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**VIENNA AGREEMENT ON IRAN'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM: AN  
ANALYSIS OF WESTERN AND ISLAMIC INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS  
THEORIES**

**GRADUATE THESIS PRIOR TO OBTAINING A BILINGUAL BACHELOR  
DEGREE IN INTERNATIONAL STUDIES, MINOR IN FOREIGN TRADE**

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## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my parents and brothers who were always by my side supporting me in every step of this process. You are the greatest blessing from God and I always want you to feel proud of me. This work is also dedicated to my Muslim friends who, with their friendship and love, have motivated me to learn more about their culture, religion and identity.

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## **ABSTRACT**

Many of the problems arising in international relations are caused by the imposition of ideas and practices from some countries considered as powerful in the international community. Each state lives a different economic, political, social and cultural reality, therefore everyone has different ideas and practices that should be considered and analyzed when deciding how to conduct international relations. There are several theories in the field of international relations, however not all of these theories are known, studied and taken into account when deciding how the relations between the different states could be implemented. This paper focuses on the analysis of two important theories in the field of international relations: the Islamic and the Western theory. The main objective is, through a descriptive and bibliographical study, to understand the ideology of each of these theories and determine the main differences between them. Additionally, by analyzing the agreement on Iran's nuclear program, this paper aims to identify any practical application of the concepts of either, or both theories of international relations.

## INTRODUCTION

Since ancient times, scholars have been studying the different types of relations that states maintain with each other and have tried to create a theory able to explain these relations and suggest the best way to handle them. Many theories have been proposed. These theories were created based on the beliefs, culture and experiences of their authors and the countries in which they were created. However, the Western theory is considered to be the most powerful, known and applied one among the other theories that exist. It has gotten this recognition due to many situations such as: being one of the first ones to be developed, being developed in countries considered as superpowers, being used by the most powerful countries, among others.

As many other ideas that come from the West, the Western international relations theory has been spread all over the world and has been, many times, considered as the right or only theory applicable when deciding how to handle inter-state relations. However, there are several other theories in the world. One of those is the Islamic theory. This theory explains how Islam and its mandates can provide ideas of how the relations between states should be conducted. Through a descriptive and bibliographical study of several book and articles that exist on this topic, this paper will describe the main ideas presented by this theory and the main differences it has with the one that come from the West.

The Western theory was created from historical circumstances and the authors' and Western countries' experiences and ways of understanding the world and the problems happening in it. Many scholars have argued that some of the ideas presented by this theory no longer represent what is happening in the world nowadays. That is why, many of its main branches and ideas have been analyzed and some are even being modified in order to allow them be able to explain the world and international relations accurately. There are also new branches that are proposing different ideas and contributing to the recreation of the theory. Due to the importance of the Western theory, this paper also presents the main branches and ideas of it and



explains some of the reasons why this is considered the most powerful theory among the others that exist.

There are many ideas and concepts that each of these two theories presents, but which of these are actually applied when handling international relations? With the purpose of identifying the practical applicability of these ideas, this paper analyzes the most important parts of the agreement on Iran's nuclear program signed in July, 2015. This analysis will identify the practical application of the concepts of either, or both theories of international relations. This agreement was signed by Iran which is an Islamic Republic and the P5+1 countries (the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Russia, China, and Germany), most of which are Western countries. That is why, this is an important and useful agreement to be analyzed in order to determine if the ideas of Islamic theory were taken into consideration at the time of negotiating and settling the agreement or if the Western theory was once again the one that dominated the scenario.

## CHAPTER 1

### Islamic International Relations Theory

#### Introduction

The study and analysis of the theories that exist regarding International Relations is of great significance given that “International Relations theories represent not simply tools of analysis but, along with the different paradigms, also a way of conceptualizing the international and world order” (Mauriello 1). On the other hand, experts in the field also argue that “as an academic discipline International Relations (IR) is still overwhelmingly based on Eurocentric foundations” (Mauriello 1).

The lack of analysis and studies about non-western contributions to international relations make it difficult for scholars around the world to understand certain situations related to the rise of non-western parts of the world such as: China, the Islamic Republic of Iran, or a totally different situation such as the acts and declarations of the Islamic State (ISIS). It seems that “IR sources fail to correspond to the global distribution of its subjects and their degree of involvement in the practice of IR” (Mauriello 1).

It is said that the International Relations Theory (IRT) is mainly based on the European experience of “state formation, power and influence, and a particularly Anglo-American preference for empiricism (knowledge inferred from observable characteristics of reality) and for materialism (causation sought in material factors)” (Tadjbakhsh 174). The author Shahrbanou Tadjbakhsh argues that empiricism and materialism are not the only way for conceptualizing ideas and phenomena and creating a theory (174). He sustains that ideas and concepts from an Islamic

worldview could provide alternatives for understanding and organizing IR in a different way.

Some authors argue that many analyses have been done regarding the role of Islam in international relations. However, those writings have found few interested readers. Many others argue that there is a lack of interest from professors and universities, especially in Western countries but also those within Islam, in supporting the search and analysis of an Islamic IRT. On the other hand, there are some negative writings about Islam that have contributed to the creation of stereotypes or misconceptions. Some writings present Islam as “incompatible, or worse, hostile to Western values, ideas, norms and traditions, declaring and pronouncing Islam’s incompatibility with democracy, human rights, particularly of women and gay rights, and international law” (Manabilang 4). In order to implement an analysis of this theory, it is necessary to have an open mind and leave aside any preconceived ideas and stereotypes about Islam. We need to listen to Islamic thinkers as they speak and explain their ideas before offering any critical opinion about their global applicability.

### **1.1 Islamic International Relations Theory**

Many people may ask what a religion such as Islam has to do with international relations and how it can provide ideas for an alternative IRT. That is why, in order to analyze the alternatives that an Islamic point of view present to the field of IR, we first need to know that Islam is not just a religion but a culture, identity, and a way of living and thinking. “Islam is not just a religion. It’s a way of life that teaches us about our relationship with God, with the universe, and our relationship with ethics with the economy and our political system” (Al-Suwaidan 1). According to Tadjbakhsh, Islam has different ideas of what the foundation of truth and good life is and that is why it could provide alternatives to Western IRT (174). “Islamic law is not simply a collection of religious precepts and rules, but a comprehensive legal system styled to preserve the interests of Muslims and to regulate their relations with the rest of the world in times of peace and war” (Zawati 1).

Before analyzing what Islam proposes to the field of international relations, we need to know that its ideas have changed throughout history. This change is due to many situations and phenomena that have occurred especially since countries that consist of a majority of followers of Islam faced a period of colonization as well as a process of modernization which introduced new concepts and ideas to the Islamic system of thought. Some of these introduced ideas are presented as a challenge for the maintenance of the essence of an Islamic IRT. The idea of secularization, which may not be accepted by some Islamic countries, seems to be one of the most important characteristic of what we called “modernity”. The ideas of “democracy, development and modernity being proposed in the new liberal order are preconditioned on secularism and seek legitimacy through not just interstate relations but also as domestic orders” (Tadjbakhsh 175).

These ideas seem not to be aligned with those that come from Islam and because some Islamic countries and movements have shown resistance to adopt them, Islam is seen as the “other” of Western modernity. “The affirmation of Islamic faith is inevitably associated with resistance instead of an embracement of alternative identities based on religion, faith and morality” (Tadjbakhsh 175). This situation has led scholars from around the world to be more interested in understanding Islam and has also pressured Muslim scholars to find the ways to explain the essence and ideas of Islam. Due to this pressure, Muslim thinkers in both the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries have been studying classical texts in order to revive the essence of the Islamic IRT. It seems that a new epistemological project is being developed. This project is based on the “history of thought rather than political events, with a focus on principles such as justice, collectivity, solidarity and emancipation, rather than power and materialism, and using Islam as a religion and worldview rather than merely as a social-historical space” (Tadjbakhsh 176).

## **1.2 Sources of Islamic International Relations Theory**

Islam presents its own ideas of how the relations between Muslims and non-Muslims should be. “Islam, by claiming to understand man and have the right responses to

his/her needs and demands, acts by itself as a theory, just as Western political philosophy has theorized on man and his actions” (Tadjbakhsh 176).

Tadjbakhsh argues that there are three sources in Islam from which we get the ideas of how international relations should be handled (176).

- 1) The first source includes: the Qur’an, the *Hadith* (Sayings of the Prophet), the *Sunnah* (the conduct of the Prophet) or *ijtihad* (interpretation). These sources are considered the primary foundation for understanding the Islamic IRT.
- 2) As a second source, there is an historical analysis of the acts of imitation or rejection of national leaders when facing the ideas and concepts of the West. Both reactions: the attempt to rationalize and modernize Islam and the opposition to modernism, are analyzed as defensive and reactionary mechanisms that constitute one of the sources of the Islamic IRT.
- 3) A third source is the analysis of the ideas and proposals of the Islamization of knowledge movement. This movement looks for the creation of new ideas as result of the reconciliation of the ideas that come from Islam with the ideas that come from the West. Social sciences, and by extension international relations, are trying to be reconceptualized by “the contributions of local scholars who draw generalizations from local experiences that might have transregional or universal applicability” (Acharya and Buzan 6).

### **1.2.1 First source**

As well as being the main sources of Islam and the key instruments for understanding it, the Qur’an, the *Sunnah* (traditions), the *Hadith* (Sayings of the Prophet), and the *Sharia* (Islamic law) also present original sources where international relations have been predetermined.

When talking about international relations, it is very important to analyze the concept of jihad within the Qur’an. The term jihad has been given many meanings and interpretations but in general it refers to struggle or strive towards something. The Qur’an uses *jihad* in two different ways: “a greater *jihad*, as an internal struggle,

based on striving to understand the Qur'an itself or to follow God more closely, and a lesser *jihad* involving external striving/struggle to remove obstructions to the path of God, which includes struggling against unbelievers" (Rajae 12 cited by Tadjbakhsh 177).

Tadjbakhsh argues that based on these two different interpretations given to the term *jihad*, Islamic jurists determine the ways of handling international relations in Islam (177). They divide the world in two parts: *Dar al Islam* (the realm/abode of Islam) and the *Dar al Harb* (the realm/abode of war). *Dar al Islam* refers to the parts of the world where Islam dominates, where the obedience to God is the most important thing and where everyone lives in peace and tranquility. *Dar al Harb*, on the contrary, refers to the places of the world where Islam does not dominate, where unbelievers are in control of the territories and are hostile to the Muslims living there. Those places are threatened by the Dar al Islam. We need to remember that these two terms (Dar al Islam and Dar al Harb) are not stated or explained in the Qur'an but were interpreted and created by Muslims jurists in order to codify the Islamic law (*Sharia*).

It is very important to know in which context this law of nations based on the division of the world appeared. It appeared during the period known as the Arab conquest when Islamic lands were being expanded through the conquest of vast territories from Spain to India. This process of conquering was what created the need to have a law that guided them in the relations with the states that were being conquered, or were rival to. In the period from the creation of the Islamic first empire during the Abbasid period (750–1258) to the height of Islamic civilization during the Ottoman period (1281–1923), this idea of the division of the world constituted the central concept of Islamic international relations (Tadjbakhsh 178).

Many scholars argue that there was a Western binary division of the world as well. It is found in the Peace of Westphalia of 1648. The Peace of Westphalia refers to peace agreements made by European princedoms which ended both the Thirty Years' War in Germany and the Eighty Years' War between Spain and the Netherlands, which concluded wars between Protestant and Catholics (Tadjbakhsh 178). Some authors argue that the Peace of Westphalia can "be seen as the beginning of the formation of

a Christian community of states, set against the ‘other abode’, which at the time was dominated by the Ottoman empire” (Tadjbakhsh 178).

We need to understand that the perceptions of Islam about foreign relations are based on religious statements, because they originally come from the Qu’ran, but they are interpreted and explained by jurists who make these perceptions legal and normative rather than theological and make them susceptible to reinterpretation by the jurisprudence. According to this perception that divides the world, *The Sharia* “proclaimed the legality and universality of Islam. By extension, then, Dar al Harb could not be recognized on an equal footing as legitimate or sovereign” (Tadjbakhsh 177).

We also need to be aware that this idea of the division of the world in *Dar al Islam and Dar al Harb* explains how relations between Islamic states and non-Islamic states should be handled. It does not refer to the relations between Islamic states. Many people have argued that this is because this idea or perception is only focused on war between Islamic and non-Islamic states and not on the solidarity and support between Islamic ones. However, if this perception does not refer to the relations between Islamic states it is because according to Islamic law there is only one big Islamic state formed by all the Islamic states we know today.

This law of nations was derived from statements that come from the Qur’an, interpreted by Muslims jurists and established in a context of war. Many scholars have questioned if this law can still be applied in the same way nowadays or if there is any possibility of reading again the statements of the Qur’an and giving them a different interpretation in order to be established as principles: peace, mediation and negotiation instead of war to constitute relations between Islamic and non-Islamic states. It may be possible knowing that Islam demands Muslims not to fight those who do not fight them. “Fighting could be justified or might become a religious duty upon Muslims only for reserving themselves, protecting their properties or defending their faith. Building power is encouraged only for deterrence and self-protection” (Tadjbakhsh 178).

### 1.2.2 Second source

A second source of the ideas and concepts of a Islamic IRT is taken from an analysis of the experiences and reactions of the Islamic world as result of its encounters with the ideas and systems of the West. The idea of secular systems where the main goal of politics seemed to be power instead of righteousness came to challenge many ideas of the Islamic world. “The new international order was to be based on non-sectarian territorial demarcations, the equality of all political units, and international peace as the permanent norm” (Piscatori 319 cited by Tadjbakhsh 179).

The main encounters of the Islamic world with the West took place when the Ottoman Empire was defeated and the process of colonization, as well as the organization of the nation-states started. It is argued that by the end of nineteenth century, the Islamic world was “the most penetrated international relations subsystem in today’s world” (Brown 7 cited by Tadjbakhsh 179). This penetration of the West in the Islamic world led to two different reactions: on one side a reactive response and on the other a defensive one. Some expressed their acceptance with the idea of the integration into the modernization project while others showed a total rejection of the idea of the modernization of Islam. According to Tadjbakhsh, “far from being opposites, the two positions of absolute conformity or rejection were in fact both defensive attempts to come to grips with the introduction of a new dynamics” (179). Islamic leaders were the ones who led the different actions and reactions according to one of the two positions, whether it was in dialogue or in defiance of Western intellectual traditions.

One reaction to the penetration of the West in the Islamic world was the attempt to make Islam more powerful in order to fight against this penetration and also as an internal project. This strengthening of Islam is known in the Arab world as the *Asr al Nahda* (Age of Renaissance). Some important writers who talk about this project are Jamal-al-Din Asadabadi, known as al-Afghani (1839–97) and the Egyptian Muhammad ‘Abduh (1849–1905). They both supported the idea of introducing methods that were rationalist and discoveries that were scientific into Islam. They thought that it was the only way to make Islam stronger and the only way in which the *Umma* (Muslim community) was going to survive the penetration of the West.



