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POWER AND THEORIES FOR IT AFTER THE COLD WAR

ABSTRACT

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The dissertation was discussed at a meeting of the Department of Political Science and National Security at the Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences of University of Plovdiv Paisii Hilendarski, held on 9th January 2024, at which a decision was made to refer it for public defence.

The dissertation is 217 pages long and contains an Introduction, five Chapters, a Conclusion and a Bibliography.

The literary sources used are 249, of which 169 titles are in Cyrillic and 80 - in Latin.

The text contains 358 notes and footnotes.

Three author publications in Bulgarian are presented on the topic of the dissertation.

The materials related to the upcoming public defence are available in the Department of Academic Staff Development and Doctoral Studies of University of Plovdiv Paisii Hilendarski, as well as in the Central University Library.

The public defence of the dissertation is scheduled on 14th of March at 11:30 a.m. at the University of Plovdiv Paisii Hilendarski, 24 Tsar Asen Street, room 126, at a meeting of the Scientific Jury composed of:

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Title: Power and Theories for It after the Cold War

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER ONE

THE SYSTEM OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS IN THE DYNAMICS OF THE 21ST CENTURY: NEW REALITIES AND THE FACTORS OF CHANGE

§ 1. Systemic nature of international relations, reflection on their subjects

1.1. Power and political system – formation and functioning, conceptual interrelationship

1.2. Main theoretical lines in international relations – origin, development, influential representatives

1.3. The debate between neorealism (structural realism) and neoliberalism in international relations

1.4. Foreign policy and foreign policy process in the context of international relations

§ 2. Conclusions

§ 3. The world political system at the beginning of the 21st century

3.1. Changes in the world political system and the environment in which it operates. The end of the Cold War, the evolution of globalization

3.2. The multidimensional world, the democratic wave and Globalization

3.3. The shift from a unipolar to a multipolar world, driving forces

§ 4. Conclusions

CHAPTER TWO

POWER IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

§ 1. Interpretation of power in Antiquity and in the Classical Political Theory

1.1. Understanding of power in Antiquity

1.2. Understanding of power in the Middle Ages and Renaissance

§ 2. Conclusions

§ 3. Main theories of Power in the 19th – 20th centuries

§ 4. Conclusions

CHAPTER THREE

SOFT POWER AS A PHENOMENON IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

§ 1. The essence of *soft power*

1.1. The concept

1.2. How *soft power* works

1.3. *Soft power* as an instrument of the authority

§ 2. Conclusions

§ 3. *Hard power*

§ 4. Conclusions

§ 5. *Smart power*

§ 6. Dialectics of hard, soft and smart power in contemporary diplomacy and international relations

6.1. Can *smart power* replace *soft power*?

6.2. Hierarchy and power

§ 7. Conclusions

CHAPTER FOUR

PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AND POWER

§ 1. *Soft power* in public diplomacy

§ 2. Place and role of *soft power* in foreign policy

2.1. Foreign policy – formation and importance

2.2. Evolution of forms and methods of diplomacy

2.3. State and intergovernmental diplomacy in interaction with the non-governmental sector

2.4. Digital Diplomacy in Contemporary International Relations

2.5. New media, social networks and media platforms – elements of digital diplomacy

2.6. Economic and cultural diplomacy

2.7. Education and science – spheres of influence through *soft power*

§ 3. Conclusions

CHAPTER FIVE

SOFT AND HARD POWER AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 21ST CENTURY

§ 1. The End of the Cold War

1.1. The unipolar model

1.2. The USA as the leader, the rise of China, the weakening Russia

§ 2. Conclusions

§ 3. Is soft power effective?

3.1. From inclusion to contestation

3.2. In the context of other conflict points around the world

§ 4. Conclusions

§ 5. The institutions of constructivism – collapse and hard power

5.1. The UN and the Security Council

5.2. Other organizations

§ 6. Conclusions

CONCLUSION

REFERENCES

General characteristics of the dissertation

International relations are a multi-layered entity formed by the interaction of states within a number of spheres of public life in areas that are political, sociological and legal in nature. In the context of the events of recent years, the topic of power occupies a significant place in modern scientific discussions, which makes it **an actual problem** in the field of international relations and foreign policy. Its proven effectiveness gradually transforms it into a productive approach. This quality of its invariably includes it as a method in the foreign policy of states in recent decades. Although the concept is known in previous historical eras, power has always been of interest to researchers, and in the context of dynamic events in recent years, its role is extremely relevant. Modern military conflicts have a strong impact on regional and global security. At the same time, new trends are observed on the world stage that have an impact on the behaviour of global superpowers and weaker states. Examining the theory of *soft power* and its applicability will help clarify its effectiveness, and in its correlation with *hard* and *smart power* an attempt will be made to compare their effectiveness and their practical characteristics.

