RECONSTRUCTION OF IDEALISM IN THEORIZING SCIENTIFICALLY THE DISCIPLINE OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS FOR PEACE AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY: IDEA-REALISM*

Abstract
This work seeks to contribute to international security and peace by referring to idea-realism which is a new and eclectic theory for the discipline of International Relations. In this study, the idea-realism approach for the discipline of International Relations has been developed by taking into account the philosophy of science. The roots of this new approach are based on hermeneutic perspective and abductive research strategy. This point of view and the used methods lead us to the United Nations General Assembly for peace and international security as long as a better institution is not established.

Keywords: Idea-realism, Hermeneutics, Abduction, International Relations Theories, United Nations General Assembly.

Öz


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Introduction

The purpose of this study is to contribute to international peace and security in the case of United Nations organisation by redefining idealism (or rather by bringing the definition of idealism in philosophy to the discipline of International Relations), which is accepted as utopianism with a misnomer in the scientifically theorization of the discipline of International Relations.

It is important to note that the aim is to contribute to the development of the discipline by showing that the idealism in the discipline of International Relations is misconstrued and accordingly the wrong conclusions are reached. It is also another important factor to reveal why the United Nations is important for the construction of the international community and to defend it, at least as long as the international community does not create an alternative one.

At the same time, the issues of what the epistemological and ontological elements of the discipline should be in order to be able to theorize International Relations in the frame of idealism will be discussed. In this context, first of all, “a brief critical view” will be given to the backbone theories in the discipline of International Relations, and after revealed what (philosophical) idealism is, it will be discussed what the contribution of idealism to the scientifically theorization of the discipline of International Relations is. The contribution of idealism will then be transformed into a concrete practice in the UN case.

Finally, the conclusion will be introduced to the literature with a new term by acting upon its own definitions of the International Relations discipline.

2 It is “a brief critical view” because this study does not aim at explaining all theories in International Relations discipline in a descriptive manner in historical ranking. In other words, this work does not intend to make an inventory of all theories in the discipline of International Relations by explaining any theory comprehensively.
A Critical Overview on the Theories of International Relations

Under this heading, the theories impressing the discipline of international relations will be outlined with a critical view of the theories in question. The epistemological and ontological features of the theories in question will reveal the basic dynamics of the critical view. In other words, the goal of criticism is the epistemology and ontology of the theories of international relations.

There are various classification studies of the theories of international relations. For example, Tayyar Ari classifies international relations theories as (1) theories explaining the conflict, (2) theories explaining cooperation, and (3) the theories that did not distinguish conflict and cooperation. Theories of conflict include realism, neo-realism, geopolitical theories, game theory, and globalism. Theories of cooperation are composed of pluralism, liberalism, transnationalism, and interdependence, international integration theories, multilateralism, and international regime theories. Theories that do not distinguish between conflict and cooperation are international system theory and decision theory. Steve Smith, on the other hand, has already divided contemporary theories into three categories in International Relations. These are 1) realism and liberalism represented by neo-realist and neo-liberal discussions called rationalistic theories 2) normative theory, feminist theory, critical theory, historical sociology and postmodernism which are described as reflective theories 3) social constructivism, which contemplates filling the gap between rationalist theories and reflective theories. However, the discussions stamping the theories of international relations will be evaluated here by acting in a historical order.

5 Examples of classification can be increased. Mustafa Aydın also sorts International Theories into three paradigms as traditional-realist, pluralist-rationalist and globalist-revolutionary. For details, see Mustafa Aydın, "Uluslararası İlişkilerde Yaklaşımlı Teori ve Analiz", Ankara Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi, Vol: 51, No: 1, 1996, p. 113.
The debate that hits its first mark on the discipline of international relations is the discussion of idealism and realism.\(^6\)

Realists see international relations as a state of anarchy in which there are plural sovereign states that do not accept any supreme authority. The relations of plural sovereign states are regulated by conflicts, and the decisive factor is power.\(^7\) In an understanding of realism, an international order or society cannot be mentioned. The reason why international relations are seen as a state of war is the thought based on negative-defined nature of man. It is clear that such an approach is not scientific\(^8\) in terms of both its preliminary data and the results it recommends.\(^9\)

According to the idealist thought created by realists in the discipline of international relations and characterized as moralism and utopian different from the history of thought, individuals are basically good and rational in nature. Wars are driven by the states due to their absolutist and authoritarian organizations. Idealism is a normative and descriptive approach that relates politics to ethics.\(^10\)

The discussion of realism-idealism summarized above in terms of exit point is mainly deterministic and reductionist. While there is a determinist view that human nature is merely good in

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7 It is clear to a reader familiar with Political Science that these thoughts are the projection of Hobbes's Leviathan's human identification to the discipline of International Relations. While “a man is a wolf to another man” -homo homini lupus- there, “a state is a wolf to another state” here. For homo homini lupus, see for details: Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, trans. Semih Lim, Yapı Kredi Yayınları, İstanbul 2004.