These authors make a distinction between two types of Islam: authentic Islam and degraded Islam. Authentic Islam, they said is the Islam that uses reason to interpret religious sources in order to guide human actions. Degraded Islam is corrupted Islam and one that has gone far from its essence. Islam does not prohibit the use of reason. The *Qur'an* and the *Sunnah* state that it is necessary to have knowledge about the material world in order to know how to survive in it. Some authors even argue that the modern scientific discoveries we know today were already contained or prefigured in the *Qur'an* and the *Sunnah* (Tadjbakhsh 179).

“Islam, when properly understood, was not opposed to rationality and modernity, for it was largely constitutive of modern truths such as rationality” (Tadjbakhsh 180). Therefore, we could not say that Islam’s interests are contrary to rationalism. These arguments in favor of the compatibility of Islam and rationalism have opened a new debate about *ijtihad* (the use of reason in the interpretation of religious sources) and *tajdid* (innovation) within the Muslims thinkers and interpreters, many of who support the idea of using the reason to give new interpretations to the statements of the classical texts.

However, the idea of introducing new concepts into Islam, know by many as the attempt to create an “Islamic modernism” was also rejected by many Islamic fundamentalists and it is argued that “the rejection of reforms within Islam coincided with the resurgence of religion in social and political life in the Muslim world” (Tadjbakhsh 180) which allowed these fundamentalists to maintain its position of total rejection to any attempt to change the Islam. Some Islamist thinkers did not agree with the involvement in a process of modernity because they thought that: “rationalist epistemology erodes divine authority, expresses and accelerates Western power, and inhibits the establishment of a legitimate Islamic social system” (Euben 34 cited by Tadjbakhsh 181). They argued that modernists came to ask for a justification of Islam and ask for a reason for everything Islamists believed in.

“The reforms included elements of secularization of religion, and the reformers’ concept of *ijtihad* was a ‘free intellectual pursuit’ which disregarded the historical accumulations of and traditions of *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence), hence of authority”

(Zubaida 438 cited by Tadjbakhsh 181). It seemed that with the rationality that came with modernity, they had to change the language and methods they were used to using and to define what was important to know which seemed to be only the knowledge related to the material world. Some Islamist authors argued that rationality is limited when it comes to talking about moral judgment, human purpose and the divine authority. They sustained that human intuition and the truths of faith were over reason (Tadjbakhsh 181).

Authors such as Sayyid Qutb 1906-1966 (the leading intellectual of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood) and Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini 1902–1989 (spiritual and political leader of the Islamic Revolution of 1979) argued that Islam could survive Western penetration if Islamists do not let external or foreign influence corrupt it. Some Islamists argued that they had a better understanding of international relations than modernists did. The author Khomeini, for example, explains the dynamics of international relations through the idea of the existence of a dualism. He argues that in the world there are the oppressed (*mustadafun*) and the oppressors (*mustakbirun*) and that the Qur'an states that God promised the earth to the oppressed. Both terms were taken from the Qur'an and are found in the realm of the moral (Tadjbakhsh 181).

“In Khomeini’s view, citizens of an Islamic state were moral by virtue of membership in it, and through daily adherence to the laws of God” (Euben 37 cited by Tadjbakhsh 181). It is argued that Muslims are always adhered to the laws of God because the way in which they follow God’s rules is by incorporating his message into their law (*the Sharia*). By contrast, Khomeini argued that societies which believe that human beings, instead of God, can establish legal and moral rules and are therefore controlled by human authority, do not act morally.

Some scholars argue that discourses of authors such as Khomeini besides being a reactionary rhetoric also present a modern understanding of important topics such as: state, justice, political system, nationalism and the idea of people as agents of change. “Khomeini’s rhetoric is not only traditional Islamic phraseology, but incorporates contemporary meanings and demands, domestically and internationally, such as populist concerns with the welfare of the lower classes; anti-dependency

trade relations, non-alignment foreign policy” (Fischer 99 cited by Tadjbakhsh 181). Other authors see in Khomeini’s thinking as a reactionary response to the influence of the West that the Islamic world was already feeling and facing.

### **1.2.3 Third source**

The third source of Islamic IRT is an analysis of a new movement started in the last quarter of the twentieth century called “Islamization of knowledge”. This new movement is looking for a “creative path to reconciliation” (Tadjbakhsh 182) between Islamic fundamentals and modernist ideas. This movement looks for “the good life” through the use of morality and ethics and argues that together with the rationalism and materialism, faith needs to be included as a principle of knowledge. The idea of Islamization of knowledge was introduced by Ismael Al-Faruqi in 1982. He wanted to find a possible combination between modern knowledge and Islamic legacy. For Al-Faruqi Islamization means: “to redefine and reorder the data, to rethink the reasoning and relating the data, to re-evaluate the conclusions, to re-project the goals – and to do so in such a way to make the disciplines enrich and serve the cause of Islam” (Al Faruqi 15 cited by Tadjbakhsh 182).

Supporters of this movement argue that: “the multidimensional intellectual and moral malaise plaguing the Muslim *Umma* originates in epistemological imperialism” (Al-Masseri 403 cited by Tadjbakhsh 182). This imperialism, based on the ethnocentrism, focused its attention on the creation and understanding of an abstract knowledge without taking into consideration important metaphysical and ethical values. It is argued that those who ignore God’s teachings and revelations will create a positivist knowledge which is only focused on and worried about the end of humanity, history, modernity, progress, etc. (Tadjbakhsh 183). On the other hand, the one that only focuses on God’s teachings and revelations and ignores the sciences will not be able of creating a correct knowledge because they will be making religion something “mystical that accords no value to humanity or nature, rejects cause and effect, and ignores the usages of society, history, psychology, and economics” (Al-’Alwani 41 cited by Tadjbakhsh 183).

The Islamization of knowledge aims to destroy dominant paradigms and to analyze the contradictions, complex knowledge and that knowledge that has been left aside by the process of modernization and rationalization. It aims to make the world understand the importance of religious knowledge and the inclusion of it in the creation of knowledge. “It attempts to combine reason (rationality), faith (intuition) and senses (empiricism) towards a new paradigm of social sciences” (Ragab 1 cited by Tadjbakhsh 183). It is argued that we need faith to understand the truth revealed by God, empiricism to understand the truth based on what we perceive through our senses and rationality to combine both truths into a unified paradigm (Tadjbakhsh 183).

Little has been written about international relations using the new ideas proposed by this movement. This is due to the fact that this movement is relatively new and the proponents of it have been focused especially on finding the methods to develop these new concepts and ideas. What has been proposed regarding international relations is a new interpretation of the classical sources for the Islamic IRT especially the ones related to the old idea of the division of the world in *Dar al Islam* and *Dar al Harb*. Some authors argue that it was an idea that responded to the circumstances of the time it was created but that it does not respond correctly to the current circumstances. They also argue that such an idea makes it more difficult to find a path of reconciliation between Western and Islamic ideas. They support the idea of new interpretation based on the fact that the idea of the division of the world was not stated in the *Qur'an* or *Sunnah* but was interpreted in that way by some Muslims jurists.

Scholars and supporters of this movement have found it complicated to determine ideas of how relations between Islamic and non-Islamic states should be handled. This is due to the fact that Muslims because of the processes of globalization and migration are now settled all over the world. It means that the world cannot anymore be divided in *Dar al Islam* and *Dar al Harb*. Some authors are proposing a new term for this new case: *Dar al Ahd* (abode of treaties) or *Dar al Amn* (the abode of security). *Dar al Ahd* or *Dar al Amn* refers to the places of the world, that are not considered part of the Islamic world but have Muslims living there as minorities. In those places Muslims' rights and security seemed to be respected based on an

agreement signed between nations or on a resolution of the United Nations (Ramadan 125 cited by Tadjbakhsh 184).

Other authors argue that because of the difficulty of dividing the world into Islamic states and non-Islamic states, “it is necessary to classify relations between human beings belonging to different civilizations, cultures, ethics and religions, as well as relations between citizens and their continuous interaction with the social, legal, economic or political framework of the spaces they live in” (Ramadan 75 cited by Tadjbakhsh 184). They also argue that the movement of Islamization of knowledge needs to find their way to regulate the relations between the norms and values of people from different civilizations and cultures as well as the different interests and interactions they may have.

This movement will need to take into consideration “local heritage, modern demands, and Islamic commandments in a way that is inclusive and respectful” (Tadjbakhsh 184). It will also have to consider the possibility of having different interpretations of Islam, which means that “Muslim jurists in other parts of the world, such as China, Malaysia, Indonesia, Tunisia, Turkey, Morocco, etc., can give their own interpretations, sometimes basing them on their own culture to express appropriateness or approximation, applicability, and adjustment” (Manabilang 6).

### **1.3 Fundamentals of Islam in International Relations**

People around the world have different interests and demands and the international system is considered to be a forum where different debates, conflicts and disagreements take place. There are currently 50 Muslim countries. Their beliefs and attitudes seem to be based on the mandates of Islam. However, “the depth and nature of each country’s adherence to Islam and how each interprets it in the political arena can be quite different” (Alikhani 7).

According to Islam, there are some fundamentals that need to be taken into consideration at the time of conducting the relations between states. The term “fundamentals” refers to “the unchangeable teaching and beliefs that form the

intellectual and doctrinal substructures for Muslims” (Alikhani 7). These fundamentals are the base for the creation of principles that will guide the relations between Muslim states with each other and with non-Muslim ones. Author Alikhani has classified the fundamentals into two groups. On one hand, we have the epistemic and cognitive fundamentals and on the other the rational and ethical fundamentals.

### **1.3.1 Epistemic and cognitive fundamentals**

Epistemic and cognitive fundamentals refer to “the intellectual and doctrinal principles of human beings that form their attitudes and behavior” (Alikhani 8). It is said that people’s perceptions about other people and phenomena are based on these fundamentals. Policy-making in international relations is based on the epistemic and cognitive fundamentals of political leaders and state systems. According to Alikhani, these fundamentals are:

#### **1.3.1.1 Respectful attitude towards all human beings**

People’s attitudes towards other people determine how their relations will be. Taking in consideration that states have persons as their main actors, the relation of these will determine the relation of the states they belong to. Islam demands Muslims to treat all human beings with dignity. The Qur’an states that dignity is bestowed to all humans by God. Qur’an’s verses tell how God put part of his soul into the human body, how he chose man to be his successor on earth and how he created everything that exists in the world to serve humans, bestowing, in this way, dignity on all human beings (Alikhani 8). Islam states that dignity is a right that all human beings have and cannot be taken away from them since it is a gift that God has given to all of us.

#### **1.3.1.2 The authenticity of human beings: free will and free choice**

From the Islamic point of view, “human beings are authentic in essence and will not lose their inherent essence regardless of the society or situation in which they live” (Alikhani 9). Islamist thinkers argue that God could have placed all human beings on

earth into one nation only and could have made us have the same beliefs, perceptions and interests. However, he did not do that because he wanted to give humans the freedom to choose their own path and the duty of facing the consequences of their decisions. Therefore, Islamic thought argues that no state can force other states to take its same decisions or to follow its same path. Each one is totally free to choose the path it will take.

### **1.3.1.3 Original equality of human beings**

According to Islamic thought, there are four arguments that demonstrate that all human beings are considered equal. The first argument says that according to the Qur'an all human beings have the same origin because all come from the same community and were created from a single man and woman. However, they were then divided in different groups or tribes and that is the reason they do not recognize each other now. The second argument states that God created all human beings in the same way but gave them freedom to choose their own path. Therefore, if humans belong to different religions, cultures and nations is result of their own will and not of differences God made when he created them. The third argument says that according the Qur'an the ones who truly believe in God and perform good and moral actions, no matter if they are Muslims or not, will find salvation. This argument and the previous one "pave the way for a peaceful socio-political path for all human beings" (Alikhani 10). The last argument refers to the fact that God bestowed dignity to all human beings regardless of their religion, ethnicity or ideology. This equality of all human beings must also be understood as an equality between states since they are formed by human beings.

### **1.3.1.4 Recognition of the plurality of religions as a reality**

In international relations we find the presence of different religions and sects, each one with its own interests and demands. This variety of religions has caused some of the biggest conflicts and disagreements in the international arena. "A number of

verses of the Qur'an deal with this in a realistic manner, recognizing and acknowledging the presence of other religions as a reality and encouraging them to act according to their own beliefs and principles" (Alikhani 11). This seems to contradict the Qur'anic belief that there is only one truly religion for God and it is Islam. "The Qur'an maintains that Islam is the most perfect and greatest religion among all religions" (Alikhani 11). However, although Islam considers itself the most perfect religion it also encourages everyone to respect other religions and ideologies. People can keep their beliefs and religion and consider them as the best ones of all but they also need to respect other religions and nations and find the way of establishing good relations with them while seeking their own interests.

### **1.3.2 Rational and ethical fundamentals**

Rational and ethical fundamentals are "behavioral rules and the interaction human reason calls for, and without which social systems cannot be established and maintained. They are rooted in rationality and strength and improve socio-political systems" (Alikhani 11). According to Alikhani, these fundamentals are:

#### **1.3.2.1 Peaceful coexistence**

The Qur'an states that Muslims must talk to people in a kind and benevolent way. "Prophet Muhammad spread his cloak under the feet of Najran Christians and greatly respected all people, including non-Muslims who entered Medina" (Alikhani 11). In Prophet Muhammad's treaty with the Sinai Christians it was stated that Christians could not be under pressure and that Muslims should be respectful and tolerant with them and even protect them from any harm. Islam is seemed to be a religion of "blessing and affection" (Alikhani 11). It encourages Muslims to establish a friendship with the Christians who are not arrogant and oppressive and even encourages "the establishment of friendship between Muslims and their enemies" (Alikhani 11). Therefore, Islam does not consider non-Muslim countries as its enemies. On the contrary, it is considered important and even necessary to establish relationships with those states.



### 1.3.2.2 Avoiding violence

It is argued that violence is opposed to the essence of Islam. Islam uses power and governance to educate and help people to follow the right path to get the perfection that will lead them to the happiness in this world and in the afterlife. Islam does not consider power and governance to be objectives but a way of achieving important goals such as the promotion of justice and the protection of rights. Power and governance do not have value if they do not contribute to achieve and apply moral and human values. This is easier to achieve in a peaceful and rational environment (Alikhani 12). Islam aims to revive the importance of moral, human and divine values within the society. Violence is considered essentially immoral and people must pursue moral objectives which will be achieved by employing moral values. Islamic political thought promotes justice and the protection of rights, locally and internationally. It considers the use of violence to be opposed to the pursuit of justice and it is even considered a way of promoting corruption.

Prophet Muhammad, through his actions, also taught and encouraged Muslims not to use violence. During his rule in Medina, he maintained a reasonable and peaceful attitude towards his enemies and opponents. He used agreements, treaties and dialogues to establish good relations with some Jewish tribes living in his territory. Prophet Muhammad's battles and military conflicts are argued to be all defensive. And when he won a battle he was "mild, kind, tolerant and forgiving" (Alikhani 13).