The choice of topic is based on several key points. *Hard power* has accompanied international relations since ancient times. Given the dynamic present and the chaotic international scene, according to a number of researchers, an in-depth examination of the use of power would provide an answer to the question of how effective and necessary it is. The dynamics of international relations also causes the need to create and apply methods that exclude the use of military force and emphasizes on one that contributes to the achievement of foreign policy goals and exerts influence by creating intensive cultural, economic and political ties. Such are diplomatic methods. But there are other means that form a favourable internal and external environment for the implementation of set foreign policy goals - the means that use force in its varieties. They are an element of the foreign policy behaviour of states. It is precisely from such arguments that the first years after the end of the Cold War were marked, when it was expected that *soft power* would be the leading approach in international relations, while *hard power* had waning functions. However, the dynamics of international events put this thesis on a test, and especially after the start of the war in Ukraine, set in February 2022, the possibility of *soft power* replacing *hard power* in relations between states should be reconsidered.

In this sense, **the aim** of the present dissertation study is to establish the way in which concepts of power are reflected in the relations between states on the global stage after the end of the Cold War.

In connection with the above and given the fact that power is a complex phenomenon that changes and reflects on the dynamic characteristics of society, in order to fully encompass the analysis, **the following tasks are set for the study:**

1. To examine the international relations on the global stage as a system in their dynamics, as well as defining the factors of change that the world stage generates.
2. To present the role and place of foreign policy in the formation of international relations.
3. To present the image of the political system after the end of the Cold War and to distinguish the main processes that influence relations between states, as well as those that have generated a change in the structure that altered the dependencies between states after the Cold War.
4. To present the theories and ideas about power in the main theoretical lines, as well as the relationship between them.
5. To present the essence and formulate the role and functions of *hard power*, *smart power*, and *soft power* as foreign policy methods and as institutional policy and practice with the aim of influencing the behaviour of individual state actors to achieve a certain result.
6. To analyse the effectiveness of the three types of power in the field of foreign policy and diplomacy, as well as the cause-and-effect relationships between the concepts.
7. To analyse the main theories of power in the period before and after the end of the Cold War, emphasizing on the processes related to the use of power: (1) how power is applied; (2) what results its use leads to; (3) what power is in international relations.
8. Given that a special theoretical focus in the dissertation is on *hard power*, to examine it in the aspect of relations between states based on a review of major strategic documents as the beginning of future foreign policy.
9. To examine the activities of some international institutions and military alliances as directly related to a forecast regarding their further role in regional security.
10. To establish the regularities revealed by the contemporary context of the global scene, as well as which theory of power is most relevant to contemporary international relations, the policies of global and regional leaders, as well as the aspiration of states to participate in strong alliances.

Object of the study

The object is the phenomenon of power. The present text examines power, the evolution in the understanding of power, as well as theories about it as a reflection of international relations after the Cold War. Since the new realities and the dynamics of the environment predetermine greater attention to the role and importance of the so-called *soft*, *hard* and *smart power*. The chosen object of study is related to the way of using each of the three types of power according to the theory of international relations, their formation and implementation in accordance with the goals of the foreign policy of each subject state on the international stage.

Subject of the study

The subject of study is the theoretical justification of power in the period after the Cold War. In this time interval, three concepts appear in the theory of power – *hard*, *soft* and *smart power*. *Hard power*, known since ancient times and before, is an invariable part of relations between states. Although humanity has gone through periods with limited application, it is still present today. *Soft power* is a tool for analysing modern diplomacy and international relations between states through the attractiveness of the culture and specific behaviour of the participant, its political ideology and the avoidance of military power. Originating in the 1980s, the concept of *smart power* is a new concept in political science. According to J. Nye, it is a combination of *hard* and *soft power* in the conditions of new technologies at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries.

