

## **The International Community facing Libyan and Syrian crisis: two different standards of evaluation**

In my thesis I analysed the two principal international crisis that shocked the world from 2011 to nowadays and I tried to explain why in one case there was a military intervention (Libya) and why not in the other (Syria). Basing on these argumentations, I wanted to deduce the new balance of power between the nations on an international level, by seeing if the situation is mutated radically after 1989 or not. I conducted my analysis according to the two principal paradigms of the international relations: the realist paradigm and the liberal one.

The realist paradigm has a State-centric and a value-free approach in the studies of international affairs (it excludes judgements of value and moral or ideological implications): the State is seen a rational and unitary actor and put at the first place the problems regarding the national security. It is important the concept of power (the capacity of an agent A to influence B). Hans Morgenthau is considered the father of modern realism, but we can find the paradigm's origins in authors like Thucydides (he defined the concept of hegemonic war), Niccolò Machiavelli and Thomas Hobbes (their theories about human nature and State reason converged in the principles of realism). Then, we can find different currents inside the realist theory, by considering the different lectures that some authors gave to this paradigm. One of the principal authors is Raymond Aron, theoretical of heterodox realism, in which re-introduce the ideology as a determinant factor in international relations). Instead, Thomas Schelling uses a value free approach and defines the strategic realism, basing his reflections on the changing of war strategy during the centuries. Then, Kenneth Waltz (he is the father of neorealism, he applies the principles of realism to a systemic theory of international relations).

The liberal paradigm, by the other side, has a multi-centric approach: the State is not the principal actor of international relations and it is not unitary and rational. It is composed by political groups and lobby that, during the decision making process, contract and debate each other: the final decision is the result of the compromise or the victory of the part (governmental or not) that has more influence. The issues of national security are not necessarily at the first place of the political agenda: even ecological, economic or social questions are considered a priority according to this paradigm (issues of low politics). The old currents of liberalism are the liberal internationalism, the idealism and the liberal institutionalism. The fundamental values on which is based the liberal paradigm are the individual freedom and the autonomy. With these two conditions results an ideal vision of the world where there are nations with democratic government and free market: this situa-

tion should avoid the explosion of wars between the States due to the harmony of interests (democratic peace). Other liberal issues are the collective security (prevention of menaces to the peace by, in the majority of cases, illiberal States), the international integration (construction of supranational and international institutions with the aim of the creation of a unique international right and a major global governance) and the interdependence between States.

In addition, I took in consideration an historic precedent that is similar to the conflicts in Syria and Libya: the war in Kosovo (1996-1999). This crisis was began some years after the end of the Tito's government (this happened at his death) in the Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia in 1980. The Serbian panslavism of Slobodan Milosevic and the spirit of independence of the Balkan republics (Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia Herzegovina, Montenegro and Kosovo) caused a decade of internal wars in the Balkan Peninsula. These conflicts, that took place from 1991 to 1999, were characterized by serious and systematic violations of human rights (with cases of ethnic cleansing and forced deportation) and it was necessary the diplomatic intervention of western States (OTAN) for the resolution of the misbehaviours between the parts. A special international court was instituted by the Security Council of the United Nations to condemn the people responsible of war crimes and for crimes against humanity. In Kosovo, the Serb armed forces and the separatists of UCK fought from 1996 to 1999: the Serb paramilitary troops (and even the police) have perpetrated physical and psychological violence against Kosovars and they forced many of them to the condition of refugees. The International Community (under the sign of the OTAN), that noted the continuing violations of human rights by the Belgrade's government, decided to invade military the Serbia and bombing strategic points of his territory, even the capital Belgrade. This action led to the end of the conflicts, to the defeat of Slobodan Milosevic and to his deposition. According to a realist point of view, the attack against Serbia was possible because of the low power of the Serbian armies and for the substantial international isolation of the Balkan country; in addition we can say that there were no oppositions by the veto-player in the UN (just a verbal condemnation by the Russia, but without substantial actions). For what concerns the liberal paradigm, the Serbia of Slobodan Milosevic represented a menace to the collective security, even considering the violation of international rights and the illiberal and despotic nature of Slobodan Milosevic's government.

For what concerns the Libyan situation, this crisis can be considered as part of the contestations in the Arabian world (the "Arab Spring"), in which in many countries of the Middle East and the Maghreb thousands of people protested to ask more democracy and social reforms. The demonstration that started in Libya, in March 2011, is degenerated in a civil war that broke the nation in two blocks. On one part, we had the loyalists of Tripoli that was with Muammar Gaddafi (Libyan presi-

dent since 1969) and on the other side the rebels (formed by members of the ordinary Libyan army and people of the civil society, such as teachers, students and traders). The International Community was interested on Libyan question, because of the complaints of abuses against the population by those who were loyal with the colonel Gaddafi. These reports led to the UN resolution n° 1243, which authorized an international presence in Libya with the aim of stopping the conflict and conducting the country in a democratic transition. Subsequently an attack under the sign of the OTAN (like in Kosovo in 1999), leaded by France, neutralized the nation, by determining the victory of rebels and, in one the numerous bombings, Gaddafi was killed. In the realist analysis, I took in consideration the facts that this country, in addition to the internal divisions, was poorly armed (the war-equipment was an old-generation one). Therefore, Gaddafi was not able to build alliance system that could ensure him a protection in case of Western attacks: these two factors encouraged the decision of proceeding with aircraft operations against Tripoli. From a liberal point of view, we can see that the motivations that leaded the attack in North Africa were the same of the case of Yugoslavia (menace to the collective security, violations of the international right and war against a not-democratic regime). However, we have to add the economic interests by the French multinationals of hydrocarbons for the abundant extractive resources of the country (especially oil and gas). These ones (in particular the Total) wanted to take a major part of them by convincing the Paris government to lead the attack against Gaddafi (this action gave a damage to other multinational that were in the country before the war, like ENI).