According to the verses of the Qur'an, war and *jihad* (to struggle or strive towards something) can be used only for cases of self-defense. "There is the law of equality. If anyone transgresses the prohibition against you, transgress ye likewise against him" (The Holy Qur'an 194 cited by Zawati 288). Alikhani argues that the verses of the Qur'an related to war and *jihad* can be divided in three categories. The first category contains the verses of the Qur'an that restrict the use of *jihad* to some terms and conditions. According to these verses, "Muslims are prohibited from initiating any battle and from any kind of oppression during battles, and are obligated to adhere to moral and humanitarian laws and rights" (Alikhani 13).

The second category contains verses “that encourage Muslims to *jihad* unconditionally” (Alikhani 13). This may seem opposed to the previous category of verses. However, we must know that according to the principles of Qur’an unconditional verses (such as the verses of the second category) are always subordinated to conditional verses (verses of the first category) and these last ones establish the terms and conditions for the interpretation and application of the unconditional ones. We also must take into consideration that the verses of the Qur’an were written according to the circumstances of that time. Therefore, they command and encourage Muslims to take certain actions toward specific situations that were happening at that time. Finally, the third category contains verses that do not prohibit or encourage the use of *jihad* but only give some explanations about the meaning and different aspects of the *jihad* and the rewards for combatants and martyrs (Alikhani 13).

### **1.3.2.3 Adherence to moral principles**

Moral values in Islam are considered to be the bases that guide Muslims in their behavior and attitudes towards all human beings and the phenomena happening in the world. These moral values aim to benefit not just the individual but the whole society at building relations of cooperation and respect between people. Islam encourages Muslims to pursue moral objectives which will be achieved only through the application of moral values. Islam states that people must not abandon their moral and spiritual values even when using rationality to understand scientific and technological progress in the material world.

The Holy Quran presents all the moral principles that will guide people to the achieve happiness in this world and in the afterlife. Islam demands all Muslims to maintain their moral values because they constitute the main pillar for “Muslim nation victory and for the development of a sustainable human and materialistic civilization” (Alikhani 13). Islam aims to include in international relations moral values and the pursuits of states to be considered morally correct.

#### 1.4 Islamic thought on treaties

Islamic law demands the respect for treaties over the respect for religious solidarity. If the Imam makes a treaty with the enemy, that treaty is mandatory for all Muslims. Since the time when Prophet Muhammad migrated from Mecca to Medina, Muslims knew various types of treaties which differences were based on their nature and purpose. The very first treaty is argued to be the *Hudaybiya* which was a treaty between Muslims and non-Muslims that was developed in Mecca when Prophet Muhammad and his followers were trying to enter this place in order to continue their pilgrimage.

During the Muslim civil wars other types of treaty were developed. One of the most known and important treaties was the one that was done while the Arab-Byzantine wars were being developed and was signed by four important Caliphs and the Byzantine emperor with the aim of stopping the attacks to the boundaries of the Muslim State. Under this treaty, the Muslim state agreed to pay an annual tribute to the emperor and the emperor agreed not to attack it. However, this type of treaty was criticized by many Muslim jurists who “argued against it and said that they would accept it only when it was a matter of effectual necessity” (Zawati 297). Another type of treaty called *al-mufādāh* (ransoming) was also developed at that time. It was a treaty that allowed Muslims to free prisoners of war in exchange for certain amount of money.

There are three more types of treaties according to Islamic thought. First, the *amān* (safe-conduct), which is given for a limited period of time and “is a pledge of security, granted to an enemy person for a limited period, under which his life, freedom, and property are protected by the sanctions of law” (Zawati 298). There are two types of *amān*. One that refers to a protection that is given to a group of people by the Imam or highest representative of the territory and the other type of *amān* which is a protection to an individual that can be provided by any Muslim, male or female, of full age.

The second type of treaty is the *hudna* (armistice). This treaty has the objective of entering into a peace agreement with the enemy. This type of treaty is found in

Islamic International law and has been validated by practice. Some jurists argue that this treaty is valid only when concluded by the Imam. However, the Imam must take in consideration the conformity and interests of the *Umma* (Muslim community) at the time of deciding whether he should conclude a *hudna* or not. Muslim jurists sustain that *hudna* must be agreed for a limited period of time which they argue should be not longer than four months except in cases of absolute necessity. “Once the *hudna* is accepted by the Imām, its observation becomes an obligation upon all Muslims” (Zawati 302). The *hudna* must be terminated if one of the following cases happens: if the participants decide that the treaty should end; if the enemy explicitly declares the termination of it; if the enemy initiates military attacks; or if a Muslim is killed by the enemy (Zawati 302).

The third type of treaty is called *dhimma*. This is a treaty that allows non-Muslims to live in *Dar al Islam* (territories under the rule of Islam) only if they perform some duties. One of these duties is the payment of a *jizya* (poll tax). They have to pay “an annual tribute in lieu of military service and protection. Hence, *jizya* is only due from every male adult, sane, free and able” (Zawati 303). Other duties that they have are: to show respect for Islam, not to build churches of their religions, not to damage Muslims in any way, not to celebrate their religious traditions in public, no to carry arms, not to sell alcohol, among others. “By paying the *jizya*, an essential duty, and observing the above obligations, they are entitled to the same rights as Muslims: right to life and prohibition of torture and inhuman treatment; and respect for their dignity and their family rights” (Zawati 306).

### **1.5 Islamic thought on reciprocity**

Muslims soldiers are demanded to deal on a reciprocal basis with their enemy in the battlefield. The Qur’an states: “if then anyone transgresses the prohibition against you, transgress ye likewise against him, and fear Allāh, and know that Allāh is with those who restrain themselves” (The Holy Qur’an 194 cited by Zawati 307). Muslims soldiers must observe the conduct of the enemy in order to know how their conduct should be and the limits for their actions. “And if you punish them, punish them no worse than they punish you” (The Holy Qur’an 126 cited by Zawati 307).

However, the Qur'an is also clear when it demands Muslims soldiers not to imitate the enemies' acts if they are immoral and unethical.

### **1.6 Islamic thought on arbitration**

Arbitration is an old instrument that has been used many times throughout history to settle disagreements and conclude peaceful treaties. At the beginning of the Arab world, arbitration was used to solve the problems between tribes. In fact, Prophet Muhammad was elected by some tribes to be an arbitrator (*hakam*) and help them solve the problems arising between them. "The word *tahkīm* is derived from the root *hakama*, which means to decide, judge, or rule. Both words, *hakam* (judge) and *hakīm* (wise), are among the ninety nine attributes of *Allāh*" (Al-Hayā 139 cited by Zawati 309). Islam considers *tahkīm* (arbitration) as a peaceful way to settle disputes both in civil and public international law. According to Islamic law, arbitration must have some characteristics: first, there has to be a free selection of arbitrators; second, Islamic law must be respected by the arbitrators and third, if the parts of a conflict agree to submit their dispute to arbitration they must respect its rules. The decisions of the arbitrators will be considered null if the arbitrators are not chosen freely or if they are close relatives to one of the parts of the conflict.

### **1.7 Islamic thought on neutrality**

Some authors argue that an institution such as neutrality did not exist in Islamic legal theory "since Islamic humanitarian law never recognized an attitude of impartiality on the part of other states" (Khadduri 168 cited by Zawati 312). However, other authors argue that a theory of neutrality does exist in Islamic legal discourse and it is based on a verse of the Qur'an that says: "therefore if they withdraw from you (*I'tazalūkum*), and wage not war against you and offer you peace, then Allāh hath opened no way for you (to war against them)" (The Holy Qur'an 90 cited by Zawati 313). This theory states that neutrality is when "a third political community voluntarily desires not to take sides with or against belligerent parties and the

warring parties fully recognize the rights of the neutral state” (Zawati 313). Islamic rule says that Muslim states must respect when another state decides to take a neutral position in a belligerent conflict between other states.

### **1.8 Islamic thought on diplomatic exchange**

In Arabic, the term *rasūl* (messenger) or *safīr* (ambassador) refers to a diplomatic agent. It is argued that Arab tribes, even before the appearance of Islam, already maintained diplomatic relations. However, it is when Islam emerged that diplomatic relations started to be widely used. Prophet Muhammad used to send invitations to various governors to come to his territory to teach them about Islam and ask them to become followers of it. He then received delegations and ambassadors from different kingdoms in his mosque. He put a lot of effort into preparing the ceremonial receptions because it was a very important part of diplomatic relations. It is also said that the Prophet used to exchange gifts with the delegations visiting his territory. Diplomatic relations at that time and later times were a successful method to maintain good relationships with neighboring territories. “The Islamic state came into more sophisticated diplomatic relations when they negotiated and concluded truce and peace treaties with neighboring kingdoms” (Zawati 318).

Islamic law respects the privileges and immunities that are based on the customary and conventional international law diplomatic agents enjoy. Privileges and immunities such as the right to inviolability, extraterritoriality, the right to move and travel freely, the freedom of communication for official purposes and exemption from services and military obligations (Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations of 1961 cited by Zawati 318). Islamic law also states that: “to enable them to exercise their duties and functions, diplomatic agents enjoy full personal immunity under Islamic international law. They are not to be killed, maltreated or arrested even if they are convicted or have a criminal record” (Zawati 319). Additionally, diplomatic agents do not to pay any kind of taxes during their stay in *Dar al Islam*. However, Islamic law also asks the agent staying in its territory to respect the rules and act morally otherwise these agents could be expatriated to their state of origin.

## **1.9 Islamic thought on foreign trade**

Foreign trade became an important instrument in Muslim society, and has played a great role in the expansion of the Islamic religion and civilization. It is argued that “many Islamic commercial ideas and technical expressions were introduced into the European commercial discourse during the Crusades” (Zawati 321). If the doctrine of *jihad* is analyzed in order to see what it says about foreign trade with *Dar al Harb*, scholars argue that Islamic law allows Muslims to carry out trade with subjects of *Dar al Harb*. However, because of some political and religious reasons Islamic law establishes some limitations for commercial agreements and exchange of commodities between Muslims and the subjects of *Dar al Harb*. These limitations are imposed on some exports and imports. For example, Islamic law prohibits the export of “arms, riding animals, and all materials that can be used in the industry of weapons and may increase the fighting power of *Dar al Harb*” (Zawati 322). These kinds of goods can be exported to enemy territories only if Muslims are sure they will not be used for military purposes. There are also some limitations on imports. For example, forbidden commodities such as wine and pork cannot be imported by *Dar al Islam*.

## **1.10 Differences between the Islamic and Western International Relations Theories**

Islamic and Western International Relations theories differ in their essence. Islamic IR theory is essentially normative. It does not define what and how things are but how they must be done. It does not indicate and explain how relations between states are handled but it tells how these relations must be handled based on norms and values.

While Hobbes and Kant believe peace is a better way of life and a state of peace can better achieve progress and stability, in Islam, peace is advocated as a divine quality, a transcendental guidance to be pursued in order to achieve the original state of felicity that we were in paradise, our former dwelling (Mirbagheri 1 cited by Tadjbakhsh 185).

*Sunnah* (Islamic tradition) states that justice is needed to achieve peace and that peace is totally related with the quality of virtue. Justice is deemed to be the reason and main goal of the construction of a political community within the Islam. “Peace that is based on justice would mean a balanced, fair and tranquil state of affairs, where all concerned would enjoy their due rights and protection” (Mirbagheri 3 cited by Tadjbakhsh 185). Western theory argues that a state needs to have order in order to have justice because justice cannot be found in a state that is in chaos. On the contrary, in Islamic thought, we do not need to have order first and then look for justice. A correct order itself constitutes justice. Islam states that morality and ethics and the inherent and indestructible relation of dependence between human beings, God and nature should be what guide the international relations leaving aside the pursuance of individual happiness and the reasons of the state (Tadjbakhsh 185).

Western theory, some authors argue, was created from a process of self-definition. This self-definition is the result of a process of analysis of the West and its own past. On the other hand, Islamic theory, with the new interpretations and movements that are being proposed, aims to create a theory that comes from different processes of analysis: one of the beginning and history of IR, one of the importance and function of reason and divine knowledge within IR and a last one about other civilizations and cultures and their way to discover and use truth and reason. It means that Islamic theory is aimed to be a construction made out of dialogues between the present and past and between Islam and other civilizations.

Islamic thinking uses a variety of dialogues in order to develop a unique IRT. These dialogues are guided by two different and contradictory approaches: a jurisprudential approach and an epistemic one. The jurisprudential approach argues the word of God is perfect, that it has only one interpretation that does not change with time and the only important thing is to find the correct way to apply God’s teachings revealed in the Qur’an with the guidance of the words of the Prophet. On the other hand, the epistemic approach, which is supported by modernists and the Islamization of knowledge movement, argues that religious understanding, which is a human affair, changes according to the time and new circumstances. God’s words are always the same but the way they are interpreted change according to the place, time and



different realities. Regarding international relations, the jurisprudential approach “leaves the debate to the clerical hierarchy which decides on the meanings of jihad” (Tadjbakhsh 186) and the epistemic approach opens the door for a debate about the interpretation of jihad.

Some authors argue that the Islamic IRT needs to be constructed through a constructivist approach (Tadjbakhsh 187). While Western theory seems to be based on utilitarian state and power-focused theories, Islamic IRT aims to introduce norms, values and ideational dimensions in the field of interstate relations. Islamic IRT aims to include in international relations: religious legitimacy, ethics and the states' pursuit to be considered morally correct. In this process of creation of the IRT through constructivism three factors are taken in consideration: religion, culture and identity.

Religion has not been a factor that has been taken in consideration in international relations. “The tendency to ignore religion to explain behaviors and outcomes in world politics lies in the Western-centric orientation of IR theory and – more specifically – its internalization of the Enlightenment norms of secularism and rationality” (Fox and Sandler 1 cited by Tadjbakhsh 187). The Westphalian Peace Treaty had the purpose of ending the wars between religions. Because of the idea that religions were the cause of wars, classical liberalists supported the idea of the separation of church and state.

Some authors argue that religion was left aside when social sciences came with the idea that everything could be explained rationally instead of theoretically. “Authors such as Auguste Comte, Emil Durkheim, Max Weber and Karl Marx, all predicated their theories on the disappearance of superstition and authoritarian religion” (Tadjbakhsh 187). However, religion is a factor that needs to be considered since religion for many people it is not only a system of beliefs that conduct their behavior in certain ways but it is also what gives them the basis for interpreting the world and the things that happen in it. If we are unaware or do not understand how other people interpret the different circumstances that happen in the world, it will be very difficult to have good relations with them.

Culture was another factor that, for many years, was not taken into consideration within the field of international relations. However, some argue that this has changed given that since the 90's culture has become a factor that has been studied and researched about within the field of international relations. Some scholars think that a new culture has been created thanks to globalization. Globalization has created "a new type of culture: one that is transnational based on accumulation, consumerism and individualism, and which has eroded nationally defined geographic identity" (Robinson 578 cited by Tadjbakhsh 188). However, other authors argue that it is not that a new culture that has been created but it is the Western culture that has been spread to other parts of the world. Neo-Gramscian thinkers have expressed their concern about "the consolidation of global hegemony and its extension from the core to the periphery" (Pasha 548 cited by Tadjbakhsh 188). They are also preoccupied with the encounters of these expanding Western forces and an essentialized Islam which seems to reject the adoption of the Western culture and engages in counter-hegemonic conflicts.