Methodology and tools

The study uses a series of modern methodological approaches. Among them, the most important are the following: the theory of classical and neoclassical realism, understood as a tool for studying power; the method of theoretical synthesis is actively used; legal-historical analysis; dialectical-logical synthesis of objective realities, trends and processes; historical approach; comparative sociological analysis; comparative approach, etc. An interpretive method a desk study was used through based on research work on specific documents and scientific sources. When working on the text, sources, books, periodicals and websites were studied, in which the problem of power is considered in various theoretical aspects; the role of *soft*, *hard* and *smart power* from the moment of their formation, as well as their relevance and applicability in the post-Cold War period, was analysed.

Main research thesis

The main thesis of the study is that despite the hopes for lasting peace that emerged after 1989, soon after the end of the Cold War the world returned to the use of *hard power*. And although players on the international stage expected the triumph of *soft* and *smart power*, *hard power* is once again on the agenda. Although the powers act simultaneously, the *hard power* is dominant.

The stated thesis can also be presented through several **working hypotheses**:

1. NATO will continue to play a key role in European security, given the fact that the European Union is not yet able to form a common consolidated army.
2. *Hard power* will be permanently established in the foreign policy of states, as a result of which the rivalry between the Great Powers will intensify.
3. When using *hard, soft and smart power*, no ascending order and evolution can be established, both in the form of power itself and in any evolutionary understanding of the players regarding the application of one or the other concept, i.e. they are not subject to a hierarchical arrangement.
4. International institutions and organizations, which should be guarantors of peace and cooperation and expressions of *soft power*, fail to work effectively enough and prevent or manage international conflicts.
5. Due to the fact that relations between countries after the end of the Cold War are in a state of chaos and unpredictability, diplomacy does not have a leading role in shaping them.

In order to focus the analysis and realizing the potential of the chosen topic, the following **limitations** will be introduced

Only the theories of power with the strongest influence on political thought have been studied. This text examines the application of the formed theories of power in the period of development of international relations after the end of the Cold War. With regard to the concepts of *soft, hard and smart power*, only the politics and international position of states – world powers such as China, Russia, the European Union, the USA, for example – have been studied. This study does not claim to be exhaustive in its presentation related to the analysis of the foreign policies and behaviour of the listed entities. The international institutions presented are only those in which the largest number of states are members (the UN, since it has the highest international status and is the most authoritative international organization, the

guardian of international peace and security; as well as European ones due to the participation of Western European states in them). A geopolitical criterion has been applied. The time period to which the study is limited refers to the application of power after the end of the Cold War, i.e. in the period after the 1990s of the 20th century. In order to create a context for the object and to introduce the subject, the concept is examined in its manifestation and interpretation through Antiquity and the Middle Ages. The research does not focus on measuring the effectiveness of the applied power, as such it does not fall within the scope of the dissertation. *Soft power* has been examined mostly through the prism of public diplomacy and as its instrument.

CHAPTER ONE

THE SYSTEM OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS IN THE DYNAMICS OF THE 21ST CENTURY: NEW REALITIES AND THE FACTORS OF CHANGE

Systemic nature of international relations, reflection on their subjects

1.1. Power and political system – formation and functioning, conceptual interrelationship

The concept of systematicity is associated with the notion of multiple elements and is inherent as a definition to the system of international relations. The international scene is attended by subjects - states, groups of states, etc. But in order for this set of international relations to be formed, interdependence must arise between its components. Interdependence in the modern system of international relations has several important characteristics - military power, numerous channels for official and unofficial communication and contacts between governments, organizations, individuals. In systems, there is a connection between their constituent elements and when it is stable, it is assumed that a prerequisite for internal order in the system has been created. The system of international relations is changing dynamically and rapidly. As a result of globalization processes, for example, the influence of the international system on areas of human life or spheres of relations is expanding.

1.2. Main theoretical lines in international relations – origin, development, influential representatives

The anarchic system of the international scene today gives rise to two main views of the international order in the field of political philosophy. Supporters of the liberal approach define it as more optimistic, while the realist approach adopts a more pessimistic assessment. Theorists of realism, and especially today's neorealists, perceive the absence of a world government, or anarchy, as a major factor in the unsatisfactory international political outcomes. The lack of a common body for defining and enforcing rules means that the international scene is essentially a self-help system. Each state is responsible for its own survival and is free to determine its own interests and exercise power. But regardless of its starting point, all lines of realism pay attention to two essential questions: what explains the behaviour of states on the international scene, and what causes and explains the dynamics of the international system. All nation states in the international system are rational players and

are in constant competition and confrontation with each other to ensure their own survival; their decisions are dictated by their national interests; the international system is anarchic in nature; power is the most important concept in explaining and predicting the behaviour of states on the international stage in it.