8 However, philosophy of science expresses realism as the explication of constructs and mechanisms that causally produce phenomena that can be observed, and definitions that make them easier to understand. In other words, it is necessary to discover the necessary connections between phenomena that are important to the realist, which is achieved by obtaining knowledge of the underlying structures and mechanisms See for details: Norman Blaikie, *Approaches to Social Enquiry*, Polity Press, Cambridge 1993.


idealism, there is a deterministic view that human nature is evil in realism. While there is a moral reductionism in idealism, there is a reductionism against the concept of power in realism, and both approaches far from grasping the behaviour of man and state. Moreover, it is difficult to understand the changes that can take place without a war in the realist approach. It can also be argued that idealism precedes realism as idealism tries to show that moral proposals trying to give the answers of “good” and “right” are not limited to national societies.¹¹

Nevertheless, idealism is not enough to explain ethnocentrism¹² or cultural intolerance, and not enough to explain cultural relativism,¹³ trying to identify and understand a culture in its own cultural structure without using value judgments, which leads to an epistemological shortage.

In the framework of the system theory¹⁴ which develops a technique to understand relations between the nations, an analytical examination of international relations is made without going outside the system. The biggest shortcoming of this view, which emphasizes that there is a balance of power among the states in the system, does not attach importance to the historical and cultural dimensions. The system approach,¹⁵ which emphasizes stability, equilibrium, fixed state and model continuity, ignores both the dialectic law and acts as if it has absolute knowledge. So, this makes the approach problematic from an ontological and epistemological point of view. Naturally, the system approach is far from revealing the internal and external factors of the international system.

¹³ “Although for every culture some moral judgments are valid, no moral judgment is universally valid. Every moral judgment is culturally relative”. See for details: “Cultural Relativism”, PhilPapers, https://philpapers.org/archive/TILCR.pdf, (Date of Accession: 19.05.2018).
¹⁵ Doughtery-Pfaltzgraff, op. cit., p. 170.
In contrast, decision-making theories are concerned with examining internal and external factors, and these theories claim that it is necessary to learn how the state decides for understanding state behaviour. According to decision theories, if the decisions taken by states are examined, international relations are understood. One of the main assumptions is that decision makers are acting in a way that provides maximum benefit. The biggest deficiency in this approach is that the decisions taken by the state will give an idea about the perceptions of the states in this system, not about the system of international relations, which leads first of all to an epistemological outcome.

In neo-realism, where realist proposals are sought for scientific exploitation, the notion of structure, which sees state behaviour as a limiting factor, is subject matter. According to the neo-realism’s ontology understanding, the structure expresses the unintended conditions of action that occur spontaneously and come up as a result of the interaction of the units. Anarchy builds deep structure while power creates visible structure. That means it is the anarchic structure that constitutes the power. However, this anarchic structure can not explain the establishment of the United Nations Organization, a product of international security search. This indicates that the neo-realist approach was not successful at the beginning, that is, in the ontological definition phase.

In rationalism, another approach in the discipline of international relations, the synthesis of realism and revolutionary thought is subject. The international community is a temporary success that has emerged in the context which the radical developments have happened. Without international order, there is no protection of human rights. In rationalism, which argues that international relations need to be explained by reason and not by power and morality, there is an abstraction from the naivety of idealism and the sterilization of realism. In rationalists who analyze

16 Doughtery-Pfaltzgraff, op. cit., p. 468-476.
the element of society in which realists show little interest,\textsuperscript{19} justice is a controversial concept, which is a natural consequence of the revolutionary direction of rationalization. Justice is a controversial concept on the basis of rationalists claiming that the international community is made up of radical changes, and this understanding leads to a mentality which tries to settle the rhetoric of the strong on the hard pan. This conclusion addresses the pragmatism far beyond Kant’s understanding of reason and fails to give a steady idea about the ontology of the international system.

Since all people in the world will be able to understand each other through open dialogue, a critical theory that supports the project of enlightenment and defends universality is an understanding of trying to bring out the opposed hegemonic existence in all social and political constructions. The critical theory, thinking that work should be initiated by changing the state mentality as a moral community, argues that past assumptions about the rights and duties of limited communities should be changed. The biggest missing in the critical theory, which rejects system determination and thinks that man can get rid of structural constraints by acting collectively in a free way,\textsuperscript{20} is the thought that the human being is not defined by values, but by the knowledge, defined as reason based on outcome, which refers only to the needs and purposes of human beings. This causes both ontological and epistemological outbreaks because such an understanding can not explain the German Nazism, Italian Fascism and international terrorism.

Like critical theory, historical sociology, which does not admit the state as a given form in the world politics, rather, which claims that societies develop throughout the history, has shown that the state is not a functionally similar organization to society, on the contrary, it has changed over time. Historical sociology takes into account class-interest groups, the international state system, the capitalist world economy and international structures in addition


to the mixture of state and society as well as state and international society. In the historical sociology, which acknowledges that these elements limit the state on the one hand and provide the state with possibilities on the other, the institutional and normative international framework is interlinked with state and society complex.\cite{21} It can be said that the basic critique of historical sociology, which has contributed ontologically to the discipline of international relations, can be made epistemologically, for in historical sociology, history is gaining importance of reading from the outside. However, all the actors (individual, community, society, state, etc.) subject to the discipline of international relations read the events in their contexts from the inside. Historical sociology can not, for example, explain why modernity is expressed as interim by terrorist groups in the Middle East.