Identity has been analyzed as a factor of international relations by constructivist scholars since the late 1980s. It is argued that "the construction and domination of a particular identity is a product of the complex interaction of ideational and objective factors" (Hinnebusch 151 cited by Tadjbakhsh 188). In the Western models, a state achieves legitimacy if it has a combination of identity/nation and sovereignty/state. "In the Middle East, by contrast, the existence of strong substate and powerful supraplates' identities challenge loyalty to the state" (Hinnebusch 151 cited by Tadjbakhsh 189). The difference with the Western model is that people in the Middle East feel more identified with a specific tribe, society or Umma than they feel with a territorial state. In this region, states were formed not by its people's will but by the decision and delimitation of Western imperial powers. This caused the destruction of the existing cultural unit of the members of the Umma which in the past was the strongest factor they had for the formation of the Islamic civilization.

Once the Ottoman Empire collapsed, identities such as Arab nationalism were supported by some leaders looking for a reunification of the states that once formed the empire. Pan-Arabism saw its decline after the 1967 Arab defeat. After that, a new identity was proposed: Pan-Islamism. It was created with the objective of "creating

similar Islamic states that would act against the world arrogance in the name of the oppressed (mustadafun) of the Muslim world and Third World” (Tadjbakhsh 189). With the same purpose of creating a strong Islamic identity among the Islamic states, some supra-state organizations have been created such as the Saudi-promoted Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC). However, this organization has not achieved its goal of unifying Islamic states because it is said that it does not have the power to organize and coordinate the actions of Islamic states and has not achieved any significant consensus among its members.

Some authors argue that these movements and organizations have failed in achieving their goals because of the different structure and reality that each state presents, the multiple identities that exist among the members and the “absence of economic interdependence among Muslim states as well as their dependence on the core” (Tadjbakhsh 189). International pressure appeared to be one cause for the significant differences that exist among states and their lack of interest in forming a unique identity and acting as a group. “International pressure can cause countries to become more different from each other as well as cause groups within countries to become more different from each other” (Bush 13).

States achieve legitimacy not only from their external sovereignty but also from their internal one. Internal sovereignty is achieved by respecting and adhering to the rules of the majority of the population. In the case of Islamic states, this is a challenge due to the fact that “states have to follow the reason of state in order to survive but the reason of Islam in order to maintain their legitimacy” (Tadjbakhsh 190). It is argued that the nation-state in the thinking of Islam is “a constituted object not a constitutive subject, existing as a contingent by-product of outside formations and not necessary as a sign of inside principles” (Sabet 187 cited by Tadjbakhsh 190). According to Islamic jurisprudential theory: “the state is a means towards securing an Islamic or ‘good’ life, and of spreading Islamic values, and not an end in itself” (Tadjbakhsh 190). “The state emerged as an outcome not of anarchy but of human cooperation, based on reason, social solidarity with an emphasis on group consciousness and social cohesion, what was called *assabiyya*” (Khaldoun 1 cited by Tadjbakhsh 190).

While in Western theory power/capability seemed to be the driving force that conducts acts and decisions, in Islamic theory the driving force is the pursuit of social unity towards a moral good. Western IRT (with its main approaches: realism, neorealism and liberalism) and Islamic theory represent therefore “distinct philosophical and religious discourses which influence and structure different conceptions and actions” (Sabet 183 cited by Tadjbakhsh 191).

### **1.11 Conclusions**

Historically the “West” has spread its ideology of International Relations globally. However, there are several competitive and powerful ideologies about how to carry out International Relations one of which is Islamic. There are many pre-conceived ideas about Islam that need to be surmounted. We need to listen to Islamic thinkers speak and explain their ideas and after that we will be able to give a critical opinion about them and their application in the world. Islamic IRT presents alternatives of how to organize knowledge about international relations.

The alternatives are based on important ideas such as justice, morality, faith, religious understanding which are opposed to the pursuance of material wealth and power. These ideas presented by Islamic ITR are not widely welcomed by other parts of the world. That is why, in recent years they have been subject to important modifications in order to make them more compatible with the modern ideas that this globalized world presents nowadays. It is true that it would be difficult or even impossible to make this theory universal and applicable to all the parts of the world but it is important to know it and analyze it in order to be able to open a dialogue about the construction of a new theory that involves more than just Western thinking.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **Western International Relations Theory**

#### **Introduction**

Since ancient times, when states started to relate with each other in order to achieve their objectives and assure their security, scholars have been interested in studying the different relations that have occurred between the states. They have tried to explain what motivates states to have relations with other states and how those relations are handled. The creation of a theory of international relations has been one way which through they have tried to explain this discipline. There is not only one theory but several ones and this is due to numerous group of scholars that have been interested in this discipline. However, most authors argue that realism, liberalism and constructivism are the most known and used theories within international relations.

These theories provide their own ideas and interpretations about the relations and phenomena that occur in the international system. Many debates have been made regarding which of these theories best explains international relations. However, most of the discussions have concluded that it is not possible to choose only one theory that properly explains all the inter-state relations that are handled in the world. This is due to the fact that these theories have been created based on the experiences and history of the states in which they were developed. Therefore, one theory could explain the way one state or a specific group of states handle their foreign relations but that explanation does not necessarily reflect the reality of all the states in the world.

Due to the fact that the world is constantly changing and that every day new circumstances are presented in the international system, many scholars argue that the popular international relation theories, which were created many years ago, do not reflect the current reality anymore. That is the reason why many scholars are now trying to analyze old theories and to reinterpret them in a way that serves to explain the current situations happening within inter-states relations. Some other disciplines such as sociology, anthropology, psychology, among others have contributed with significant ideas in order to construct alternative theories.

There are also some new international relations theories that derive from a variety of cultures and parts of the world that are also contributing with significant ideas and interpretations. Some scholars argue that in order to create a theory that is able to explain the international relations properly, it is necessary to take in consideration different perspectives and ideas. Authors such as Tim Dunne, Lene Hansen and Colin Wight have called this idea “integrative pluralism”. “Integrative pluralism accepts and preserves the validity of a wide range of theoretical perspectives and embraces theoretical diversity as a means of providing more comprehensive and multi dimensional accounts of complex phenomena” (Dunne, Hansen and Wight 416).

## **2.1 Western International Relations Theory**

There are not many writings about a “Western” international relations theory. This may be because this theory is supposed to be created to explain how relations between states from all over the world are handled. It was created thanks to the contribution of many scholars whose ideas come from different philosophies and doctrines. It aims to explain and guide the relations not only among Western states but among all the states that exist. However, some authors argue that this is a “Western” theory given that all the concepts and ideas that form it come from Western thinkers and are based on Western countries’ history and experiences.

There are many reason, some of which are later explained in this chapter, why this theory is considered to be one of the most important, known and applied ones among

other theories that exist. Many authors argue that this theory has been even considered as universal and has been the one taken into consideration at the time of regulating international relations. Because of its universal “acceptance” and application, some scholars argue that international relations are regulated by following a Eurocentric theory.

The present international political structure of the world is, at least in its most basic features, the legacy of Europe’s now vanished ascendancy. Because it was in fact Europe and not America, Asia, or Africa that first dominated and, in so doing, unified the world, it is not our perspective but the historical record itself that can be called Eurocentric (Bull and Watson 2 cited by Seth para. 4).

## **2.2 History**

Since ancient times, there have been attempts to explain what is meant by the term international relations. It is said that Plato and Aristotle mentioned some things about it in their reflections (Dougherty 11). However, they are not considered very important given that these two philosophers only mentioned some ideas but did not aim to explain the topic itself. On the other hand, the ancient Greek historian Thucydides did give some significant ideas to explain how inter-state relations were handled. He did so through his work called “History of the Peloponnesian War” (Dougherty 11).

One of the important authors of that time was The Prince of Machiavelli who argued that the power and international system had to be understood through modern analysis and considered this discipline as one that has no values involved (Dougherty 11). One of the first and most important writings about the creation of a peaceful international system was “De Monarchia” by Dante Alighieri. There were many other important authors that wrote about the topic. However, it is argued that these writings were not considered important enough to analyze and be taken into consideration to create a theory at that time. It is said that most of the scholars were rather preoccupied with the study of the balance of power theory (Dougherty 11).

The period of European history from 1648 a 1914 is considered to be “the golden age of diplomacy, the balance of power, alliances and international law” (Dougherty 12). Until 1914, the idea that most international relations scholars held was that the international system was unchangeable and that having a world divided in sovereign states was necessary and even natural. The ones who studied international relations focused their attention on understanding and explaining diplomacy and international law rather than the processes that took place in the international system.

It is said that the rise of United States as a superpower was an event that led scholars in that country to be more interested in the study of international relations. However, the unclear foreign policy of the country and some periods of isolation between 1920 and 1930 did not allow scholars to develop international relations as an intellectual discipline or theory (Dougherty 13). In North American universities the only courses in which something related to international relations was taught were the ones called global events and international law. Global events aimed to help students understand the world events happening at that time but did not teach them how to apply social sciences methodology rightly. International law was focused on the differences between the obligations of the different states of the world and the fight of the superpowers to maintain their status quo.

In the interwar period, some scholars were preoccupied with the study of international law and international organizations. However, there were others who started to analyze what factors or characteristics in the relations between states could be considered as the cause for the Great War of 1914-1918. Many argued that the aim of finding the way to avoid another war was what gave the study of international relations significant importance. “An urgent desire to abolish war and reduce its destructive power set the approach to international relations theory” (Dougherty 15).

In order to understand the causes of the war, they started to study important topics such as nationalism, imperialism, colonialism, negotiation, balance of power, the geographic aspects of the distribution of power in the world, the history of international relations and the influence of economic factors in those relations. A set of theories was being developed, each one with its different ideas and interpretations.



Many of these were later very important elements that were taken in consideration at the time of the construction of a international relations theory.

### **2.3 Importance of the Peace of Westphalia for the Western IRT**

The Peace of Westphalia refers to two treaties, the Treaty of Münster and the Treaty of Osnabrück, which were signed in October and May of 1648. These treaties ended the Thirty Years' War in the Holy Roman Empire and the Eighty Years' War between Spain and the Dutch republic.

These treaties are very important to take into consideration regarding international relations theory given that many scholars argue that they established some of ideas that are part of the essence of the theory. Some of the principles that international relations theorists argue come from The Peace of Westphalia are: the principle of the sovereignty of states, principle of self-determination, principle of equality between states and the principle of non-intervention of one state in the internal affairs of another state (Carbone 2).

These principles are the basis for the explanation of the international system given by Western theory. Such ideas are widely accepted and applied in international relations and international law. “These allow each constituent to choose and pursue its own domestic way of life, while providing norms and rules for their interaction” (Seth para. 9). Given that the relations in the international system are conducted by following these principles, some scholars argue that this system is a “Westphalian system”.

### **2.4 Main branches of Western International Relations Theory**

#### **2.4.1 Classical realism**

Classical realism focuses especially on topics such as: state sovereignty, military power and national interests. It is argued that its roots are found in “the diplomatic

and political practices of modern Europe up to 1945” (Acharya and Buzan 6). Classical realism argues that power politics is something that is rooted in human nature. Thucydides who is argued to be one of the creators of classical realism in his work “The Peloponnesian War” wrote: “human behavior is guided by three factors: fear (phobos), self-interest (kerdos) and honor (doxa). These aspects of human nature cause instabilities and wars, characteristics of the human condition (anthropinon)” (Thucydides cited by Bartolomé 9).

Power politics is a form of international relations in which each state looks for its interests only and tries to find the ways to achieve them without taking into consideration the interests of other states or the international community. Therefore, classical realism supports a foreign policy that is based on “self-interest, self-reliance, suspicion and vigilance” (Acharya and Buzan 7).

#### **2.4.2 Neorealism**

Neorealism argues that power politics exists due to the need of states to survive in an anarchic international system. “Both classical and neorealism project onto the rest of world history their basic Europe-derived story of international anarchy and balance of power politics as a permanent, universal structural condition” (Acharya and Buzan 7). They based their concepts on the Western modern history in which Western powers fight among themselves and look for ways to take over the rest of the countries in the world. Realism has imposed its state-centric concepts over the the world and has made these concepts to be considered as the successful way to become a superpower.

Realists argue that: “States are sovereign and thus autonomous of each other; no inherent structure or society can emerge or even exist to order relations between them. They are bound only by forcible, coercion or their own consent” (Slaughter para. 2). Realism argues that power is the most important thing a state can have because only through power states can defend themselves and survive. It says that power is presented in different forms. There is economic, military and diplomatic

power and all these types of power are needed in order to be able to defend a state in an anarchic system.

It is said that the way of understanding the world through the eyes of realism is based on four assumptions. First, realists argue that the main goal every state has is to survive and that foreign invasion and occupation are the biggest and most common threats they face. It is said that even when a state has a foreign policy that encourages a pacific treaty with other states and the international cooperation, every state needs to be prepared with the sufficient power to defend itself from any threat that is presented to it.

Second, realism asks states to be rational. It means that even though the goal of each state is to survive, they should try to maintain a pacific communication and treaties between them and should engage in international cooperation in order to have a world where survival will be more easily achieved. Third, realism argues that every state has military power and no state can be sure about the good or bad intentions of the neighboring country. It means that it considers the world to be dangerous and uncertain. That is the reason why it urges states to have enough power to be able to defend themselves. Fourth, realists argue that this is a world where is “the Great Powers—the States with most economic clout and, especially, military might, that are decisive. In this view, international relations is essentially a story of Great Power politics” (Slaughter para. 4).

It is said that realists are divided in two groups. There are offensive and defensive realists. Offensive realists argue that states must be aware of the power other states possess and always seek to have more power than them. They argue that a state can be safe only if it has more power than the others. “Hegemony is thus the best strategy for a country to pursue, if it can” (Slaughter para. 5). On the other hand, defensive realists argue that seeking to dominate other states is not the right strategy to survive. They state that domination will guide states into more conflicts and attacks among them. Instead, they support the idea of having an equal distribution of power among states. In that way, they think states will not risk their security by attacking others that have their same level of power. “Polarity—the distribution of

power amongst the Great Powers—is thus a key concept in Realist theory” (Slaughter para. 5).

In relation to international law and international institutions, realists argue that these laws and institutions seek to have an equal distribution of power among states. However, they argue that in an anarchic system of law cannot control the acts of the states if it is not enforced through State power. They also say that no state will accept to be under a law unless it is a law that regulates an issue the state is interested in and one that presents direct benefits to it. “It is not the rules themselves that determine why a State acts a particular way, but instead the underlying material interests and power relations. International law is thus a symptom of State behaviour, not a cause” (Slaughter para. 7).