Seen as an optimistic theory, liberalism is impossible to be followed completely because it relies on compromise and cooperation, which are difficult to achieve. States are not solely responsible for protecting individual freedom without allowing conflicts. Liberalism follows two principles: respect for the freedom and will of the individual and the need for states to act in community.

1.3. The debate between neorealism (structural realism) and neoliberalism in international relations

For neorealists, there are three possible systems according to the changes in the distribution of capabilities determined by the number of great powers in the international system. A unipolar system with only one great power, a bipolar system with two great powers, and a multipolar system with more than two great powers. For them, a bipolar system is more stable than a multipolar system, since balancing can only be achieved through internal equilibrium. Neoliberalism is seen as a counterpoint to structural realism and accepts the neorealist presumption that states are the key actors in international relations, but nevertheless advocates that non-state actors and intergovernmental organizations have their place in this system.

1.4. Foreign policy and foreign policy process in the context of international relations

Force is accepted as the most reliable means of guaranteeing international national and state security. But it is not accepted as permanently active. The effectiveness of the force capabilities of each actor on the international scene is not made dependent on their absolute magnitude, but on their ratio to the force on which they will be used. Of importance to security is the ability of those involved in foreign policy to anticipate possible future actions of the adversary, to anticipate them, or to determine the likelihood that they will be taken.

The world political system at the beginning of the 21st century

3.1. Changes in the world political system and the environment in which it operates.
The end of the Cold War, the evolution of globalization

After the end of the First and Second World Wars, international relations moved into a stage of recovery from defeat and a struggle for supremacy, but now in the field of ideology. The subsequent Cold War was essentially a conflict again, but managed primarily through *soft power*. After 1989 and the end of the Cold War, the map of Europe was transformed, new states were created and new borders were drawn. The three strong disintegration processes that began to develop after the end of the Cold War - the collapse of the Soviet Union, the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and the collapse of the world socialist system - faced one of the major global players with the serious challenge of trying to regain a leading global role. It remained with the realistic opportunity to build a competitive geopolitical centre. The subjects of international relations are once again in dynamics and entering a new stage of development after the collapse of the blocs. New factors are beginning to act, influencing the role of the nation state. The desire for greater emancipation is increasing in countries, which, on the other hand, fuels confrontation.

3.2. The multidimensional world, the democratic wave and Globalization

After the bipolar model in the field of international relations, new processes of interaction between global players with other challenges - socio-economic, demographic, environmental, climatic - began. The economic challenge of transitioning from a planned economy to a liberal market is putting to the test many countries in Central and Eastern Europe.

3.3. Transformation from a unipolar to a multipolar world, driving forces

At the end of the 20th century, when the bipolar world of Western democracy and the socialist Soviet bloc ceased to exist, new processes of economic transformation, technological progress, freedom of movement of goods, capital and people began. On a global scale, the process of globalization began to be characterized as structurally determining for all aspects of life. The globalization of the world economy is the fastest growing sphere of human activity, which, according to its critics, gives rise to negative trends in the development of humanity - growing socio-economic inequality and polarization in society, severe environmental and energy problems, monopoly over access to resources, strengthening the influence of powerful supranational economic structures and entities, influencing the determination of national and regional policies and development strategies.

Conclusions from Chapter One

There are two different opinions regarding the reconstruction of international relations and the possible polarity of the Great Powers. **One foresees a transformation to multipolarity in the near future. The other claims that this thesis is inapplicable and unfeasible. The author concludes that in both cases there is a challenge to the current world leadership and an upcoming change in the status quo and the figure of the hegemon.** The chapter examines and presents the dynamics of interaction between the subjects of international relations and the complex connections between them. **The way in which, by clashing their interests and policies, they influence the environment and shape the international order is described. The factors of change on the world stage are defined.** An analysis of the main theories of power after the Cold War is presented through an exposition that contains the image of the world political system after the Cold War and its main perspectives. The chapter presents ideas about power in basic theoretical lines, if liberalism and realism are accepted as such, as movements of political thought with the largest number of theorists.