The liberal theories that gained momentum in the discipline of post-Cold War international relations have a view of looking international relations from inside. Liberal theories paying a complement to democratic societies, freedoms and liberal markets claim peaceful world that globalisation weakens nation states.\cite{22} The greatest weakness in liberal theory is that what it understands from the inside is to try to interpret the world with Western values and thought systems. However, liberal theories ignore that every actor who is subject to the international system interprets the facts, the developments and even the values from its own inside. So, this shortcoming causes the liberal theories to fall into ontological and accordingly epistemological error.

Identity, norms and ideas are placed on the basis of the international system in the constructivist understanding that sees the socialization process of the state as a concept of behaviour that emerges with the interest articulated to the identity. This understanding argues that war is not an absolute situation in international relations as neo-realists presuppose or cooperation

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is not an absolute situation as liberals presuppose. Despite the fact that there is a rich direction in this understanding, the most sensitive point stems from the fact that the identities are taken as the value given for the next generations. Taking identities as data for later generations causes the previous mind, which defines these identities, to fall into an ontological error, as if the worldview were absolute and unchangeable. Consequently, this understanding comes to the conclusion that knowledge, in terms of epistemology, is not the reflection of the objective truth in the human brain but a product of the universal intelligence of the previous generation. Such a result, for example, is distant from the Green movement in the world to understand. On the other hand, the fact that constructivists do emphasize the social determinants of social and political structure and action can be interpreted as one of the greatest contributions of constructivists to the discipline of international relations in terms of ontology. Another contribution is that, contrary to what the liberals understand, it is not a western-loaded meaning to read from the inside, but rather an emphasis on the meaning in accordance with context.

In post-modernism, which provides another contribution to the discipline of international relations, power produces knowledge, and all knowledge rests on existing power relations. Apart from the existing power, there is no such thing as reality. Expressions about the social world are only real within the specific discourse. It states that the world can not be grasped as easily as a text but must be interpreted. Derrida looks at how texts are created and offers two tools to show how arbitrary the apparent natural contrasts of the language are. These are 1) analysis based on oppositions and artificially created by a hierarchy (e.g., good-bad, strong-weak, true-false, etc.) and 2) double reading. The first reading is a repetition to see how dominant reading reaches to harmony while the second reading is internal tension in the text.

However, postmodernists who think that the interpretations of those living in the social world make up the truth do not have anxiety about searching the objective reality and feeling to make a life meaningful; but on the contrary, there is a side that leaves the human in the void. It also ignores the material practices that are constructed and reasoned on this discourse, assuming that the expressions about the social world are only real within the obvious discourses. Nevertheless, post-modernism, which has a different ontological definition that is free of objective reality, offers a viewpoint that can be improved, such as constructivism. The reason for this is the wide range of identity definitions that postmodernism offers.

Upon Idealism

Under this heading, idealism will be defined (in which it is also useful to keep in mind philosophical idealism to distinguish idealism from the false definition of idealism in the discipline of International Relations). In the next heading, ideas about how the discipline of International Relations can be theorized in accordance with the idealist thought will put into words.

Idealism, Idéalisme in French, Idealismus in German, and Idealismo in Italian, is the general name of the doctrines that reduce the existence to the idea. Idealism is a current of thought that is dependent on spirituality in metaphysical space and is divided into two main ideas: subjective idealism and objective idealism. According to subjective idealism, being is the product of human thought or the thought of human itself. According to objective idealism, being, regardless of human thought, is the product of a universal thought or the thought itself, which leads us to God and his wilful will. As a result, being in idealism is the product of thinking.

Idealism, also called thought, has various teachings apart from subjective idealism and objective idealism. These are idea, absolute idealism, transcendental idealism, immaterialism, German immaterialism, voluntaristic idealism, spiritual pantheism, theologian idealism, phenomenological idealism,

logical idealism, positivism, synthetic idealism, relativistic idealism, critical idealism, intuitionism (Bergsonism), spiritual existentialism, godless existentialism, Christian existentialism, Machism, pragmatism, utilitarianism, historian idealism, voluntaristic personality, new American idealism, new German idealism, new Italian idealism, new Spanish idealism, Russian idealism, Swedish idealism, Argentine idealism, Norwegian idealism, Danish idealism. However, in order to give an idea here, Plato’s idealism, Kant’s experimental idealism, Hegel’s absolute idealism, and Fichte’s subjective idealism will be touched.

