

ПОЛІТИЧНІ ПРОБЛЕМИ МІЖНАРОДНИХ ВІДНОСИН

УДК 327

THE MAIN TRENDS AND APPROACHES IN THE THEORIES OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS TO GEOPOLITICAL TRANSFORMATIONS

ОСНОВНІ ТЕНДЕНЦІЇ ТА ПІДХОДИ В ТЕОРІЯХ МІЖНАРОДНИХ ВІДНОСИН ДО ГЕОПОЛІТИЧНИХ ТРАНСФОРМАЦІЙ

Akbarova Aygun Famil

PhD in Political Sciences, Associate Professor of the Department of Diplomacy and Foreign Policy, Baku Slavic University, akbar9@rambler.ru

Акбарова Айгюн Фамил

Доктор філософії з політичних наук, доцент кафедри дипломатія і зовнішня політика, Бакинського слов'янського університету, akbar9@rambler.ru

Abstract. *The article is devoted to the main trends and approaches in the theories of international relations to geopolitical transformations. In modern conditions, the process of formation of a stable global geopolitical system is not over. Discussions are continuing about the possibility of creating a unipolar world, a multipolar world, or restoring a bipolar model with different centers of power than before. These trends significantly strengthen the factor of geopolitical interests of national states and other global actors adhering to different geopolitical concepts. The analysis of the geopolitical stability and strategic autonomy of the Republic of Azerbaijan achieved as a result of the crushing defeat of Armenia in the Second Karabakh War gives special relevance to the study.*

Keywords: *geopolitics, trend, approaches, international relations, geopolitical transformations.*

Анотація. *Стаття присвячена основним тенденціям і підходам в теоріях міжнародних відносин до геополітичних трансформацій. У сучасних умовах процес становлення стійкої світової геополітичної системи не закінчений. Тривають дискусії про можливість створення однополярного світу, багатополлярного світу або відновлення біполярної моделі з іншими, ніж раніше, центрами сили. Дані тенденції в значній мірі підсилюють фактор геополітичних інтересів національних держав та інших глобальних акторів, що дотримуються різних геополітичних концепцій. Особливої актуальності дослідженню надає аналіз геополітичної стійкості і стратегічної автономності Азербайджанською Республікою, досягнутих в результаті нищівної поразки Вірменії в другій Карабаській війні.*

Ключові слова: *геополітика, тенденція, підходи, міжнародні відносини, геополітичні трансформації.*

Introduction. Today, the significance and potential of the Azerbaijani world many times exceeds the geographical parameters of our state. The offensive nature of Azerbaijan's geopolitical projects is aimed at cooperation in the region in two main areas: transport and logistics and communication. Multilevel transformation affects both foreign policy and economic processes in a space where vital interests of a number of states of the world and other actors of international relations intersect.

In modern conditions, geopolitics is the most important relevant link of the entire system of international relations and world politics, which is taken into account in detail when developing strategic and tactical aspects of the foreign policy of the Azerbaijani state.

The purpose of the research is to identify the main trends and approaches in the theories of international relations to geopolitical transformations.

The latest literature review. In recent years, scholars have paid considerable attention the geopolitical dynamics in the South Caucasus region. Here we can specify the works of such authors as Stephen M. Walt, Frazier S., Corey M. and others who have covered this problem.

Research results. In this study, the geopolitical dynamics in the South Caucasus region and the Caspian-Black Sea basin, the trigger of which was the decisive victorious actions of Azerbaijan in the Second Karabakh War, in our opinion, should be analyzed from the identification of the dialectical relationship between the basic concepts of the theory of geopolitics and the theory of international relations.

Geopolitical theories in their systematized form are especially relevant at the present stage, when the relatively stable global geopolitical structure has been replaced by a period of permanent instability for the long term [Elements for a Structural Constructivist Theory of Politics. Niilo Kauppi]. Geopolitical analysis cannot abstract from the territorial core, in which the main values of the national state are created. The state as a spatial territorial organization, - Swedish political scientist Rudolf Chellen, one of the creators of geopolitics, pointed out, - “the first one comes into view when it is observed from the outside. Geopolitics keeps the unity of the state in its field of view, thereby contributing to the understanding of its essence” [Chellen, 2005, p.117]. By outside supervision, Chellen meant such parameters as the scale of ownership, the quality and quantity of the state’s resources, which make it possible to “provide an appropriate means of political action and give direction to political life as a whole. ...Geopolitics becomes an art, namely the art of guiding practical politics” [Chellen, 2005, p.121]. Thus, according to Chellen, the main geopolitical actor is the state and its policy is determined by the geographical location of this state.