CHAPTER TWO

POWER IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Interpretation of power in Antiquity and in Classical Political Theory

1.1. Understanding of power in Antiquity

The concept power has undergone evolution from Antiquity to the Middle Ages. At different stages of historical and spiritual development, as well as in different phases of theories of the state, different concepts are used to denote the phenomenon of power. Authority, state authority, power have been considered. That is why there is no single concept to denote the phenomenon of power in different phases of historical development. But this does not mean that such a phenomenon does not exist and it is not a relatively constant value, always present in human societies. The chapter examines several key stages in the development of power, starting with Antiquity and ending with theories of power in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Ancient Greek philosophy and political ideas have significantly contributed to the creation of the theories of the Modern Age. Ancient Rome, on the other hand, formed the

ideas of modern state organization. The structure of the Ancient State marked the beginning of political democracy. In the spiritual life of the ancient Greeks in the period 5-4 centuries BC, customary law, the norms of customs, by which justice, punishments, etc. were measured, were replaced by the philosophical ideas of thinkers such as Plato and Aristotle. After them, the problems of society, law, and the state began their development at a new higher stage. The ingenious ideas of these political thinkers are the prototype of today's civilization, the one in which we live, whose norms we obey, and which we often criticize. For Socrates, a just society is one whose main goal is the common good, it should always prevail over its other goals. In such a state, power finds expression as a subject of objective idealism. As being owned by and subordinating a society that lives according to an idealistic order, unattainable not only because of the nature of the human soul, aspirations and perceptions. Power in Plato's types of state structure is exercised and distributed according to its type, with a view to the one who governs state affairs. Aristocracy is the power of the many, which for him approaches *the ideal state*, a structure without conflicts, similar to what the gods built in the past. In aristocracy, the good and the just rule. For Aristotle, the main goal of every ruler should be to ensure peace for the citizens. Because the main cause of disagreements and conflicts is inequality. In the Roman Empire, the state was the expression of the common interest and desires of all its free people citizens in the community. It began its development, formation, and rise according to Cicero's understanding of the family.

Political teachings in Ancient Greece and Rome were born mainly by authors from the ruling class of their era. The diversity and depth of these ideas also served as the basis for the teachings that emerged much later, perceptions of the state, government, power, and justice. These are concepts in which the unchanging human striving for justice is always present.

1.2. Understanding of power in the Middle Ages and Renaissance

During the Middle Ages in Europe, the Church had religious and political functions, whose norms began to be sharply criticized by thinkers such as Machiavelli. He shared the view that politics should subordinate religion. Machiavelli put forward the thesis that the state should continue to exist as a secular one, and not as a religious one, completely subordinate to religious dogmas. In order to transform itself into a secular one, the state should admit the creator, art, and science. He defines power as a building block in the structure of the state. Machiavelli's interpretations of power are considered part of the so-called conflict theories of power. He presents relations in society and between states as a contradiction, a clash between

the subordinate and the subordinator. Hobbes, like Machiavelli, criticized the thesis that power has a divine origin, that its bearer is God. His understanding of power is rather consensual, contractual, based on agreement between members of society, based on unanimity on basic issues and problems such as order, rules, conflict, rights, and interests. Through power, a person can acquire goods. For Rousseau, power is also consensus.

Main theories of power in the 19th – 20th centuries

When examining theories of power from the 19th and 20th centuries in the period of developed modern constitutional republics, states with established democratic norms and governance subject to the separation of powers, these theories often perceive power as an attribute, as an instrument of the organ, body, collective that governs the community or people. In them, the focus gradually shifts to the concept of power. Thinkers such as Kant believe that lasting international peace can have only one basis: common interstate ideas and guiding rules, at the same time values, principles and norms of law shared and defended by all states but at the same time also of morality. Morality and politics must be connected. In the era of the nation state, there is again a division in society into classes, but not on the principle of the ancient estates, but according to another role in the community - intelligentsia, peasants, workers.

In theories such as Pareto's, power is a conflict. In other theories the understanding of the division of the governed and the ruling class (G. Mosca) is advocated. Legitimization is carried out through society, i.e. only the most capable get a chance, personal qualities have precedence over descent. Marxists, on the other hand, see the dominance of the political, economic and military elite through the prism of class relations and their economic characteristics.

The German sociologist Max Weber viewed power from a sociological perspective - as an interaction between two parties as a result of a conflict that arose between them. One participant can exercise his will despite the resistance of the other. An interesting point about Weber is his contribution to classifying power as dominance on a tripartite principle.