The term of idealism is derived from the Greek word “idea”, which means the sensory image that spontaneously revolves around the head without interference of the nerves, and in this sense the founder of idealism is the ancient Greek thinker Platon. According to Plato, being is an idea and objective reality is a view. For Platon, the perceived beings are actually shadows and copies. These copies have origins or examples. While copies are blurred, ambiguous and transient, the main examples do not change, they are immortal. According to Plato, underneath what appears in the world, there are immortal origins which are their source. Precise and sturdy knowledge can be obtained by looking at this idea. The source of all beings and knowledge is “idea of good”. Everything that is good and beautiful is this idea. “Idea of good” resembles the sun. As everything in the world of the senses is seen by the sun, in the world of mind, that is, in the world of understanding and comprehension, knowledge is acquired by the “idea of good”. “Idea of good” has also put a number of duties and powers on the state, which has an idea. It is imperative that justice or truth is maintained in order for the state to continue to exist. In the eyes of Plato, human beings can establish a just, right, virtuous and happy society, a state and a management style by their intelligent and reasonable actions. As a matter of fact, the mind not only clarifies what exists, but also explains the need to exist based on what exists.

28 Hançerlioğlu, op. cit., p. 74-75.
29 Ibid.
The starting point of German idealism, which covered the first half of the 19th century, is Kant’s philosophy.\(^{31}\) In Kant’s philosophy, there is a stance on the mind as opposed to the substance, and this counter stance took Kant to the conclusion that only the mind exists at the end.\(^{32}\)

For Kant, idealism is an assertion that there is no other being than a thinking being. They are only designs that are in thinking beings and that do not correspond to any object that is actually outside of them.\(^{33}\) Kant, on the other hand, acknowledges that there are substances via perceived by our senses. But Kant thinks that we can never know through our senses how objects are on their own,\(^{34}\) and so he produces his own method, that is, the concept of “transcendental”.

The transcendental method is the criticization of knowledge, the teaching of knowledge.\(^{35}\) Transcendental is the preliminary data necessary to obtain knowledge, and they are themselves such categories as time and space. Without this preliminary data, experiments can not be conducted, and knowledge can not be obtained.\(^{36}\)

However, it should be noted that the transcendental-transcendent concepts are those that Kant also feels need to distinguish. The concept of transcendent in Scholastic meaning is a domain of transcendent beyond pre-experiment and post-experiment domains. The transcendent surpasses consciousness and knowledge; they are outside or above them.\(^{37}\) With Kant’s expression\(^{38}\), transcendent is the thing that pulls outs all possible experiment.


\(^{34}\) Kant, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

\(^{35}\) Göker, *op. cit.*, p. 396.

\(^{36}\) Hançerlioğlu, *op. cit.*, p. 58.


\(^{38}\) Kant, *op. cit.*, p. 81.
The principle that determines and governs Kant’s idealism from beginning to end is the principle of correct in the experiment.\textsuperscript{39} According to Kant, the experimental knowledge is the only certain one that is valid all the time and everywhere.\textsuperscript{40}

Hegel (1770-1831), in a separate way, is renewing Plato’s idealism. Matter is the product of spirit and universal thought precedes all things. According to Hegel, the world stands on the head and the essence of existence is contradictory. Being happens as a result of the contradiction between the existence itself and the absence which is the opposite of the existence.\textsuperscript{41} According to Hegel, scientific knowledge gives itself to life and dialectical movement of the truth without any ill will. So, there is no relation between this true knowledge as a real and the so-called science that is not known where it is but is located in a place out of the real and carries deep thoughts on the truth. According to Hegel, scientific knowledge is a “knowledge of itself”, which eventually comes to itself, and explains and describes itself.\textsuperscript{42} Scientific knowledge is the consciousness of thought.\textsuperscript{43}

For Hegel, evolution is the result of a clash, and the result can be clearly seen in the whole universe. Useful laws and organizations for a time turn into opposition after a time when they are confronted with the new interests of the society. Synthesis is a negation of negation. Again, according to Hegel, the source of the history, social life, moral and political life is the idea that shows itself in the thoughts of human.\textsuperscript{44}

Since the state, which is the most competent entity in the concept of Hegelian thought, is universal spirit, individual has objectivity, truth and morality when the individual is only a

\textsuperscript{39} Kant, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 130.
\textsuperscript{40} Hançerlioğlu, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 59.
\textsuperscript{41} Hançerlioğlu, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 123-124.
\textsuperscript{44} Hançerlioğlu, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 125.
Individuality can only be achieved precisely in the universal and homogeneous State. The State ends the History; because the person who has attained fulfilment in this State will no longer attempt to negate it and thereby will no longer create something new instead. According to Hegel, the will of the individual is now in complete harmony with the general will in the State and the State is directly the reality of the general will. The State is not a sum of individual wills, but a clever, vigorous whole. In other words, the blending of private and general will is not the same degree. The consciousness to feel general will and the level to represent it change according to the position in the State. It is the world history that determines the rights and fates of nations and states. History is a continuous progress towards the consciousness of freedom. How nations and states acquire their meanings within the context of history, then single individual acquires his/her meaning and determination within the state as well.