It is argued that realists and neo-realists do not consider essential to analyse the role of culture in international relations. “Since states simply exist, and by their nature pursue their interests, or else are compelled to do so by the systemic and structural circumstances of anarchy, the rules that govern state interaction are not seen to have anything to do with culture” (Seth para. 7).

### **2.4.3 Strategic Studies**

The discipline of Strategic studies is similar to realism because it accepts most of its concepts of how the world is and how international relations work. However, the focus is on the strategies and tools used in military power. Strategic studies flourished during the Cold War “in the pursuit of deterrence theory as a response to the co-development of nuclear weapons and long-range missiles” (Acharya and Buzan 7).

It is argued that this branch is influenced by a rational way of analysis and Western economic thinking. After the Cold War, it has been more focused on what is called “Revolution in Military Affairs” which refers to the creation and inclusion of new technologies and strategies in military issues. However, it is also argued that strategic studies do not only come from Western thinking since this branch has also been influenced by non-Western thoughts such as the ones from Che Guevara with

his knowledge on guerrilla war and Sun Tzu with his knowledge on strategic thinking.

#### **2.4.4 Institutionalism**

It is argued that institutionalism shares some ideas with realism, for example, the idea that the international system is anarchic, that states will always look for their own interests, that states seek to survive by increasing their power, and that the world is dangerous and uncertain. However, institutionalism does believe that cooperation between states is possible but it also believes that cooperation is still a self-interested strategy. If two countries sign a free trade agreement it is because they both will get benefits from it. One country will not agree to give privileges and benefits to another unless there is something in exchange. Some of the most important and characteristic concepts that come from institutionalism are the ones of reciprocity and reputation considered as essential factors to make international cooperation possible. Realists, on the contrary, think that cooperation is not real unless there is coercive power to enforce the agreements that have been signed.

Institutionalists argue that institutions defined as “set of rules, norms, practices and decision-making procedures that shape expectations” (Slaughter para. 10) can minimize the uncertainty that comes with the acts of cooperation. They argue that first, institutions allow states to have several meetings of negotiation in order to conclude agreements that include benefits for all the parts. They can even have negotiations to renew or modify old agreements which facilitate cooperation among states.

Second, it is argued that institutions also encourage states to consider reputation as an important factor and characteristic they must have in order to be accepted in processes and acts of international cooperation. Third, institutions also pay attention to the behavior of the states and their commitment and responsibility at the time of complying with everything that was agreed with other states. Institutions collect and provide information about the state's behavior and on that basis states decide if they want or do not want to negotiate with a specific state. Fourth, institutions provide a

centralized forum in which states can have their negotiations which helps to facilitate the process and reduce the costs involved. They also provide a set of rules which helps to coordinate the process, make it more organized and easy to handle.

#### **2.4.5 Liberalism and neo-liberalism**

It is argued that liberalism and neo-liberalism come from “political and economic theory, and from the Western practice of political economy from the nineteenth century onwards” (Acharya and Buzan 7). Liberalism presents such principles as individualism and democracy, among others. While realism analyzes history and experiences to explain how the world was and will always be liberalism looks for new ways of doing things in order to help people to construct a better, more peaceful and just world for the future. It is argued that liberalism looks for the homogenization of economic and political practices as well as human rights across the planet.

Most Western countries have applied ideas and principles that come from liberalism and due to the success that many of them have achieved, they argue that liberalism's ideas are the way in which any country can also achieve success and power.

“Liberal theorists have often emphasized the unique behavior of liberal states; though more recent work has sought to extend the theory to a general domestic characteristics-based explanation of international relations” (Slaughter para. 14). Some neo-liberal scholars have introduced new ideas to this theory. These ideas are related to the importance of taking into consideration the characteristics of individual states in order to understand their interests, goals and way of handling their international relations. “This view contrasts sharply with both realist and institutionalist accounts, in which all states have essentially the same goals and behaviors (at least internationally) and are considered self-interested actors pursuing wealth or survival” (Slaughter para. 14).

One of the most important ideas of liberalism is democracy. Scholars used to argue that democracy is the right path for every state given that democracy prevents war. They used as argument “the absence of war between liberal States, defined as mature

liberal democracies” (Slaughter para. 15). However, later studies and analysis led to this argument being considered questionable given the fact that wars between liberal and democratic states actually happened. There are other new ideas that some scholars have included in this theory. First, states are not the only actors in the international system. Individuals and private groups are also important actors in world politics. Second, state’s main objective is to serve the interests of its society. Third, we can understand the behavior of a state in the international system by understanding the interests of its society (Moravcsik 513 cited by Slaughter para. 16).

States are “configurations of individual and group interests who then project those interests into the international system through a particular kind of government” (Slaughter para. 17). It is true that survival is still one of their main goals, but it is not the only. There are also economic, commercial, political goals which are configured depending on the interests and ideological beliefs of each society. Some of the ideas of neo-liberalism result in being too complicated to apply in international law. This is because international law does not have the mechanisms to take into consideration the reality and interests of each state at the time of formulating international norms. It is argued that these are ideas that are usually considered and applied in the creation of institutions such as international courts which must take in consideration differences between states at the time of making decisions given that those decisions will impact the state internally.

#### **2.4.6 Marxism**

It is argued that Marxism is “the main reaction against and counterpoint to liberalism’s response to the rise of an industrial economy in the West” (Acharya and Buzan 8). Marxism argues that liberal ideas and principles, such as individualism and market, instead of helping people to construct a better and fairer world will conduct people to start a war between social classes. Marxism supports collectivism and a command economy which are opposed to the ideas presented by liberalism. However, Marxism and liberalism have also some common ideas.

Marxism does not only analyze the past and explain how the world is but it also looks for new ways to make the world a better place for human beings. Additionally, like liberalism, Marxism argues that its ideas and strategies are applicable for every country and human being in the world. When the Soviet Union was strong, Marxists claimed that the power it had was due to the application of its concepts. However, once the Soviet Union was dissolved, it is argued that Marxism lost its strength and only some of its ideas were taken by other countries such as China. Since that moment, Marxism was not seen as a successful way to achieve power and prosperity.

#### **2.4.7 The English School**

It is argued that the roots of the English School come from Western political theory. The English School argues that states can and should form an international society. The main writings about this branch are found in European history. There are also some works and analyses made about the pre-modern period to show the existence of international societies in those times. The main purpose of the English School is to show how an international society that was formed in Europe could expand and take over the rest of the world “through the success of its imperialism, (and) Europe (could remake) the world politically in its own image of sovereign territorial states, diplomacy and international law” (Acharya and Buzan 9).

English School scholars argue that in order to study world politics, it is necessary to understand history. They think that it is not simply about understanding the balance of power in the international system, but it is about understanding what circumstances led the world to have that kind of balance, what made the powerful states be powerful, the weak ones to be weak and what motives led them to act in the way they do. Some authors argue that the English School looks for ways to expand European culture and society to the rest of the world. It is argued that English School supporters believe that this is possible due to the lack of a powerful culture in other parts of the world that could stand against European culture.



### **2.4.8 Critical theory**

It is argued that critical theory has its roots in Marxism. It shares with Marxism the idea of not just explaining the world but looking for ways to make it a better place. Critical theory presents a position against exclusionism and in favor of emancipation. Unlike other progressive theories that present their ideas as universal, critical theory seems to take in consideration and to understand the different situations that each country and society presents. It is argued that this branch has been influenced by Marxism, European economic and political theories, Peace Research and feminist writings.

This theory is “concerned with the construction of power and the State, which theories like Realism or Institutionalism tend to take for granted” (Slaughter para. 26). Marxism argues that it is important to understand class relations in order to understand state’s behavior and feminism considers gender as variable of interest that also influences the way a state behave. These two ideas are taking into consideration in the critical theory. All these ideas have led this theory to be concerned not just with state security but with human security too. In this perspective, critical theory will analyze, for example, the damage the war causes not just to the state but to the families and individuals that belong to it.

### **2.4.9 Constructivism and postmodernism**

It is argued that both constructivism and postmodernism have their roots in the Western philosophy of knowledge and social theory. It is argued that this branch has also been influenced by feminist writings. “They set themselves up as alternatives to the materialist, positivist epistemologies underpinning realism and liberalism, seeing the social world as needing to be approached in its own terms as an intersubjective realm of shared understandings” (Acharya and Buzan 9).

Constructivism is mainly a methodological approach rather than a normative one. Postmodernism seems to be more radical, challenging the idea of a relationship between knowledge and power and considering the “truth” as a social construction

that is limited by time and space. Constructivism and postmodernism believe that their ideas are universal in application but they also understand that social structures are limited by time and space which make it impossible to compare them across time and space.

Constructivism believes that “military power, trade relations, international institutions, or domestic preferences are not important because they are objective facts about the world, but rather because they have certain social meanings” (Wendt cited by Slaughter para. 20). Constructivism argues that in order to understand states’ behavior, we need to analyze a set of ideas, norms, history and beliefs that belong to each of the states. It focuses on the social context of international relations giving significant importance to variables such as identity and belief. The way states perceive other states: as friends or enemies, as part of a group or opposed to it, etc. also determines the way they will handle international relations.

Constructivism gives a lot of importance to the role of social norms in international relations. “Constructivists would argue that the norm of State sovereignty has profoundly influenced international relations, creating a predisposition for noninterference that precedes any cost-benefit analysis States may undertake” (Slaughter para. 22). They argue that some international norms are created based on constructed attitudes rather than on the rational pursuit of interests.

Constructivism considers non-state actors as very important parts of the international system. Scholars argue that transnational actors like NGOs or transnational corporations can alter state beliefs about some issues related to war or international commerce. “Such ‘norm entrepreneurs’ are able to influence state behavior through rhetoric or other forms of lobbying, persuasion, and shaming” (Keck and Sikkink cited by Slaughter para. 23). While institutionalism argue that institutions are just tools used and created by states to serve their interests, constructivism believes that institutions also look for their own interest (free trade or homogenization of human rights in all the world) which may or may not be the same as the ones of the states that created them.

#### **2.4.10 Feminism**

In order to understand the ideas that come from feminism regarding international relations, we should understand the meaning of some important terms such as gender and patriarchy. Feminists argue that the term gender does not have the same meaning as the term sex. Gender does not refer to the biological differences that exist between women and men but it refers to “the complex social construction of men’s and women’s identities and behaviors in relation to each other” (Ruiz 1). Feminists use the term gender to analyze the “relations of power involving men and women, how that power is exerted, and how that interaction has been habitually, historically, and socially implemented over time” (Ruiz 1). The term patriarchy feminists argue means “a system in which females are subordinate to men, in terms of power and status, and which is based on the belief that ‘it is right and proper for men to command and women to obey’” (Ruiz 1).

Feminism argues that most of the actors in the international system: governments’ representatives, diplomats, policymakers, and academic professionals come from “patriarchal social and political backgrounds” (Ruiz 1). The main discussion proposed by feminism regarding international relations is about the lack of importance that is given to the role of women in the international system. They present cases in which women have been excluded from the international arena as arguments to demonstrate the reality women face at the time of trying to be international actors. “Areas of domestic politics, the military, and even the topic of education are issues with respect to which feminists would argue that gender and patriarchy do not allow women equal access to power positions in world politics” (Ruiz 2).

There are many debates that have been developed within Feminism regarding how international relations should be understood and explained. That is the reason why there is not only one perspective through which feminism understand inter-state relations but there are many. There are two perspectives that are considered by some scholars as the most important ones. These come from two areas of feminism: standpoint feminism and radical feminism.

Standpoint theory argues that international relations can be understood by understanding first “the gendered construction of knowledge” (Ruiz 2). They argue that gender influences the way people think and act in the international system. In relation to the construction of a theory for IR, they argue that “the purpose and definition of ‘theory’ is in itself male-centered, because it is oppressively normative rather than conjectural and analytic” (Goldman 423 cited by Ruiz 2). They argue that creating a theory means to present ideas considered by some as “normal or standard” and expect everyone to accept them as true and universally applicable, without first questioning if those ideas are really objective and accurate (Ruiz 2).

In relation to security, which is an important topic in international relations, feminists argue that it should not only refer to protecting the state from other states’ attacks but it should also refer to protecting people, especially women, from acts of violence and rape which come not only from foreign people in their territory but mostly from their own fellow citizens. They argue that not only states but also individuals are international actors that should be protected and taken in consideration. Feminism argues that important issues such as sex trafficking and migration of labor are left aside in order to discuss about what are considered to be “more important” issues such planning military and war strategies or finding the ways to develop good diplomatic inter-state relations.

On the other hand, radical feminism “focuses on the lives and experiences of women showing how women’s activities are made invisible on the international scene” (Code 1 cited by Ruiz 3). They argue that even though women are sometimes not allowed to be important and visible actors in the international system, they do contribute, perhaps indirectly, with the functioning of the system. They encourage people to search about the role of diplomatic wives and even military prostitutes in everything “men” have achieved within international relations.

“Feminists argue that realists overvalue the role of the state in defining international relations, without questioning how the state itself is internally structured, politically and socially” (Ruiz 3). They argue that the state does not take in consideration the views and opinions of the individuals. They also argue that if an state pays attention

to its individuals' interests, including women's interests, its interest and ways of achieving them will be different.

Feminism argues that "realism is the antithesis to achieving gender equality, both in discussion and practice, and even in its tools of war and security, patriarchy remains the central theme" (Ruiz 4). It is said that if individuals' opinions are not considered important, female individuals' opinions will neither be taken in consideration. Therefore, feminism ideas will not be part of international discussions. On the other hand, liberalism seems to consider the individual as an important international actor and present some other ideas with which feminism agree. However, feminism has also some critiques to give to liberalism. "Feminist critiques of liberalism address the economic inequalities inherent to free trade, which disproportionately affect women" (Ruiz 4). They argue that economic indicators as the Gross National Product do not value women's work. They say that they do not give the necessary importance to women's work "since much of their work is reflected in unpaid illegal or domestic settings that are not included in economic assessments" (Ruiz 5).

## **2.5 Fundamental ideas of the Western International Relations Theory**

### **2.5.1 Anarchy**

Two of the dominant theories in international relations, Neorealism and Neoliberalism, argue that the international system is anarchic. The word "anarchy" can have two different meanings: "lack of order, and lack of government" (Pfefferle para. 10). "Neo-realists argue that conflict occurs because of the absence of order analogous to that which exists within states, while Neoliberals stress that the prospects for cooperation are constrained by anarchy, but not made impossible" (Pfefferle para. 9). Neoliberals also argue that a lack of government represents a problem for the system because there is not a central authority that can enforce the agreements and contracts signed by the states and that it is also a cause of conflict (Pfefferle para. 11). However, some scholars argue that there is not a complete lack of order in the international system given that there are frameworks that have been

established by the states which help them define rules and institutions within the system (Pfefferle para. 10). Some scholars argue that even the idea of balance of power that comes from Neo-realism can be considered as a principle that settles an order in the international system.

