soviet expansion into Western Europe. Halsman and Lieven believe that a combination of strict resistance (as America used for Soviet expansionism), and “a clear rejection of preventive warfare” is needed today. Likewise, a rigid strategy should be against al-Qaeda, but with great restraint in the direct use of American force. They argue that the containment strategy worked against the Soviet Union because it was based on the idea of patience or on a time-taken strategy. This is the kind of patience America needs to show today, which the United States of America should have shown to Saddam’s Iraq and what America should show to Iran today, for instance, because the choices are too dangerous right now. America’s exit strategy for Iraq should be based on the division of Iraq among various ethnic and religious groups. Iraq’s neighbors—Iran, Syria, Turkey, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia—should be called in to help patrol the frontier between the divided regions. This could lead to a regional consensus that would limit future conflicts in Iraq and this will create the possibility of ending regional conflicts, including the Israeli-Palestinian problem [40].

In other words, ethical realism seeks to mix moralistic views with a strong pragmatic approach to governing a foreign policy. There are five virtues in this theory: prudence, humility, study, responsibility, and patriotism. Through the utilization of these virtues a sound foreign policy may be designed by seeking to identify crucial American interests, which should be striven towards with all purposes, while simultaneously acknowledging that the United States has a moral obligation to behave responsibly towards other states or nations which also have crucial interests, where these crucial interests of other states or nations do not clash with America’s crucial interests, the United States should accommodate these states or nations whenever possible. Besides these crucial interests, the United States should no longer actively promote democracy and human rights but allow or make them free to form and grow *naturally* by promoting *economic growth* instead; the idea is behind this

thesis that a strong economic middle-class will demand certain things from its government, such as peace, stability, further prosperity, freedom, and democracy [41].

## 10. Conclusion

From the overview of the realist paradigm in International Relations, it can be observed that traditional realists always favor human nature to detect the power politics in the IR discipline whereas neo-realism focus only on the global system. They believe that human nature is aggressive and selfish with no natural harmony of interests among people. Human nature is not improvable, and imperfect human beings cannot act as perfect. Individual and collective actors exist in a naturally competitive structure; this tendency is assured by the anarchic nature of international politics. Realists believe that the key actors are states in the world, policies should enhance power and wars can be managed but not eliminated and the impediment to international cooperation is impossible to overcome from the problem of trust (distrust) in a condition of anarchy. According to Realists, key characteristics of international politics are permanent and constant; evils like poverty and war cannot be terminated. Political actors serve the interests of their states by maintaining and improving their security rather than serving the interests of individuals or some vague international interests; their focus is mainly on a few states—the great powers. International institutions are suspect in terms of transparency as they may pursue interests other than those of their state or attempt to take over authority from states. Therefore, states must be independent, autonomous, and free to act (or for self-help) without limits on sovereignty. Thus, realism has a pessimistic view of the International Order and it is not new; it is a centuries-old phenomenon that has been pursued by international actors continuously to the present. In sum, directly or indirectly, realism is still a much relevant thesis and is present in current international relations debates, research, and teaching. Even today, in the IR discipline, the American tradition of realism is dominating the international arena that is bringing new variances in modern realism.

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