On the Syrian front, we have a situation similar to that of Tripoli: the big difference is in the outcome of this crisis. The conditions and the context are almost the same: protest linked to the Arab Spring and degeneration in civil war. The first substantial difference is in the alignments: while in Libya, we have only two parts in conflict (loyalists and rebels), here we have a third position that fight for itself and it refuse both the pro-Asad and the anti-Asad (the Syrian Kurds, supported by PKK, and other small formations, such as Palestinians). The conflict is in evolution even nowadays, but it seems almost sure a victory for Bashar Al-Asad's regime and a maintenance of the pre-civil war situation (in Libya, contrary to what happened in this crisis, there was the deposition of Gaddafi and the birth of new institutions). The principal reasons of rebel's failure can be find in the no-intervention of international community (even if there were proved human rights violations by the government), in the lost consensus for the rebels (because of terroristic presences in themselves), in the legitimation of the Asad's government after the 2014 elections (victory with the 88% of preferences) and in the strong Syrian system of alliances. By focusing on the decision of the international community to not attack Syria, we can notify, with a realist optics, which in this circumstance the action of the Western powers are nullified by several factors. First, the powerful alliances of Syria

and the veto posed in UN assembly by Russia and China (the first is one of the most important ally of Syria) during the vote to establish an international presence on the Syrian territory. Secondly, the long-range weapons (that are able to hit Israel) and chemical weapons owned by Bashar Al-Asad's regime that stopped the Western countries (US in particular) in their intentions of war (the human and economic cost could be too high, even with a victorious attack). In the liberal analysis, I took in consideration three: the principal is the risk for the collective security (even linked to the Syrian weapons and a probable attack against Israel, ally of the US and enemy of the Syria). Another menace is that terroristic groups could gain the control of these kind of weapons (considering the infiltration in the rebels), use these for attack in the Middle East and other parts of the world, and generate catastrophes even in regional and global level. There two others liberal considerations regarding the Western no-intervention. One is the division into the public opinion about Syrian civil war linked to the presence of jihadist groups between the rebels (the most resounding case is the protest against the attack by many parts of the US army). The other is linked to the economic crisis that is tormenting Europe and America (a new front of war could be too expansive for the States). Then, we can also say that the substantial absence of extractive resources in the country did not generate interest between the multinationals of oil and gas (the Total's pressure for the attack was decisive in the resolution of Libyan crisis).

After the analysis of these two wars, we can make some considerations about the international system and the "Arab Spring". First, we have to consider the erosion of American power in global affairs. The cause of this descent influence can be find to economic crisis (that hit US since 2007) and the foreign policies not live up to expectations by Obama's administrations. By the way, we have not to ignore the re-gained role of challenger of Russia. After his fall in 90s' because of the decomposition of Soviet Union and the difficult adaptation to market economy, this country was being able to grow up again his power thanks to the supplies of gas for the Europe (it is the principal commercial partner for what concerns hydrocarbons) and to the skilful managing of international relations by the president Vladimir Putin (even if in many case he adopted the use of force, such as in Georgia or in Ukraine). Another important factor is the maintained veto power into the United Nations Security Council (the same of US and China, which is the other challenger to the American hegemony).

By the European side, we can see that the particular interests of the singular States have caused the failure of the common foreign policy wished by Maastricht's treaty (1992) and Lisbon's one (2007). This disintegration of European unity, that was evident in Libyan war, has contributed to the low influence of European Union in international affairs. Even if we have to consider that the impact of

economic crisis was strong also in Europe and has deeply influenced the foreign policies of the States.

Started as a movement to ask major democracy and politic renovation in Middle East, the “Arab Spring” degenerated in a substantial failure: the terroristic infiltrations and the tensions generated by the fall of influential *rai's* (such as Mubarak and Gaddafi) created a situation of high instability with the risk of authoritarian degenerations. The Libya is the most striking case: after Gaddafi's deposition, the riots led to a new civil war that created a new fracture between Tripoli and Bengasi. The phenomenon of illegal immigration to Europe (Italy in particular) is at historic highs, even considering the old treaties that the Gaddafi's regime stipulated with Rome to contain these illegal flows. The Syrian failure of riots, because of the jihadism of many rebels, confirmed the substantial dangerousness and the manipulation by terroristic groups of these demonstrations.

We can affirm, in conclusion, that the international balances nowadays are more or less the same of the period pre-1989, the European Union try with difficulty to be the third part between Russia and US, the China exercises a great pressure on Washington thanks to the American public debt securities (Beijing has the 25% of the foreign). The Middle East continues to be a land of instability where the balances are precarious and the shadow of Islamic extremism impends perpetually on the States with weak institutions (the Iraq, for example), this fact constitutes a constant menace for the Western security and interests (oil provision in particular).