### **2.5.2 Conflict and Cooperation**

While Neo-realists see conflict as an inherent factor of international relations, Neoliberals see cooperation as a way to avoid conflict between states. Neoliberals believe that cooperation is possible “in large part due to the role played by institutions and regimes” (Grieco 117 cited by Pfefferle para. 12). It is argued that Neo-realists and Neoliberals are trying to find stability in a system they consider to be anarchic. Neoliberals believe that cooperation together with institutions facilitates the achievement of security and stability in the system. On the other hand, Realists do not believe in cooperation as a way of avoiding conflict which they think is something that will always be present in the international system (Pfefferle para. 14).

## **2.6 Key concepts of the Western International Relations Theory**

### **2.6.1 The state**

The concept of state is one of the most important ones in Western IR theory. Its importance is due to the fact that states were, at the beginning of the creation of the theory, considered the only actors of the international system. Some scholars still think that they are the only actors. However, most of the theories nowadays argue that there are also non-state actors which play significant roles in the international arena. State is defined by some authors as “an extremely well-established form of political community” (Cox 121). Sovereignty is the state’s more important characteristic. Sovereignty means “that the state itself should not be subject to superior external authority and that the state constitutes the supreme authority within a given jurisdiction” (Cox 122). Sovereignty as a characteristic given to every state

was established in the international system by the Peace of Westphalia of 1648 (Cox 122).

States remain being the strongest international actors and this is due to the fact that states can do things that non-state actors cannot. “States, and states alone, have the power to raise taxes, issue passports, print money, pass laws, allow people in and out of countries, put them in prison, and in some jurisdictions even kill people” (Cox 125). States are also responsible of making foreign policy and deciding how they relations with other states will be. They are considered to be “the the only legitimate representatives of territories and populations on the global stage” (Cox 125).

### **2.6.2 War**

War has been defined as an “organized violence carried on by political units against each other” (Cox 93). It has been always present in the world and that is why some scholars argue that it is a natural condition of international relations. Realists argue that war is not caused by state’s expansionist ambitions or the lack of a central and supreme authority in the international system. They argue that it is caused by individuals given that war is seen as something that is inherent to human nature. “Those who yearn for peace probably assume that war is deeply abnormal. Those who study the world in all its complexity, however, soon come to realize that war is a deeply ingrained part of our social lives” (Cox 93).

Some other authors argue that war is not part of human nature but is a consequence of the lack of a central authority in the international system. “Anarchy generates a security paradox, forcing states to ensure their own survival through preparations for war” (Waltz cited by Cox 94). It does not mean that states will fight each other at any time and for any reason. Some authors argue that there are four main motives that a state has to initiate a war: “fear, interest, standing and revenge” (Lebow cited by Cox 95).

One big motivation for war is profit. Some states have gained more territory through war, other have gained access to important markets or essential commodities and resources. Other motive that has contributed to the initiation of wars has been

defending certain faith or identity. “Religion has been an especially potent source of conflict. Two of the world’s most influential faiths, Islam and Christianity, have witnessed many wars over the centuries” (Cox 97). Revolution is also considered as a cause of war. “Throughout most of the twentieth century, nationalist revolutions and the belief in the need for revolutionary violence to overthrow Western domination have been principal sources of war” (Cox 98).

War can be developed in many forms and it can have different types of actors. At the beginning, it was said that war was something that happen only between states given that states were the only ones with the power to mobilize resources and hundreds of peoples and to command them to do certain actions. However, scholars argue that wars also happen between non-state actor. It can be between individuals inside the state or terrorist groups against societies, among others.

### **2.6.3 Peace**

Peace is defined by some scholars as “the opposite of war – an absence of conflict” (Cox 107). While some scholars argue that peace is achieved when one state is not being attacked by other states, other authors argue that peace is really achieved when there is a stability outside as well as inside the state. “Peace requires not only an absence of war, which is called negative peace, but also an absence of the social injustice caused by structural violence, which is called positive peace” (Cox 107). Realists argue that in order to achieve and maintain the peace, states need to be always powerful and militarily prepared. In this way, other states will avoid attacking them because they know they are not strong enough to win the battle.

There other authors who do not agree with the ideas that come from realism and have proposed their own ideas for achieving the peace in the international system. Immanuel Kant argues that in order to achieve peace, states must, among other things, show opposition to “secret treaties and to the intervention of the states to alter ‘the constitution or government’ of another state” (Crox 109). Liberalism also presents some ideas about how to achieve peace. They believe in the power of the treaties and the cooperation as ways to maintain peaceful relations between states.



After the Second World War, a relatively successful peace was constructed not because the USA had more tanks, planes and submarines, than its enemies, but because the USA in particular and the West in general could draw on its shared Liberal tradition of peacemaking, speeding up the West's reconstruction after years of profound disturbance (Cox 110).

Treaties have been a way in which states have been able to end conflicts. "As agreements between consenting parties, they also assume a legally binding character" (Cox 110). Treaties have the power to enforce what was agreed between the states by using international pressure. However, history has shown us that treaties are sometimes violated and have failed to stop new conflicts. Peace movements have also been a way in which people have tried to ask for peace in their territory and in the world. Some of these movements have been successful at forcing states getting into a peace process. A peace process refers to a "political process in which conflicts are resolved through negotiation and nonviolent means" (Cox 113). These processes involve: negotiation, persuasion, mediation, dialogue, among other tools that help them achieve their objective.

#### **2.6.4 Power**

There are many definitions of power. Power can be related to economic resources, military capacity, international influence, among other factors. It is known that power is not equally distributed among the states in the world. Power is not always something we can see. "There are forms of power that we cannot see, such as the power of an idea like nationalism or the mobilising power of something like faith" (Cox 137). These two forms of invisible power can influence the decisions and actions of international actors. Norms and institutions are also forms of power that force states and non-states actors to act in certain way, sometimes even against their will.

It is argued that geographical characteristics could be factors that determine the distribution of power in the international system. "A state with limited territory and few resources is likely to be a rather weak. By the same token those controlling

expansive lands and rich natural resources are likely to be powerful” (Cox 140). However, geography is not the only factor that determines the distribution of power among states. There are also other factors such as: economic development, population, technological development, education, political stability, role of women in society, and even the region or continent where the state is located.

## **2.7 Explanations for the dominance of Western theory in International Relations**

There are several international relations theories. They have ideas and concepts which were established based on the history and experiences of the country or region in which they were developed. Many authors argue that the way international relations are handled is Eurocentric. They say that because most of the principles, mechanisms, norms and rules that are used in the international system were created based on what is called “Western” theory proposes. Some authors give several explanations of why the Western theory is the most known, popular and applied one in interstate relations.

First, it is argued that Western thinkers were the first and more interested ones in studying international relations and creating a theory for this discipline. It is said that the first debates about the creation of a theory took place in Western countries. Second, it is said that “Western IRT has acquired hegemonic status in the Gramscian sense” (Acharya and Buzan 17). This means that the West have found the way to influence the minds of others and make them believe that their theory is the right one. “Western imperialism not only overwhelmed local traditions of thought and knowledge, but also cut peoples off from their own history by drawing their self-understanding into a Western historical frame” (Acharya and Buzan 18).

Third, it is argued that non-Western theories exist but they find barriers at the time of trying to be part of global debates or be published globally. One of the difficulties they find is the language. They usually use a language that is used only in their country or region which makes it difficult for them to reach readers with different languages. “Those engaged in the English language debates have more than enough

to read within that, and often lack the language skills to investigate beyond it” (Acharya and Buzan 18). It is also said that another difficulty they face is the lack of receptiveness of non-western contributions by the West. “The themes of articles published in these journals are heavily weighted in favor of Western issues, theories and settings, both historical and contemporary” (Acharya and Buzan 19).

Fourth, it is argued that certain conditions (cultural, political, historical, etc) in the countries or regions where non-Western scholars come from can be seen as obstacles for the creation of an international relations theory. One of these obstacles may be the lack of support and encouragement of governments, universities and institutions for scholars to research and publish their works. It is also said that the concept of theory, as something that helps explain things and events and establish parameters of how things happen and will continue happening, is not a mechanism that is used in every part of the world. Therefore, it may be difficult for non-western scholars to explain international relations in a way they do not know or are not used to use, which makes it difficult for them to construct an IR theory.

There are many other reasons why the Western theory is the most applied one. However, nowadays there are an increasing number of non-Western scholars who are writing and explaining international relations based on their history, experiences, culture and beliefs and they are getting to publish their work and make it globally known.

## **2.8 Conclusion**

Many authors argue that there is not a “Western” international relations theory given that this theory was created to explain how relations between all the states in the world are handled. However, there are other authors who argue that this is a Western theory given that it was created by ideas and concepts that are based in Western history and that come from Western scholars.

Western theory has been influenced by many philosophies and doctrines. Each of them has their way of understanding and explaining international relations. Some of them seem to be opposed to others. However, they all have contributed to the

creation of this theory. There are many reason why this called “Western theory” is considered to be the most important, known and applied one. Most of what is done in the international system is based on the principles and ideas of this theory. However, this is sometimes called Eurocentrism in international relations and is what is causing conflict with other parts of the world which are not very comfortable accepting and applying this theory.

Nowadays, there are some non-Western authors who are trying to create an IR theory that actually reflects the way they understand international relations and they way they suggest they should be handled. These writing are receiving more and more attention and are being taking into consideration by some doctrines that propose the creation of a new IR theory that includes more and different perspectives and reflects the reality of not only one part of the world but the reality of the whole planet.

## CHAPTER 3

### Agreement on Iran's nuclear program

#### Introduction

On July 14, 2015, an agreement on Iran's nuclear program was signed by Iran and a group of six powers called P5+1 which includes: the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Russia, China, and Germany. After a wide number of negotiations, they have agreed and settled a Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). "The JCPOA is intended to ensure that Iran's nuclear program can be used for purely peaceful purposes, in exchange for a broad lifting of U.S., European Union (EU), and United Nations (U.N.) sanctions on Iran" (Katzman and Kerr 1).

Negotiations regarding the Iranian nuclear program started in 2003 when the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) "reported the existence of clandestine nuclear facilities at Natanz" (Katzman and Kerr 1). After that report, countries such as France, Germany and the United Kingdom were concerned about the possibility of the construction of nuclear weapons by Iran. They started negotiations in which Iran agreed to suspend some of the activities of its nuclear program, but at the same time it maintained its right to develop nuclear technology. After some agreements, the group of P5+1 countries initiated negotiations with Iran which concluded with the signing of the agreement called "Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action" (JCPOA).

Under this agreement, Iran agreed to collaborate with the IAEA in any required inspection or study of its nuclear program in order to ensure that Iran is not working on the creation of nuclear weapons as well as to suspend some activities related to its uranium enrichment program and the creation of new reactors, among other things (Katzman and Kerr 1). This agreement was concluded on July 14, 2015 and started

to be implemented on January 16, 2016. Everything that was agreed, including the sanctions relief on Iran by U.S, U.N. and E.U, started to be applied on the same date which was agreed in the negotiations.

Leaders of the P5+1 countries argue that this agreement is the most effective way through which they will prevent Iran from constructing a nuclear weapon. Due to the numerous conflicts that have existed between Iran and the United States, some countries, especially allies of U.S, have argued that this agreement can have some negative results for U.S. They “express concerns that the extensive sanctions relief be provided under the accord give Iran additional resources to extend its influence in the region” (Katzman and Kerr 1). However, the president of U.S. stated that it is a positive action of Iran to sign this agreement, but it does not mean that it will immediately lead U.S. and Iran to eliminate their differences and have good diplomatic relations. He says that this is one step from many others that can be done to try to restore relations between these two countries.

### **3.1 Background**

Iran’s nuclear program began in the 1950s. This program started to work when Shah Reza Pahlevi (Iran’s emperor), supporting the program “Atoms for peace” which was driven by US President Dwight D. Eisenhower, signed a civil nuclear cooperation agreement with the US in 1957 (Ibáñez 136). After that, Iran negotiated with U.S. the sale of a five-megawatt reactor and later it also negotiated the sale of approximately twenty-three reactors to countries such as France and Germany (Ibáñez 136). Due to Iran’s capacity for creating this equipment, some countries started to suspect that Iran was developing a secret nuclear program to construct nuclear weapons. Some authors argue that according to some documents provided by U.S. National Security Council:

Iran wanted to construct 10-20 nuclear power reactors and produce more than 20,000 megawatts of nuclear power by 1994. Iran also began constructing a light-water nuclear power reactor near the city of Bushehr and also considered obtaining uranium enrichment and reprocessing technology (Kerr 1).

Iran stated that it was not developing a nuclear program and tried to demonstrate that it did not have the intention of constructing nuclear weapons by signing a nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1968 which was ratified in 1970. “Iran also submitted a draft resolution to the U.N. General Assembly in 1974 that called for establishing a nuclear-weapons-free zone in the Middle East” (Kerr 1).

Between 1978 and 1979, Iran faced a revolution, called by many as an Islamic revolution, which overthrew the dynasty under Shah Reza Pahlevi and replaced it with an Islamic republic under Jomeini, the new leader of Iran. When Jomeini took power, there were six reactors which were still working, but he decided to cancel the international contracts as well as the nuclear program because he argued that those activities were opposed to Islam’s mandates (Ibáñez 136).

Once the war between Iraq and Iran finished in 1988, Iran had a new leader, president Rafsanjani, who decided to reactivate the nuclear program. Russia, China and Argentina became the main suppliers of the technology needed to work on the projects of the program. However, it is argued that U.S. started to apply pressure on these new suppliers in order to prevent them from selling Iran their technology. Argentina canceled the selling of an experimental reactor in 1992 and China also started to reduce its contracts with Iran in 1998. On the other hand, Russia continued to be an important supplier and supporter thanks to which Iran was able to continue its project and built new nuclear plants (Ibáñez 136).

In 2002, a group considered to be opposed to the government called “National Council of Resistance of Iran” presented some documents in which they demonstrated that Iran had two new nuclear plants, one in Natanz and other in Arak, that were not notified to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) (Ibáñez 136). Since that report, Iran was confronted with more international pressure and this problem was notified to the U.N. Security Council to be revised and investigated.

Iran was accused of developing secret activities and projects regarding nuclear material. However, Iran insisted that it is not constructing or planning to construct nuclear weapons and that it was using the plants with other purposes.

The Iranian government has said that it plans to expand its reliance on nuclear power in order to generate electricity. This program will substitute for some of Iran's oil and gas consumption and allow the country to export additional fossil fuels. Iranian officials have repeatedly asserted that the country's nuclear program is exclusively for peaceful purposes (Kerr 2)

However, many countries still suspected that Iran was strengthening the capacity of its nuclear plants in order to be able to create nuclear weapons. They also said that Iran may not be working on nuclear weapons now, but could start doing it at any time since it has the capacity to do so. All these problems led to the creation of the "Proliferation Security Initiative" which aims to stop the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. It was initiated with the purpose of stopping the selling, import and export by any kind of transportation of nuclear weapons or the systems needed to create them between states. It began in 2003 with the support of 11 countries, but later gained the support of 16 other countries (Ibáñez 1).