According to Fichte, freedom to human is provided by the philosophy that makes consciousness the exit point. Philosophy can only be entered in two ways. First, it is moved from the object that is, the being. The question to be answered in such a case is how it happens that it emerges subject besides the object, something like consciousness in the being. This is an insoluble question. We can never comprehend how the consciousness comes out from the material. The entrance to philosophy can then take place on the second path. In other words, it is entered into the philosophy by moving from the subject. So, it can be solved how the subjects design the world of objects. The first way takes away free person because it makes object the exit point. But the second way liberates man. According to Fichte, the main characteristic of consciousness is action; because consciousness is something active. It is an activity for the consciousness to think itself. What is very close to the core

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45 Russell, op. cit., p. 335.
47 Gökberk, op. cit., p. 441-442.
48 Ibid.
49 In fact, this grip is compatible with Fichte’s knowledge science. “... the science of knowledge is not conditioned and determined by logic, but logic is conditioned and determined by the science of knowledge...” For details see: Johann Gottlieb Fichte, The Science of Knowledge, trans. A. E. Kroeger, Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott & co., 1868, p. 46.
of the active consciousness is freedom. Human is in this world for not only knowing that his/her substance is freedom, but also working and realizing his/her substance which is independent. The law comes from mutual recognition of this freedom. Everyone should know how to limit his/her own freedom by his/her own decision. Thus, those who respect the freedom of others know that they are free. One can also expect respect for his/her own freedom from those whom he/she defines as free. So, a free person can only be considered in the frame of society. It is the state that forces the people to respect the freedom of man in society. The state has been created with the desire to connect everyone with the same law. The bond here is a free bond made by will. The citizen himself/herself must be asking the compulsory law of the state. The guardian of this law must be the citizen himself/herself. The ideal form of this is democracy. Access to the ideal form in the state is to reach the situation where the coercion is no longer necessary. So, the contradiction of freedom and coercion will also clear away. The way to do this is to educate citizens to obey the rules, not to force them but to observe morally.\(^{50}\)

The result of what has been said so far, especially in the context of science philosophy, is that the consciousness has imagination power on the being. But, especially in the context of ideology, absolute idealism and subjective idealism, the first question that comes to mind here is how to establish the consensus of these thoughts if there is as much thought as the human brain. In other words, what will be the idealistic contribution in bringing the opinion of the states together in a common pavilion if the states, which are the fiction of human, are particularized?\(^{51}\) To answer in advance, this is hermeneutic viewpoint that offers a common

\(^{50}\) Gökberk, *op. cit.*, p. 417-427.

\(^{51}\) An implicit conclusion emerging from what is told under the heading “Upon idealism” is that idealism is not an alternative to other theories such as realism and/or rationalism, as understood in the theories of International Relations; on the contrary, it is a source that nourishes these concepts, too. However, other approaches such as idealism in the discipline of International Relations have also been described by being exposed to loss of meaning and this is called science, as well. The objection to the claim that rationalist theories including realism and liberalism are scientific has been one of the main objectives of this work. Moreover, even reflective theories and social constructivism in the discipline of International Relations can not be defined without referring (philosophical) idealism in very deed.
context to idealism, or that idealism mutually offers a common context. And to answer in advance again, the strategy that seems most appropriate for such a viewpoint is the abductive research strategy. Under the next heading, the theorisation of the discipline of International Relations will be attempted in the basis of hermeneutics and abductive research strategy by applying to the philosophy of science. Such an effort also requires epistemology and ontology debates to bring on the agenda. Finally, to quote here from Steve Smith appears that it is enough to express the expectation needed from International Relations discipline to summarize:

“What kind of international relations theory do I want to see in this new millennium? Above all, I want to see a discipline that is open to a variety of issues, subjectivities and identities rather than taking the agenda of the powerful as the natural and legitimate focus for the discipline. I want to see a discipline that enquires into the meanings and subjectivities of individuals in cultures different to those of the dominant world powers rather than assuming their rationality, interests and thus identities. I want to see a discipline that admits of many routes to understanding, rather than treating one model of social science as if it was the sole bearer of legitimacy and thus beyond criticism. I want to see a discipline that realises the limitations on correspondence theories of truth, and instead treats truth not as a property of the world waiting to be discovered, but as a matter for negotiation and interpretation. Finally, I want to see a discipline that does not hide behind the mask of value-neutrality and empiricism. These positions serve specific social interests and are thus ineluctably political and partial. It is only through realising the nature of the human condition, of realising the problems of interpreting and representing social behaviour, that we can construct an international relations theory which exhibits both the ethic of responsibility and the humility of being in Velazquez’s gaze, and in turn gazing back at him. We sing our worlds into existence, yet rarely reflect
on who wrote the words and the music, and virtually never listening out for, nor recognising, voices or worlds other than our own until they occasionally force us into silence."\(^5\)

**Upon the Philosophy of Science in the Discipline of International Relations**

Two of the most basic concepts in the philosophy of science are the concepts of ontology and epistemology.\(^3\)