Challenge, in the spirit of his time, defined traditional geopolitical parameters, linking the geographical invulnerability of the state with geographical remoteness, its territorial location and the length of borders. And although these factors play a lesser role in the conditions of high speeds of possible military response and economic interdependence of States, nevertheless, as it seems to us, they have not lost their relevance in many ways. First of all, because every foreign policy decision is implemented in the spatial dimension. The geopolitical priorities of the state on the world stage are produced by its spatial and geographical parameters. It is these parameters that determine the style and methods of foreign policy implementation throughout the historical development.

The German scientist Friedrich Ratzel, who introduced the concept of geopolitics into international science, wrote that the territory or space is a necessary political resource of the foreign and domestic policy of the state [Ratzel, 1897]. Developing the idea of the size of space and geographical advantage, Ratzel emphasized that space determines internal and external political processes. “The connection of the people with their territory, thanks to their interaction, is strengthened so much”, writes F.Ratzel, “that the people and their territory become something unified and cannot be mutually separated without at the same time destroying the life of the state” [Geopolitika: Khrestomatiya, 2007, p.16].

The classical vision of geopolitics, presented in Andreas Dorpalen’s book “The World of General Haushofer” with the subtitle “Geopolitics in Action”, suggests that “geopolitics becomes an art, namely the art of guiding practical politics” [Dorpalen, 1984]. At the end of the 70s of the last century, geopolitics as a science, consistently overcoming the ideological limitations of geographical determinism, significantly expands its object of research. In particular, Professor S. Cohen justified the need to analyze the territorial development of the state through its structure of political organization, economic structure, functioning of the social sphere. S. Cohen paid special attention to the influence of external forces on all the above-mentioned components of geopolitics. “Along with such standard indicators of the power of the state as the area of the territory, the

possession of fertile soils, water and mineral resources, the development of transport and other types of communication network, population, level of education and military arsenal, the level of interconnectedness of nations, ideological strength (the level of influence of ideology), national goals, mentality, goals should also be taken into account and a strategy to maintain its international influence and ability to renew" [Cohen, 1973, pp.6-7].

The main aspect of the modern logic of geopolitical competition is the control over space, which is carried out through the use of various tools for its protection or preservation, in the geostrategic, geo-economic, military-power and information space.

It is more expedient to consider control over space as a general category of political theory and the theory of international relations in the paradigms of the theory of structural constructivism. The methodologies of structural constructivism and critical geopolitics chosen by us are determined by significant limitations in the conditions of extreme turbulence of the postulates of neorealism. As R. Cohain noted, at the end of the XX century the theory of international relations was "in a state of confusion and vacillation" [Keokheyn, 1998]. Representatives of realism, focusing on historical patterns and continuity in foreign policy, consider the preservation and strengthening of power and influence within the existing international system.

Neorealism considers national interests as a geopolitically stable reality, although, unlike the classics of this trend, it recognizes the difficult to predict dynamics of modern world processes [Mearsheimer, 2001, p.18-19]. Neoclassical realism, operating with such fundamental categories for this direction of the theory of international relations as "balance of power", "strategic culture", "strategic deterrence", "national security", "foreign policy", traditionally focuses on building up power. The dominant subject of international relations, despite the increased number of actors in the complex structure of the international system, according to neorealists, remain states as the real and only carriers of national interests [Taliaferro, 2009, p.5-10]. However, the profound transformations taking place in the world system have become a challenge for neorealism, especially in the direction of predictive analytics.

In this regard, a prominent representative of neorealism, Stephen Walt, in the article "Why I did not subscribe to the defense of the international order" suggests "refusing to support efforts to preserve the old, unipolar, liberal world order" [Walt, 2018]. Such an unexpected conclusion is justified by the following theses: 1) "the bipolar world and the existence of nuclear weapons have done more to prevent a large-scale war between the two superpowers" than global institutions like NATO, the WTO and the European Union; 2) the old "liberal world order" of the West was not liberal, it simply won in comparison with the authoritarian rulers of the "second world" - (meaning the leaders of communist and socialist countries) [Walt, 2018]. In the article "The State Department needs rehabilitation", Stephen Walt suggests strengthening the importance of diplomats in international practice, since they have a deep knowledge of other societies and governments, the necessary ability to explain how problems look to others. Such knowledge of a different mentality is necessary for the conclusion of successful international agreements, because if no one knows how the other side thinks, it is difficult to put forward proposals that will help achieve our goals and which the other side will accept [Walt, 2018].