Some countries accused Iran of continuing the import of material, such as uranium, that can be used to create nuclear weapons. Taking into consideration the suspicions and insecurity expressed by some states, the U.N. Security Council asked Iran to stop its uranium enrichment program. It was argued that Iran refused to stop its program and as response to this refusal, the U.N. Security Council issued some resolutions that imposed sanctions on Iran. However, it is said that "despite evidence that sanctions and other forms of pressure have slowed the program, Iran continued to enrich uranium, install additional centrifuges, and conduct research on new types of centrifuges" (Kerr 1). On the other hand, Iran has kept stating that it used those materials and procedures for purposes that do not include the creation of nuclear weapons.

### **3.2 Agreement on Iran's nuclear program: Beginning of negotiations**

During negotiations about Iran's nuclear program initiated in 2003, the IAEA reported that Iran had nuclear plants that were not notified to the agency. In October



of 2003, Iran signed an agreement with France, Germany and the United Kingdom. Under this agreement, Iran agreed to suspend some activities of its nuclear program. After that, Iran started negotiations with the group of 6 countries known as “P5+1”. This group includes: China, France, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. On the other hand, the U.N. Security Council has also adopted some resolutions regarding Iran’s nuclear program. The most recent resolution was adopted in June 2010, which required Iran to “cooperate fully with an ongoing IAEA investigation of its nuclear activities, suspend its uranium enrichment program, suspend its construction of a heavy water reactor and related projects, and ratify the Additional Protocol to its IAEA safeguards agreement” (Katzman and Kerr 1). Most of these resolutions included economic and other kind of sanctions for Iran.

IAEA safeguards refer to the capacity of the agency to “inspect and monitor nuclear facilities in, as well as to obtain information from, a particular country” (Katzman and Kerr 3). They are allowed to investigate only the nuclear facilities the government has reported to have. An Additional Protocol to IAEA safeguards, however, increases the agency’s authority in that particular country and allows the agency to investigate nuclear plants and activities that were not declared by the government as well as to demand information from the state about them. Iran signed an Additional Protocol to IAEA safeguards in December 2003, but decided to not be adhered to it in 2006. “Iran announced that it would stop implementing the protocol two days after the IAEA Board of governors adopted a resolution in February 2006 which referred Iran’s noncompliance with its IAEA safeguards agreement to the U.N. Security Council” (Katzman and Kerr 3).

Several negotiations were developed regarding Iran’s nuclear program without having satisfactory results. It was not until 2013 when the new president of Iran, Hassan Rouhani, decided to sign an agreement called “Joint Plan of Action (JPA)”. Under this agreement, Iran had to stop the advances in the activities related to its nuclear program, as well as give the IAEA more information about it and allow members of the agency to access to some nuclear plants that were not included in the IAEA safeguards agreement (Katzman and Kerr 6).

The JPA accepted that Iran had the right to use nuclear energy if it is for peaceful purposes and by following the rules established in the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). However, some countries, especially U.S., argued that Iran did not have the right to continue its uranium enrichment program since the NPT does not stipulate the right to enrichment. This created a controversy because Iran, on the other hand, argued that the NPT does allow it to continue its uranium enrichment because it is used for peaceful purposes.

The JPA also provided “limited, temporary, targeted, and reversible sanctions relief for Iran” (Katzman and Kerr 7). U.S. laws establish that the President is the only one with the power to determine the sanctions when there are violations of treaties or contracts and only the sanctions that were imposed by the executive power can be relieved by a new agreement on the same topic. JPA’s provisions stated that:

Iran had the ability to repatriate \$700 million per month in hard currency from oil sales, and to access an additional \$65 million per month of its foreign exchange reserves. Iran’s oil exports were required to remain at their December 2013 level of about 1.1 million barrels per day (mbd). The U.S. and international sanctions were suspended on Iran’s sales of petrochemicals, trading in gold and other precious metals, and transactions involving Iran’s auto production sector (Katzman and Kerr 8).

### **3.3 The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)**

When the JPA was being developed, there were already plans to develop another agreement called “Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action”. JPA even stated that the JCPOA had to “be concluded no more than one year after the adoption of the JPA” (Katzman and Kerr 8). Under this new agreement, Iran and the P5+1 aimed to change the status of the sanctions relief on Iran from temporary to permanent, in exchange of “restrictions on the scope and level of Iran’s enrichment activities, the capacity and location of Iranian enrichment facilities, and the size and composition of Tehran’s enriched uranium stocks for a period to be agreed upon” (Katzman and Kerr 8). Iran would also be required to provide information about its Arak reactor

project, avoid reprocessing used nuclear fuel, use transparent measures and accept monitoring for the activities related to its nuclear program and ratify an Additional Protocol to IAEA safeguards (Katzman and Kerr 8).

In February 2014 Iran and the P5+1 started negotiations with the purpose of creating the JCPOA. According to the JPA, the JCPOA must be concluded by November 24, 2014, but Iran and the P5+1 announced that they needed more time to be able to conclude a good and detailed agreement. The framework accord was concluded on April 2, 2015 in Lausanne, Switzerland (Katzman and Kerr 8). The JCPOA was finalized in Vienna on July 14, 2015 and was submitted to the U.N. Security Council for its adoption. After that, the U.N. Security Council emitted a resolution that stated that the adoption day for the JCPOA would be on October 18, 2015. “The 90-day timeframe (from the day of submission to the day of adoption) allowed for review of the JCPOA by the U.S. Congress and by any other legislature of Iran or the other P5+1 states” (Katzman and Kerr 9).

The day the JCPOA was going to start to be implemented was defined during the negotiations and it depended on the date Iran has completed some measures related to its nuclear program that were established in the agreement, such as: reducing the number of centrifuges it has, doing some changes to the Arak reactor, among others. It also depended on the date the U.S, the U.N and the U.E. stop applying some specific and stipulated sanctions on Iran. After considering all these conditions, the implementation day was decided to be on January 16, 2016, “after the IAEA made the required certification of Iran’s completion of the stipulated tasks” (Katzman and Kerr 9). It was also decided that the decisions that were made by the U.N. Security Council regarding the JCPOA will terminate on October 18, 2025, ten years from the adoption day. Since that date, the U.N. Security Council will not get involved in issues regarding Iran’s nuclear program. However, there is not a termination date for JCPOA and its provisions.

### **3.4 Main Nuclear Provisions of the JCPOA**

The JCPOA imposes limits to some of Iran's programs such as: the enrichment program and heavy water reactor programs and also required Iran to allow inspections and monitoring on its activities. These inspections have the purpose of detecting and reporting possible plans of Iran to construct nuclear weapons.

#### **3.4.1 Enrichment Program**

Iran's uranium enrichment program is limited by some of the provisions of JCPOA. Iran needed to complete some conditions related to this program in order to "qualify for Implementation Day sanctions relief" (Katzman and Kerr 10). These are the JCPOA's provisions related to this program:

- Centrifuge limitation: Iran can use a maximum of 5,060 IR-1 centrifuges for the enrichment of uranium for a period of 10 years (Katzman and Kerr 10).
- Level of Enrichment Limitation: Iran cannot produce enriched uranium that contains more than 3.67% uranium for a period of 15 years (Katzman and Kerr 10).
- Facility Limitation: For 15 years, Iran is allowed to work on uranium enrichment only at the Natanz plant and it is not allowed to construct new plants for this purpose (Katzman and Kerr 10).
- LEU (Low- enrichment uranium) Stockpile Limitation: For 15 years, Iran is allowed to have a maximum of 300 kilograms of LEU containing 3.67% uranium (Katzman and Kerr 11). Iran has three options for disposing the excess of LEU it has: "diluting the material so that it contains the same levels of uranium found in natural uranium; selling the LEU to another country; or selling it to an international LEU bank recently established by the IAEA" (Katzman and Kerr 11).

- **Fordow Conversion:** For 15 years, Iran has to convert the enrichment facility at Fordow in a “a nuclear, physics, and technology centre” (Katzman and Kerr 11). It is not allowed to use that facility for uranium enrichment or activities related to it.
- **Centrifuge Production:** For 10 years, Iran has to use the excess of centrifuges he has produced only to replace or repair damaged machines. Iran can produce more centrifuges only if its stock of centrifuges for replacement “falls to 500 or below” (Katzman and Kerr 11).
- **Centrifuge R&D (Research and Development):** For ten years, Iran cannot initiate any project of research and development on any “technologies other than gas centrifuge enrichment” (Katzman and Kerr 11).

### **3.4.2 Arak Reactor**

The JCPOA required Iran to change the design of the Arak reactor to a design that was agreed by the P5+1 during negotiations, with the purpose of assuring that it will not be able to create nuclear weapons. “The JCPOA also requires Tehran to render the Arak reactor’s original core inoperable” (Katzman and Kerr 11). The IAEA has reported that Iran has already completed this last step. It has done as a condition before the implementation day. The P5+1 has agreed to collaborate with the redesigning and reconstruction of the Arak reactor. Before the implementation day, the group will conclude an official document in which they will define the responsibilities of each of the members of the P5+1 in the reconstruction of the reactor.

The JCPOA states that Iran is not allowed to reprocess used reactor fuel, except if it is used for “medical and peaceful industrial purposes” (Katzman and Kerr 11). It also requires Iran not to accumulate heavy water beyond the country’s needs. It states that

any excess of heavy water must be sold to the international market. It also commits Iran not to build heavy water reactors for 15 years.

### **3.4.3 Verification**

The IAEA is in charge of monitoring and verifying that Iran is respecting and complying with the provisions established in the JCPOA. The IAEA has said that it will send more inspectors to Iran and use new technologies in order to do a good verification of all the activities, especially those related to the enrichment program and the Arak reactor. Under the JCPOA, Iran has agreed to allow the IAEA to monitor and verify its activities for a long term. It has also agreed to ratify an Additional Protocol to IAEA safeguards agreement. “Iran’s IAEA safeguards obligations last for an indefinite duration and potential nuclear-related exports to Iran would remain subject to the Nuclear Suppliers Group’s export guidelines” (Katzman and Kerr 12).

It was also agreed that Iran has to permit the IAEA the access to Iran’s inventory of centrifuges, its components and related infrastructure. “Additionally, Iran is to allow the IAEA to monitor the country’s uranium mills for 25 years and to monitor Iran’s plant for producing heavy water” (Katzman and Kerr 12). The IAEA is required to provide regular reports about the monitoring and verification made on Iran’s nuclear program. The JCPOA also states that the IAEA will be able to access to some Iran’s nuclear plants that were not previously notified. However, the IAEA is allowed to access these places only if there are “concerns regarding undeclared nuclear materials or activities, or activities inconsistent with the JCPOA” (Katzman and Kerr 12). Before IAEA access to those places, Iran must be notified about it and will be required to provide clarification about the concerns that exist regarding those specific places or activities.

### **3.4.4 Sanctions Relief**

The JCPOA establishes that the sanctions relief agreed by Iran and the P5+1 will occur on the implementation day. Most of the sanctions that are to be lifted are the ones imposed by the U.N. through a resolution that was emitted in June 2010. In that resolution, Iran's energy sector was identified as a "potential contributor to Iran's proliferation of nuclear activities" (Katzman and Kerr 18). On the other hand, the sanctions that U.S. will suspend are those called "secondary sanctions" and are the ones that sanction countries or foreign entities when they conduct specified transactions with Iran. This step will allow foreign countries to have some specific transactions with Iran without being sanctioned by U.S.

The sanctions the U.S. will lift will be the ones imposed on the foreign identities:

- (1) that are involved in Iran's energy sector, including Iran's production of and exportation of oil, or that sell Iran gasoline and energy sector equipment;
- (2) that conduct transactions with most major Iranian banks; and (3) that are involved in Iran's automobile production sector and trading in the rial (Katzman and Kerr 18).

The sanctions the U.E. will lift on the implementation day includes:

- (1) the EU ban on purchases of oil and gas from Iran; (2) the ban on Iran's use of the SWIFT electronic payments system that enables Iran to move funds from abroad to its Central Bank or its commercial banks; and (3) sanctions on a list of specified entities (Katzman and Kerr 19).

The JCPOA states that the parties of the agreement cannot reimpose the sanctions that were lifted, as long as Iran is respecting and complying with everything that was established in the agreement. It also states that if those sanctions are reimposed, "Iran would not be bound by its nuclear commitments" (Katzman and Kerr 20).

### **3.5 Agreement on Iran's nuclear program: analysis of the application of Western and Islamic IR theories.**

In this part of the chapter, I will use my previous research on the Western and Islamic international relations theories to analyze how these theories have been applied in the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, which is an agreement that was signed by the Islamic Republic of Iran and the group of P5+1 countries which includes: the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Russia, China, and Germany.

#### **3.5.1 Iran wants to get power through the construction of a nuclear weapon**

Why is the idea of Iran constructing a nuclear weapon so dreadful? Having a nuclear weapon would give Iran a lot of power since it will be able to use it against its enemies at any time. The idea that states live in an anarchic system in which the only way to survive is getting as much power as possible comes from one of the main branches of the Western IRT: realism. According to realism, every state needs to be prepared to defend itself from any threat that it is presented. I argue that even though Iran may not be constructing a nuclear weapon, that is what other states believe. They think that Iran is preparing to defend itself through the creation of a nuclear weapon which is very dangerous since it could be used in any of the many conflicts that happen in the international system.

A country such as the U.S. which has had a lot of conflicts with Iran was one of the first ones to be worried about the possibility of a nuclear weapon in the hands of Iran. That is because U.S. could be one of the first ones affected by a massive destruction weapon if Iran decides to construct it and use it. Realism also argues that a state needs to be aware of the level of power other states have in order to find the ways to have more power than them. They argue that in order to achieve peace a state needs to assure that it has more power than the other so other states will not risk attacking it because they know they will not be able to win the battle. That is, I argue, what states think Iran is doing. I argue that they think Iran is constructing a nuclear weapon in order to be more powerful than other states and because in this



world, according to realism, only the most powerful ones will survive (Slaughter para. 5), other states are trying to refrain Iran from doing it so it cannot achieve more power than them.

We could argue that this idea is related to the Law of Nations that comes from the Islamic international relations theory, which asks Islamic states to fight against non-Islamic states. This law argues that an Islamic state must be prepared to defend itself and its faith and even get into a war with others but only if other states start attacking it, otherwise it cannot start a war. However, I argue that this particular problem about Iran's nuclear program is not a conflict between Islamic and non-Islamic states.

Conflicts between Iran and U.S. could have been originated because of disagreements between the forms of governments, beliefs and ideas of each country which made it difficult for these two to agree on certain issues and to have good diplomatic relations. Nonetheless, nowadays the problems that are presented between these countries are not solely because of religions, beliefs or forms of government, but because of many other issues such as achieving economic and political power in the international system, increasing military power to be able to defend themselves, accessing more natural resources, among others. That is why I argue that this specific problem is not related to the idea of Law of Nations presented by the Islamic theory.