Ontology—deriving from Greek, with “onto” meaning “being”, and “logos” usually interpreted as “science”; so that ontology, as traditionally understood, is the science or study of being—\(^4\)—is an idealist science that examines the structure of matter without substance—non-material structure of existence—which is not perceived by senses. The concept of ontology, developed as a branch of metaphysics, examines the basic structure, types, and forms of an extrasensory and immaterial entity design.\(^5\)

The concept of ontology, which means examining what exists as existing, begins with the ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle. Today it is asked to give it an objective basis and it has been founded with universal concepts by idealists. Nicolai Hartmann, for example, lists the identities of the being as follows: Obligation (not to be able to be otherwise), reality (to be so and not to be otherwise), possibility (to be able to be so or not to be so), coincidence (to be able to be otherwise), and impossibility (not to be so).\(^6\)

Ontology refers to claims and assumptions concerning a specific approach the social research has made about the nature of social reality. It is interested in what is in existence, what it looks like, what units it consists of, and how these units interact with each

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\(^3\) Blaikie, op. cit., p. 6.


\(^5\) Hançerlioğlu, op. cit., p. 336.

\(^6\) Ibid.
other.\textsuperscript{57} As opposed to the experimental sciences, which work to discover and model reality under a particular perspective, ontology focuses on the nature and structure of things per se, independently of any further considerations, and even independently of their actual existence.\textsuperscript{58}

Epistemology, derived from the Greek words epistéme and logos the former term meaning “knowledge” and that latter term meaning “study of”, means the nature, source and limitations of knowledge.\textsuperscript{59}

Epistemology, which is called the theory of knowledge, is a science that examines the relationship between knowing and known. Knowledge is the relation between knowing (subject-human) and known (object). Every science examines the objects of its own occupation, but it does not investigate per se what any scientific knowledge is. It is the theory of knowledge that investigates what knowledge is and tries to reveal the characteristics of knowing and known, the characters of being, and the ties between them. Contemporary knowledge theory is a reflection theory. According to contemporary knowledge theory, knowledge is the reflection of objective truth in the human brain. Human knowledge not only reflects the objective reality, it also creates the objective reality at the same time and continuously. The information that starts with the intuition brought by our senses carries out our abstract thought, and our abstract thought is tried and verified by practice.\textsuperscript{60}

Knowledge theory, epistemology, refers to the assumptions about how to know what exists. It is interested in what can be known, what can be called knowledge, but not belief, and which criteria will confirm such knowledge.\textsuperscript{61} In that sense, the theory of knowledge is a product of doubt.\textsuperscript{62}

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\textsuperscript{57} Blaikie, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 6.
\textsuperscript{60} Hançerlioğlu, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 3.
\textsuperscript{61} Blaikie, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 7.
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The other two concepts that need to be taken into consideration besides the concepts of ontology and epistemology are the concepts of method and methodology. It is actually useful to make a difference between these concepts that can be used in place of each other in the literature.

The research method is techniques and procedures such as questionnaires, interviews and observations used to collect and analyse data related to the research problem or hypothesis. Methodology, on the other hand, is an analysis of how to continue research. It covers discussions on how theories are produced and tested. It deals with what kind of logic can be used, which criteria need to be met, and how the theories can be related to the problem of research. While the objective of method is to find solution to given problem, the objective of methodology is to apply correct procedures systematically in order to determine solutions.

Another important point, except from ontology, epistemology, method and methodology, but also closely related to these concepts, is what the research strategies are. Strategies covering both the logic of theory construction and the research process are classified as induction, deduction, retroduction, and abduction. Induction is concerned with positivism, while deduction is concerned with critical rationalism. While retroduction is associated with realism, abduction deals with interpretivism and hermeneutics.

It will not be wrong to say that the most appropriate point of view (scientific approach), for the discipline of International Relations, can be interpretivism and
hermeneutics, and the research strategy can be the method of abduction when taken into account the development of the discipline in addition to crises that it has encountered.

There is no neutral interpretation of a text or social condition in hermeneutics. It is not possible for an investigator to be out of history and abstract from culture. Otherwise, this is similar to Bauman’s example of mounting the alarm to the door when the burglar is in the house. Likewise, interpretivism sees ontologically social reality as the production of processes, through which social actors debate the meaning of actions and conditions together. The reasons leading to an unlimited number of interpretations are everything hidden in culture and history. Interpretivists search for meanings and motives behind people’s actions such as behaviour and interactions with others in the society and culture. By studying people’s ideas, thinking, and the meanings which are important to them, Cultures can be grasped. And the meanings shared by the participants in any social condition may be accepted as being objective since these meanings constitute their reality.