In the 20th century, power was no longer viewed through the prism of the relationship of dominance and subordination, but as an interaction and relationship between two subjects. That is, the subject-object relationship began to be absent from the understanding of power. For example, in Foucault, for whom power was represented through dispersion, and in Arendt, totalitarian domination was crushing the political and individual abilities of man. As

the most essential elements in this type of domination, she highlighted power, the supreme role of the party and their mechanisms of functioning. Like her, Dahrendorf perceived life in the absence of violence as a favourable factor that allowed the state to have spheres of life or activities for people in which it did not interfere. That is, he recognized the power of the state, but accepted the individual as the bearer of his own power, which would allow him to live in freedom.

Conclusions from Chapter Two

Power is a significant and starting point, a primary cause or consequence for thinkers and researchers of human behaviour both in the times before the Enlightenment and in the period of the 20th century. When examining theories of power from the 19th and 20th centuries in a period of developed modern constitutional republics, states with established democratic norms and government subject to a separation of powers, **it is concluded that these theories often perceive power as an attribute, as an instrument of the organ, body, collective that governs the community or people. In political science, power is viewed as a conflict.**

In the attempt to analyse the evolution of the understanding of power from Antiquity to the Middle Ages and Modern Times, **a tendency is noticed that while in Plato power is connected with the state, in Machiavelli and Hobbes power is that force that creates order in society. The state (T. Hobbes, Rousseau) comes to create justice through force. And in the theories of Hegel and Marx there is an instrumental-and-force understanding of power. For Hegel, power and force are generated by the absolute idea that rules the world. Marx is the author of an extremely original concept of power. Unlike his predecessors in political economy, Adam Smith and David Ricardo, Marx introduces power through the power of capital. Power is capital, and capital is power in the societies of the 18th -19th centuries. The great classical author on power in the 19th century was the German sociologist Max Weber.**

Regardless of whether it is based on consensus, agreement, or conflict and contradiction, power is a hierarchical relationship of dominance and subordination between state authorities and citizens. It is always exercised by a specific person or entity with power and is at the centre of the ruler-ruled relationship.

At the same time, some modern researchers constitute means which power utilizes. Power is one of the main ones. Through it submission is being achieved. The problem of

power has been the subject of research by philosophers and scientists in several epochs, and the formulations of the concept have an impact on the understanding of the world. **As a result of the presentation thus made in this chapter, it is assumed that the more significant theories of power from antiquity to modern times have been successfully identified.**

CHAPTER THREE

SOFT POWER AS A PHENOMENON IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

The essence of *Soft Power*

1.1. The concept

The concept of *soft power*, introduced by Joseph Nye, is a form of power that has the ability to attract, rather than coerce, i.e. it is the ability of a state to cause others to desire and share its goals, its views. *Soft power* transforms the preferences of others in a way that they correspond to the state that uses the method. Although the method dates back to the times of Ancient China, the concept was widely applicable during the Cold War.

1.2. How *soft power* works

Soft power allows maintaining influence over the elites of foreign societies and using their intellectual resources for one's own benefit in a politically legitimate manner. Applied since the Cold War, however, after its end, it has gained even greater importance because of the huge and long-lasting effect it achieves, as well as because of its ability to create a lasting common opinion, assessment, attitude and common emotions among unfamiliar members of different societies. According to Nye, there are three main sources of *soft power*, namely culture, foreign policy and political values. This text argues that both the state and the system should be considered when analysing public diplomacy and *soft power*. It should also be noted that *soft power* has limited influence and is not applicable, for example, in the nuclear weapons dispute.

1.3. *Soft power* as an instrument of authority. Effectiveness of *soft power*

Soft authority (power) derives from personal characteristics, it is expert power acquired as a result of personal charisma, emotion, it is informational power preceded by knowledge. Its deployment requires the application of diverse tactics to achieve influence. *Soft power* is attractive. This new force is characterized by voluntary participation, it is

"bloodless" and sparing of human life, but requires perseverance and stable financial resources. On the other hand, for Nye, the results it achieves have a long-lasting effect.

Hard power

Power is a variable value in terms of its volume, its "means of expression". Its application should always be placed in dependence on the time period in human history in which it is considered. Political science theorizes conflict as external, distinguishing several of its stages, types, layers and volume. However, according to this classification, not all conflicts that arise inevitably lead to the use of *hard power*. From a political science perspective, *hard power* achieves a change in behaviour in the subject through the use of coercion. This is a way of achieving certain goals that causes a change in the attitude of the other party and achieves the desired results not according to the will of the subject, but through the use of violence, threat, coercion. The dominance-submission relation is also relevant to the concept of *hard power*.