### **3.5.2 Iran argues that the construction of a nuclear weapon is opposed to Islamic mandates**

Islamic international relations theory presents fundamentals such as: peaceful coexistence, avoiding violence, adherence to moral principles, among others. The construction of nuclear weapons will mean the attempt to and even preparation for precipitating actions of violence with other states. The president of Iran has said that Iran does not have the intention of using its nuclear program to construct nuclear weapons because that would be opposed to the Islamic mandates. Islamic theory states that a state cannot start attacking another state. It says that they can only attack if it is to defend itself and it can defend itself using the same arms and tools the

enemy is using. Iran will be acting in opposition to these fundamentals if it is constructing armament that will not be equal in power to the ones used by its attackers. Iran has insisted that it does not plan to construct a nuclear weapon and has demonstrated it through the signing of the JCPOA and its engagement with international cooperation by accepting to have its nuclear program being monitored and supervised.

### **3.5.3 International community wants to restrain Iran from constructing a nuclear weapon through the signing of a treaty.**

Branches of the Western international relations theory such as liberalism, institutionalism and constructivism support the use of international law and legal tools such as treaties to solve conflicts between states. They argue that legal documents have the power to force states to comply with the points that were agreed in the agreements. On the other hand, the Islamic international relations theory also supports the use of treaties with the purpose of solving conflicts. The Islamic theory asks countries to consider the importance of moral values in international relations. A country can show its moral values by respecting a treaty and complying with everything that was agreed in it.

Both theories argue that respecting treaties and complying with everything that was agreed on them give states good reputations in the international system. And states do take into consideration the reputation of other states at the time of deciding whether to sign a treaty with them or not or whether to believe in the compliance of the other with the contentious points or not. Some countries argue that the JCPOA imposed many types of control on Iran nuclear activities given that, in repeated occasions, Iran did not comply with everything that was agreed in previous agreements such as: not notifying the IAEA about some of its new nuclear facilities or exporting nuclear related material that was not allowed to export. It shows that a country's reputation does affect the way some agreements are developed.

Constructivists argue that the way a state perceive another state (as friend or enemy) determine how the international relations will be handled. In the case of the JCPOA,

Iran was considered in many situations as an enemy of U.S. and as an important and influential actor in its region which could get countries to be in its side and opposed to U.S. I argue that U.S. is afraid of Iran getting more military power and as result of that more political power which could make it difficult for U.S. to maintain their position and power of influence in the international power. I argue that U.S. is especially focused on the plans and activities of a country such as Iran because it considers that this country could represent a big threat for it. I think that if the country which has nuclear activities were an ally of the U.S., things would be different. There would not be too much pressure imposed on it given that U.S. will not consider it as a big threat but rather as a tool that it, itself, could use in case of a war.

Therefore, both theories encourage the use of treaties and ask countries to respect them and comply with everything that was agreed. That is why I argue that the idea of signing an agreement with the aim of solving the problem about Iran's nuclear program comes from both Western and Islamic international relation theories. However, the way the JCPOA was developed, I argue, was influenced by many ideas that come from the Western theory.

#### **3.5.4 International cooperation as a way to resolve the issue of Iran's nuclear program**

International cooperation is widely supported by liberalism and institutionalism which are branches of the Western international relations theory. Liberalism argues that international cooperation is the best way to solve international conflicts. Liberalism also argues that a conflict can be more easily solved if all the states involved in it are willing to find a solution for it. Institutionalism states that inter-state cooperation is possible but it is still a way in which each state is looking for its own interests.

In the case of the JCPOA, Iran is being benefited by the sanctions relief which will help it increase its economic power and be able to have transactions with important states and other identities with which was not allowed to do it before the agreement.

On the other site, the P5+1 countries are being benefited by assuring, in some way, that they will not be affected by a massive destruction weapon. I argue that they will also be benefited by assuring that Iran will not become more powerful than them and that they will keep their power of influence on the international system so they can always achieve their objectives.

On the other hand, the Islamic IR theory also supports the use of international cooperation to solve problems. The Islamic theory states that all human beings and states are equally important and have the right to express their ideas and interests and the right to be heard. It asks countries to get involved in conversations and negotiations in order to solve the conflicts between them. Therefore, the idea of using international cooperation to find a solution for the problems around Iran's nuclear program, I argue, comes from both theories.

### **3.5.5 U.S. sanctioning Iran by sanctioning other entities and states that have transactions with it**

Some of the U.S. sanctions imposed on Iran that were lifted under the JCPOA are known as secondary sanctions because those are not directly imposed to Iran but to other entities and states that do certain transactions with it. "The imposition of economic sanctions denotes the desire of one party to use its economic and political influence to pressure another party to comply" (Macaluso 4). This situation is also related to idea that the most powerful states will be the ones that will survive in the international system which comes from realism, a branch of the Western IR theory. Realism states that a state is powerful not only because of its military power but because of the power it has to influence another state's behavior and impose its ideas on them (Cox 137).

It is known that U.S. and Iran have had many conflicts regarding different issues and the way U.S. has found to sanction Iran for what it considers was opposed to international law and some agreements was by trying to stop other countries from implementing transactions with Iran. U.S. is able to do that due to the power it has in the international system. That is a proof that super powers keep controlling most of

what happens in the world and are capable, in one way or another, of achieving their interests. Western theory argues that the way international relations are handled depends on the interests of each state and the power each has to achieve them. Therefore, this situation in which U.S. is able to sanction Iran by sanctioning other states come what some branches of the Western theory state.

### **3.5.6 Iran accepting to have its nuclear program being supervised and monitored**

Iran has insisted that it is not using its nuclear program to construct nuclear weapons. “Western accusations that Iran is pursuing a nuclear weapon have never been proved and have always emphatically rejected by Iranian negotiators, who firmly support the peaceful nature of their nuclear program and their right to nuclear energy” (Macaluso 9) However, those declarations do not seem to be credible for the other countries. Under the JCPOA, Iran is required to allow the IAEA to access to its nuclear plants in order for them to supervise that they are not being used for the construction of nuclear weapons.

I could argue that this requirement is even opposed to the principle of international relations that says that states do not have the right to intervene in the internal affairs of other state. Under this principle, any state should be able to supervise the activities that are being developed in the Iran’s nuclear plants which are Iran’s property and are part of the internal activities of the country. The Islamic theory also argues that non state has the right to force or influence another to do or not to do certain activities. They argue that each state must be free to do whatever it wants without feeling the pressure of other states. However, Iran was required to accept these interventions in order to sign the agreement with the P5+1 countries.

Realism argues that a state should always be alert to what other states are planning to do. For example, Slaughter argues that according to realists’ view, we live in a dangerous and uncertain world where we can never be sure about the good or bad intentions of other states (para. 4). In the preface of the agreement it is said that the P5+1 countries “envision that the implementation of this JCPOA will progressively

allow them to gain confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's programme" (The Washington Post 2). Therefore, I argue that this situation in which states decided not to believe in Iran's representative's words and declarations and impose more control and supervision on its nuclear facilities in order to be able to assure by themselves that Iran is not constructing a nuclear weapon is inspired by some ideas that come from the Western theory, specifically from realism.

### **3.5.7 Iran getting power after the sanctions relief**

Some countries, especially the ones considered allies of U.S., have said that Iran will get economic power after the sanction relief established in the JCPOA. They argue that Iran will be able to increase its power and influence in its region. These arguments are also related to the idea that the most powerful states will survive. States seem to be always fighting each other to get more power. On one side, some states do not want Iran to create nuclear weapons because that will allow it more power. On the other hand, some states are now also concerned that the sanctions relief will also increase Iran's power in some way. It is always about who is the most powerful and how to avoid other states being more powerful. This idea is also related to what realism states. Therefore, the concern of countries about Iran getting more power in one way or another I argue also comes from the Western theory.

### **3.5.8 Was there equality in Iran - P5+1 negotiation?**

In order to understand how a negotiation was developed and its results, it is very important to analyze if the levels of power that the participants have to negotiate are equal or not. In the case of the negotiations of the JCPOA, author Macaluso argues that there is inequality in Iran- U.S. relations and that "the profound unbalance of their interaction and the unilateral damage caused by sanctions to the Islamic Republic are a primary example of inequality in bilateral relations" (3) She argues that Iran was in a weaker position during the negotiations given that the damage that the economic sanctions imposed on Iran has caused to its society cannot be compared to any economic and social damage made to U.S. (Macaluso 3).

It is also argued that inequality can be seen in the fact that “the architecture of the talks lacks balance in that Iran is confronted by five world superpowers and that the negotiations do not predispose equal concession and equal sacrifices because Iran is already paying a far higher price” (Macaluso 12). I can relate this situation to one of the ideas that come from realism that says that this is a world in which are “the Great Powers—the States with most economic clout and, especially, military might, that are decisive. In this view international relations is essentially a story of Great Power politics” (Slaughter para. 4). This means that powerful countries will always have more possibilities of achieving what they are looking for due to their power.

Iran is also a powerful country and the fact that negotiations took many years to give results demonstrates that Iran was also a powerful negotiator which did not give up easily its own interests. However, we can also see that there is not equality in this negotiations and that is a problem because if a country does not consider the results of a negotiation fair enough for it, it might be attempted to not comply with everything that was agreed. So the question now is, given the inequality that existed during the negotiations and the “unfairness” in some of its results, will the JCPOA be rightly implemented and will it last was it was agreed to last?

### **3.6 Conclusion**

Many countries in the international community are afraid of the existence of a nuclear weapon capable of causing a massive damage to the world. Iran is one of the countries which is supposed to be constructing a nuclear weapon given the fact that it has all the necessary installations and equipment to do it. Iran has insisted that it is not constructing or planning to construct a nuclear weapon. However, some countries seem not to believe these declarations and have imposed pressure on Iran in order to get it to sign an agreement through which they can, in some way, assure that a nuclear weapon is not being constructed.

After many negotiations, on July 14, 2015 a Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action has been signed by Iran and the group of P5+1 countries (United States, United Kingdom, France, Russia, China, and Germany). This agreement requires Iran,

among other things, to give access to its nuclear plants in order to have its activities supervised and monitored and it also requires the P5+1 countries to lift some specified sanctions that were previously imposed on Iran. This agreement is seen by many countries and authors as the best and most effective way to solve the problem about Iran's nuclear program.

However, there are many interests behind the signing of this agreement. Because this agreement was signed by Iran which is considered an Islamic Republic and the P5+1 group whose most of its members are considered as Western countries, I decided to use my previous research on the Islamic and Western international relations theories to analyze the application of these two on the JCPOA. What I found is that most of the ideas that motivated these countries to sign the agreement come from the Western theory, for example: the idea of always seeking to be more powerful than other states, the idea of always doubting about the good intentions of other states, the idea of using the power of influence in the international system to achieve their objectives, among others. There are a couple of ideas that I argue come from both theories, for example: the support for the use of international cooperation and treaties as legal tools for resolving conflict between states. However, most of the ideas I argue come from the Western theory.

This situation can demonstrate that Western theory is still the dominant theory within international relations. I cannot argue that Iran presented the ideas of the Islamic theory during the negotiations of the agreement and that they were ignored because it is possible that Iran did not even take them into consideration and as a result did not present them. However, I can argue that Western theory was and is still the theory that influences most of the behavior of states, Islamic or not, in their relations. Countries have got used to thinking and acting following the ideas presented by the Western theory and most of the time they forget that there are also many other theories which present very important ideas that can offer better solutions to the different problems and conflicts arising in the world.



## FINAL CONCLUSION

There are many theories that aim to explain how international relations are handled and how they should be handled. The most known and applied theory is the one that comes from the West. This theory has gained popularity and power over the others that exist due to many situations such as: being one of the first one to be developed, being developed and used by the most powerful countries, among other reasons. Western theory has been many times the only theory taken into consideration at the time of deciding how to conduct international relations. This situation has caused some conflicts because some states feel pressured to follow rules or procedures which they do not agree with. That is why, many scholars argue that the way inter-state relations are handled is Eurocentric and that is what is causing many states to show resistance to the ideas that come from the West which has led to different types of conflicts.

Western theory is not the only theory regarding international relations. There are several other theories that present important and useful ideas to the field. One of those theories is the Islamic. This theory presents ideas which are provided by Islam of how to conduct inter-state relations. This theory is presented as an alternative to the Western theory. Islam, through its different sources, presents some important ideas such as the pursuit and use of justice, morality, faith and religious understanding in international relations. These ideas are opposed to the pursuance of material wealth and power that is proposed by the Western theory. Islamic theory also says that it is of vital importance to take into consideration identity, culture and religion at the time of relating with other states. The ideas that come from Islam are many times considered as opposed to the ones that come from the West and that is the reason why they have not been widely welcomed in other parts of the world.

It is important to know that most of the ideas that come from the Islamic theory are based on the circumstances of the time in which they were created. Some scholars argue that those ideas are no longer applicable due to the new situations that the world presents nowadays. That is why, Islamic thinkers are studying the classical sources again in order to reach a different interpretation, one that could be actually

applied in real and current situations but also one that still contains the essence of Islam. They are trying to find a path of reconciliation between the ideas that come from Islam and the ones that come from the West. They argue that in that way Western countries as well as Islamic countries could better understand each other and could reach agreements more easily.

Western theory is considered to be the main source from which most of the ideas and procedures used in international relations come. However, practices such as the use of treaties to solve problems, diplomatic exchange, arbitration, the principle of reciprocity, among others were developed by Muslims and their countries many years before the Western theory was even created. This shows that the Western theory may not be the creator or owner of some the ideas it claims are its property. There are other theories that have contributed with important ideas to the field of international relations but they are not recognized for that, as in the case of the Islamic theory.

It is said that the Western theory is the most applied one and sometimes the only theory taken into consideration at the time of deciding how to handle international relations. In order to determine the practical applicability of both of the theories I have made my research about, I analyzed the agreement on the Iran's nuclear program which was signed in July, 2015. Given that this agreement was signed by Iran which is an Islamic Republic and the P5+1 countries (the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Russia, China, and Germany), most of which are Western countries, I considered this agreement to be a useful legal instrument to analyze in order to determine if the ideas of the Islamic theory were taken into consideration at the time of negotiating and settling the agreement or if the Western theory was once again the one that dominated.

After analyzing the agreement, I concluded that most of the ideas that motivated states to sign it come from the Western theory. Ideas such as always seeking to be the most powerful state, not believing in the good intentions of other states, using international pressure to achieve their interests, among others, are ideas presented by the main branches of the Western theory. I could argue then that the way international relations are handled is mainly based on the ideas presented by the

West. However, I cannot argue that Iran presented the ideas of the Islamic theory as alternatives for negotiating or settling things differently because I do not know if Iran itself actually took those ideas into consideration. What I argue is that the world has gotten so used to the ideas that come from the West that most of the times the fact that there are other alternatives that could even present better solutions to the different problems we face is forgotten.

This paper does not have the purpose of discrediting Western international relations theory. The main objective is to demonstrate that there is more than one theory and that the ideas that each of these theories proposes are very important and deserve to be analyzed and taken into consideration at the time of negotiating the best way to carry out international relations. It is not about taking another theory and making it universal and applying it globally. It is about opening dialogues in which people from all over the world could present their ideas, ways of understanding the world and solutions for managing the different problems. If we are going to consider a theory as universal, it must be created with the contributions of people from all over the world. It must be a process in which every state feels integrated and not a process in which small states feel pressured by the powerful ones.

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