The methodology of the theory of classical liberalism in international relations, and in particular, neoliberal institutionalism, builds its concepts on "participatory democracy", assuming the actions of various coalitions and interest groups with their own foreign policy agendas and channels of influence on the process of developing and implementing public policy [Krasner, 2020]. It is the ideas of neoliberal institutionalism that have become the basis for the formation of biased assessments of the level of democracy and stability of states and an important mechanism for constructing political technologies of "color" revolutions. Unlike realists who assert the unchanging logic of international relations, constructivists focus on the study of transformations.

At the beginning of the new century, F. Fukuyama prophetically noted that in the new conditions of global competition, only "strong" states will survive [Fukuyama, 2006, p.124]. In modern conditions, a constructivist approach is becoming relevant, the conceptual provisions of which are productive in interpreting security issues that are vital for any state. An important role in

this direction of the theory of international relations is played by the construction of links between threats and reference objects, as well as the conditions in which security policy acquires a legitimate character [Huysmans, 2002]. An important point in the constructivist methodology is the study of international relations through the prism of discursive analysis. The creator of the theory of constructivism in international relations A. Wendt believed that the perception of one actor by another is determined by the discourse that forms reality and determines the environment of interaction between actors – cooperating or conflicting [Wendt, 1992]. A. Wendt explained the deep relationship between national identity, strategic culture and foreign policy of the state [Wendt, 1994].

In the theory of international relations, the category of multipolarity reflects the objective state of modern world politics and has its own characteristics. The Hindu political scientist Suryanarayana believes that “the geopolitical (mainly military-political and ideological in content) confrontation between East and West is now being replaced by modern polycentrism, and it is based on the disintegration of the world into rival zones with mainly internal economic integration”. This integration is now becoming closer than between global and regional level zones [Suryanarayana, 2000].

The formation of modern multipolarity is determined not so much by economic as by geostrategic and geopolitical factors. In this regard, a distinctive feature of the new international policy is “not only the struggle of the great powers for space, but the geopolitical discourse developed by intellectuals-statesmen, in which international politics is localized by the peculiarities of national interests” [Gearóid Ó Tuathail, 2008].

Since the late 90s of the twentieth century, in the process of approving the unipolar system in international relations, a geopolitical parameter, called by Z. Brzezinski the “great chessboard”, has firmly entered the structure of qualitative foreign policy and strategic analysis [Bzhezinskiy, 1998, p.2]. In fact, the so-called “chessboard” itself represents a conglomerate of regional “sites” - taxa as a spatial and territorial integrity on which regional processes directed and controlled by world powers are evolving, stagnating or dynamically developing. According to English analyst Stuart Elden, taxa are characterized by the presence of “important political, economic and/or strategic problems that would force regional actors and extra-regional players to enter into special relations of cooperation or confrontation, i.e. to realize their foreign policy orientations and thereby defend their interest” [Krasner, 2020]. K. Johnson understands the geopolitical taxon as a conglomeration of small and medium-sized countries of the regional space, representing a relatively homogeneous territory in one or another political parameters, which is connected by some system-forming factor, for example, the Black Sea [Corey, 2009]. The geopolitical subjectivity of such regional states, if de facto present, allows them to form a foreign policy strategy. However, the clash of strong non-regional players promoting their national interests is often the main factor of confrontational processes in this region.

Zbigniew Brzezinski, considered the most authoritative representative of Atlanticism, in his work “The Great Chessboard” proposed a sub-regional geopolitical space “Eurasian Balkans”, which forms the inner core of a huge elongated territory and has a very serious difference from the external surrounding zone, representing a power vacuum.

The presence of important minerals, including gold, huge reserves of natural gas and oil, make the “Eurasian Balkans” potentially more important as an economic dividend than just a geopolitical space. The “Eurasian Balkans”, according to Brzezinski, include nine countries, two more countries are potential candidates. These nine countries include the newly independent states formed as a result of the collapse of the USSR: Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan. A special place was given to Afghanistan, which had just finished the civil war and was trying to choose orientations in world politics. Turkey and Iran were defined by Z. As potential candidates for inclusion in the “Eurasian Balkans”, Z. Brzezinski included the entire Caspian region in the “Eurasian Balkans” space. The “Eurasian Balkans” are important from the point of view of the historical and security ambitions of at least

three of the most immediate and most powerful neighbors, namely Russia, Turkey and Iran, and China also makes known its growing political interest in the region” [Bzhezinskiy, 1998, p.151].