The production and reproduction of the social reality in interpretivism, which is related to the structuration theory in terms of ontological assumptions, take place in social conditions in which social actors are partly or fully aware of them, or in the

69 Blaikie, op. cit., p. 33.
71 Blaikie, op. cit., p. 96-212. For example, a student who learns that he or she lies when not looking at the eyes of a teacher, may well lie at a later age by looking into the teacher’s eyes and control his or her nervous system in this way. In this case, what is shared by a social group or society or state and is accepted as the real at least could be even changed by the learning process. In the end, the truth has a new definition and substance. Chair is a chair as it is a chair, is it? Or it is a chair because there is a consensus that it is a chair... It is clear that compromise makes the chair objective.
72 Developed by British sociologist Anthony Giddens, structuration theory briefly means that social structure is regulated by agents in their everyday actions and is thus produced and reproduced by this action. At the same time, action is both constrained and enabled through structure. Therefore, action is merely possible then because of structure, and structure itself can just be constituted via action. For details, see: “Structuration Theory and Actor-Network Theory as Conceptual Frameworks for Analysis”, University of Pretoria, https://repository.up.ac.za/bitstream/handle/2263/24116/02chapter4-5.pdf?sequence=3, (Date of Accession: 09.12.2017).
constraints of the social structure (material practice) which is a product of these processes as in the structuration theories. The structure of International Relations is the structure of social relations that individuals, groups, communities, societies, states and supranational organizations form in a horizontal and vertical manner with each other in this structure, which indicates sociology of International Relations.

However, how the state, which is a particularly basic element in international relations, is perceived and defined is an ontological issue rather than an epistemological problem.

In order to understand how the state is perceived - for the ontological issue mentioned, the hermeneutic tradition and accordingly the abductive research strategy can be a solution.

The concept of abduction was originally introduced by Aristotle, but it is the American philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914) who developed it into an explicit theory of inference. Abduction is to infer a case from a rule and a result.

The abductive research strategy based on the hermeneutic tradition and used by interpretivism is a process produced by the social sciences to explain the social life built on the concepts and meanings used by the social actors and the actions they engage with. Here, with various strategies, Schütz’s first-order construction and second-order construction strategy can be pronounced. According to Schütz, the first-order construction is the social reality of the social actors, while the second-order construction is the social scientist himself/herself. Therefore, the aim in this strategy is to form an understanding through the second-order descriptions of the first-order constructions. In other words, “the researcher’s second-order constructs are based on the constructions of the actors in the field. In this way, the researcher connects the ‘common sense world’ with the scientific world of theories”.

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73 This also refers to the duality of structure. The structure, which is a product of social relations, is also a condition that encompasses and has limitations on them in terms of subsequent social relations. For details, please see: Blaikie, op. cit., p. 203.


75 Blaikie, op. cit., p. 176-194.

In Context Theory\textsuperscript{77}, another form of the Abduction strategy, conceptual categories and features of these categories are produced from data collected in a social context. Compliance is discovered in another context. Over time, a generalization level can be reached from these concepts or categories.\textsuperscript{78}

\textit{So, it could be said that scientifically theorization of the discipline of International Relations, in the ongoing data collection process, will be tested with the success which the trial hypotheses obtain as being dependent on the result of trial and error in the history.}

Well, but where is the place of hermeneutics to materialize? Where is it that the states will understand each other’s context and produce solutions accordingly? In other words, in what context do the states have the ability to develop the most appropriate solution to the problems they face in international arena?\textsuperscript{79}

**Idealism and the United Nations**

In the discipline of International Relations, NATO is perceived as a product of realist thinking\textsuperscript{80} while the United Nations is a product of idealistic thought.\textsuperscript{81} The thing, which is ignored, is that it is the fact that NATO and the UN, and all other formations are a product of human thought. The main question to be asked here is the question of what kind of world a person and/or a state or other actor imagine for them.

First paragraph of the Article 1 in Charter of the United Nations says that “to maintain international peace and security, and to that end: to take effective collective measures for the prevention and

\textsuperscript{77} There are also approaches in the discipline that divide the context into various classes such as linguistic context, emotional context, situational context and cultural context. For details, see: Ahmet Muhtar Ömer, “Bağlam Teorisi”, \textit{Bilimname}, Vol: 20, No: 1, 2011, p. 198.
\textsuperscript{78} Blaikie, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 191.
\textsuperscript{79} The current question can not only be developed for the state actor but also for other actors in the international community. However, the root of the question here is limited to the state in accordance with the scope of the matter.
\textsuperscript{81} Deniz Ülke Arıboğan, “Uluslararası Barış ve Güvenliğin Sağlanmasında Bir Araç Olarak Birleşmiş Milletler ve Temel Sorunları”, \textit{Avrasya Dosyası}, Vol: 8, No: 1, Spring 2002, p. 129.
removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace, and to bring about by peaceful means, and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations which might lead to a breach of the peace; ...”

Likewise, paragraph 3 of the same Article aims “to achieve international co-operation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion; ...”

However, after the last Iraq War, the USA, by violating international law and ignoring the United Nations, has put the power in the forefront, leading to the questioning of the United Nations and therefore idealism. According to Ağır, due to the USA’s position on the Iraq war, the interstate relations based on sovereign equality shifted to an interstate chaos where the politics of hegemony based on the force will be valid.