Conclusions. The fact that the main resource for constructing the geopolitical spaces of the South Caucasus is largely the geopolitical space of Azerbaijan, allows us to conclude that the region was built at the expense of Azerbaijan and the desire of our state to build a new geopolitical image is natural and legitimate. The geopolitical stability of the region also depends on Azerbaijan's choice of strategic non-regional partners.

References

1. Bzhezinskiy, Z. (1998). *Velikaya shakhmatnaya doska*. M.: Mezhdunarodnyye otnosheniya.
2. *Geopolitika: Khrestomatiya (2007)* / Sost. B. A. Isayev. SPb.: Piter. 1156 s.
3. Keokheyn, R. O. (1998). *Mezhdunarodnyye otnosheniya: vchera i segodnya* // *Politicheskaya nauka: novyye napravleniya* / Pod red. R. Gudina [i dr.]. M.: Veche.
4. Fukuyama, F. (2006). *Silnoye gosudarstvo: Upravleniye i mirovoy poryadok v XXI veke*. M.: AST. 220 s.
5. Chellen, R. (2005). *O politicheskoy nauke. eye sootnoshenii s drugimi otraslyami znaniya i ob izuchenii politicheskogo prostranstva* // *Polis. Politicheskkiye issledovaniya*. № 2. s.115-126.
6. Cohen, S.B. (1973). *Geography and Politics in a Divided World*. - New York: Oxford University Press, 356 p.
7. Corey, M. Johnson. (2009). *Cross-Border Regions and Territorial Restructuring in Central Europe: Room for More transboundary Space* *European Urban and Regional Studies*, vol. 16. pp. 177-191.
8. Dorpalen, A. (1984). *The World General Haushofer. Geopolitics in Action*. Farrar & Rinehart; N. Y., 337 p.
9. *Elements for a Structural Constructivist Theory of Politics*. Niilo Kauppi. Harvard University <http://aei.pitt.edu/9048/1/Kauppi104.pdf>;
10. *Geopolitics and discourse practical geopolitical reasoning in American foreign policy*. Gearóid Ó Tuathail, John Agnew. (2008). Routledge. <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9781315246512-12/geopolitics-discourse-practical-geopolitical-reasoning-american-foreign-policy-gear%C3%B3id>-
11. Huysmans, J. (2002). *Defining Social Constructivism in Security Studies: The Normative Dilemma of Writing Security* / J. Huysmans // *Alternatives*. Vol. 27, p. 44-45.
12. Krasner, S. (2020). *Learning to Live with Despots. The Limits of Democracy Promotion* // *Foreign Affairs*. №3, p. 49-55
13. Mearsheimer, J. (2001). *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*. New York: Norton, 160 p.
14. Ratzel, F. (1897). *Politische Geographie*. München, R. Oldenbourg, 752 p. https://openlibrary.org/books/OL6912167M/Politische_Geographie. (на немецком яз.)
15. Stephen, M. Walt. (05.03.2018). *The State Department Needs Rehab* / *Foreign Policy*, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/03/05/the-state-department-needs-rehab/>
16. Stephen M. Walt. (01.08.2018). *Why I Didn't Sign Up to Defend the International Order* / *Foreign Policy*, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/08/01/why-i-didnt-sign-up-to-defend-the-international-order/>
17. Stuart, Elden (2005). *Territorial Integrity and the War on Terror Environment and Planning* A. 2005, volume 37, p.2083-2104 [/https://www.researchgate.net/publication/23539503_Territorial_Integrity_and_the_War](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/23539503_Territorial_Integrity_and_the_War).
18. Suryanarayana, P. S. (13.10.2000). *Multipolarity: vision and reality* / P. S. Suryanarayana // *The Hindu*. URL: <http://www.hindu.com/2000/10/13/stories/05132523.htm>
19. Taliaferro, J., Lobell, S., Ripsman, N. (2009). *Introduction: Neoclassical realism, the state, and foreign policy*//*Neoclassical realism, the state, and foreign policy* / Ed. S. E. Lobell, N. M. Ripsman, J. W. Taliaferro. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 310 p.

20. Wendt, A. (1992). Anarchy is what states make of it: the social construction of power politics. // International Organization. №46(2), p. 391-425. <https://courses.helsinki.fi/sites/default/files/course-material/4594742/Wendt.pdf>
21. Wendt, A. (1994). Collective Identity Formation and the International State // American Political Science Review. Vol. 88. №2, p. 384-396.