What is ignored in the interpretation above is the difference between the breach of international law and the absence of international law. In the first case, the law is violated, while, in the second case, one of the achievements/values of human history in the process of being competent, namely the notion of law, is ignored. The existence of the United Nations is not philosophically wrong but rather meaningful. The problem is the organization structure that makes the shortcomings of the United Nations tangible over time. The USA, Russia, China, France and Britain, which have veto powers in the UN Security Council seem to be

83 Ibid.
burdened with a burden that they can not remove nowadays and that they are not in a position to speak about the rest of the world. Otherwise, when they do so, they know that they will face at least resistance as being in the example of international terrorism.

The solution that the (philosophical) idealism can present to the United Nations is the manifest that the United Nations General Assembly, in the context of the hermeneutic tradition, represents the proper example rather than Security Council. The United Nations General Assembly is a context of collective mind or of the mind that has arrived consensus. In other words, the General Assembly is the organization that needs to be strengthened and complimented against the Security Council. It is the abductive strategy itself that the states express their own world fiction here because any state has its own social reality here as being social actors. The creation of a common mind depends on the negotiations on this board. So, the common mind, that is the conclusion that the United Nations General Assembly will decide as a result of these negotiations, should not be a recommendation, but should be a binding one.86

Conclusion

The discipline of International Relations has used philosophical concepts to make scientific illusion and has opened this illusion most beautifully in the approach of Idealism. Although other approaches such as Realism and Rationalism have taken their share in this illusion, the greatest share has fallen to Idealism. Thus, the discipline of International Relations has revealed that it has not understood the history of thought and Idealism which is the history of humanity in that sense. As the concepts are entirely described by the nominal terms such as “power” and “interest”, but whose ambiguity is also somewhat inaccurate, this has justified Cox claiming that “theories for certain persons and for certain

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86 Between Articles 10-17 determining the duties and authorities of the United Nations General Assembly under the Section IV of the United Nations Charter; it is concluded that the United Nations General Assembly can inform its thoughts as advices in order that the realization of the United Nations’ purposes (For details, see: United Nations, “Charter of the United Nations”, http://www.un.org/en/sections/un-charter/introductory-note/index.html, (Date of Accession: 02.12.2017)).
purposes”.

In other words, there is no scientific discipline in International Relations for Cox because there is no neutral and non-political information. “All theories have a perspective. Perspectives derive from a position in time and space, specifically social and political time and space.”

The concepts in the discipline of International Relations need to be redefined. Even the relocation of the concepts in philosophy to the discipline of International Relations can be a sufficient and meaningful beginning in the first place, at the head of these concepts is Idealism.

Idealism is the approach concerning the conclusion that the being is the imagination of consciousness, and the approach of obtaining scientific knowledge built on this conclusion rather than moralism and utopianism, as Realists define in the discipline of International Relations. It is a philosophy that emancipates the human, by the expression of Fichte; it is an object that subject forms. In that sense, it is much more than the conclusion that “…the liberal growth in international trade and cultural and social intercourse, the resulting international rules and a host of written treaties…”

(Philosophical) Idealism, at least in this article, for the discipline of International Relations it points out that the most appropriate point of view will be able to be Interpretivism and Hermeneutics, and the research strategy will be able to be the Abduction. The rationale behind this sign is that it ultimately suggests that the actors in International Relations have essentially discovered scientific criteria in understanding each other.

89 It is mainly an invitation to philosophers for the discipline of International Relations. International Relations discipline needs philosophers. Derrida, in fact, tends to call the people who will be able to demand international institutions to take responsibility as the philosophers of the future (For details, see: Giovanna Borradori, *Terör Günlerinde Felsefe: Jürgen Habermas ve Jacques Derrida ile Diyaloglar*, trans. Emre Barca, Yapı Kredi Yayınları, İstanbul 2008, p. 135).
The inference that the meanings shared by the participants in any social condition can be accepted as objective since these meanings constitute their reality is a result of Hermeneutic comment on the fact that the actors, in particular the states, in the International Relations discipline, can understand each other better. One of the places where such a thought can be found, perhaps most importantly, is the United Nations General Assembly.

In this context, the compliment to be made to the UN General Assembly should be much more than the compliment to be made to the Security Council. The views of the United Nations General Assembly should be binding as a decision. This guarantees that the world is a more liveable place. Of course, this depends on the imagination of the actors in the world.

The idea that even a bird’s eye view towards human history has inspired is that the human being’s competence is basically based on the values that are discovered by man again, which indicates a high level of consciousness.

Finally, paying a complement to Idealism does not mean the denial of “power” if it is needed to express with the definitions of International Relations discipline. On the contrary, the preservation of the acquired values requires a phenomenon of “power”, which I define this as “Idea-Realism” that means Idealism which does not deny “power”. In other words, I define Idea-Realism as “putting the power on” for the preservation of acquired values such as rule of law, and I present the literature so.

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91 However, the same bird’s eye view shows that competence does not come without suffering.
92 The legitimacy of this power requires a notion of law. Even the protection of the law—in fact, law is one of the greatest gains of mankind, also requires a notion of power. However, it has only been referred to the concepts of power and law here, as it may be a subject of a separate study to examine the relationship of reciprocity between the notions of power and law.
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