Smart power

Smart power as a term was first used by Joseph Nye in 2004 in his work "Soft Power. The Means of Success In World Politics", justifying it as a combination of *soft* and *hard power*, a tool used in successful strategies. It is a set of diplomatic, military, economic and other resources that both *hard* and *soft power* use. Nye develops the thesis that when the resources of one player are harnessed in appropriate strategies and in spheres or regions where other states do not have an advantage, or in places where power is distributed among multiple actors, then success is assured. This modern concept, applied as a skilful combination of *hard power* and *soft power*, would be a tool of a successful foreign policy strategy.

Dialectics of *hard*, *soft* and *smart power* in contemporary diplomacy and international relations

6.1. Can *smart power* replace *soft power*?

If Nye's interpretation of *smart power* as a combination of *soft* and *hard power* is accepted, then the answer would be unequivocally affirmative. But the important problem that needs to be solved is actually how many of the countries on the international scene will have the opportunity to "create" this *smart power*, and will it not be a privilege only for the strongest, richest and leaders? Because in order for *smart power* to be effective and work for the state, the latter, according to Nye's definition, should be a high-tech, advanced state that has the resources to constantly generate technological innovations, to manage to maintain

leading levels in its economic development. And at the same time, the state that will be able to form *smart power* should possess great military power. Only in combination of these two factors will the advantage be undeniable. Then leadership - global or regional - will be difficult to challenge. But the skilful mastery of *smart power* will be the privilege of only the richest countries, and those with the greatest resources and ambitions to be regional and global leaders.

6.2. Hierarchy and power

The attempt to arrange the three types of power known from a political science perspective in ascending order is difficult to implement. An essential point in *smart power* is the way in which its success as a method could be measured. Here, perhaps, a bold proposal is formulated that the consistency of its effectiveness can be illustrated by examining the time period in which it is applied, and the analysis should be limited, for example, to the study of the foreign policy of several large states in the period of the last twenty years. The author of this text agrees with Nye's conclusion that if the world has to choose between *hard* and *soft power*, it will choose *hard power*. This supports the hypothesis that *hard power* will occupy an important, even dominant, role in international relations. Taking into account the analysed insufficient effectiveness of *soft power*, which does not allow it to take the place of a leading and main method for states to implement a successful foreign policy after the end of the Cold War, as well as the tendency for them to rely more and more insistently on *hard power* by increasing the volumes of armaments and offensive policy towards their competitors, **it can be concluded that in the use of the three types of force, there is not hierarchy and gradation, but cyclic recurrence. That is, the return to *hard power* is an expression of the repeatability of the methods by states when it comes to realizing national interests on the world stage.** After studying the essence of the functions of *hard*, *soft* and *smart power* together with their application by the states-subjects, conclusions have been formed about the results that these three methods achieve.

Conclusions from Chapter Three

There are also interpretations of *soft power* that find in it not only its positive results achieved as a result of this flattering attraction, but also those that states achieve rather through pressure. *Soft power* in itself is attractive. **If it is applied skilfully and the players who use it are experienced, it could achieve high results.** An answer should be sought as to which states are successfully applying the method. As an instrument of diplomacy and in a

broad sense - of foreign policy, states should work with skilled diplomats, have the ability to maintain close ties with a large number of states, the object of the set goal; maintain good foreign trade relations; have sufficient financial resources to allow for a volume of investments in these states; be able to form a strong influence through culture, art, education. **In other words, this is a very effective method for gaining trust and achieving foreign policy goals, but only for states that have a leading role in international relations. These are the strong countries, with a stable economy, a high level of education among the population, a rich culture, and great natural and financial capacity.** These are countries like the USA, the countries of Western Europe, and China, for example.

The present study supports the hypothesis that ***hard power will continue to play a leading role among states and will even dominate their foreign policy and defence and security policy.*** *Hard power* is a means of achieving or increasing the volume of power, its concentration, power resources, the size of the subject or subjects that are indirectly controlled through power. *Hard power* deprives the subject of the possibility of opposition, and in a certain sense of its free will, the possibility of making independent choices.

CHAPTER FOUR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AND POWER

Soft power in public diplomacy

Essentially, public diplomacy is an indirect model for exerting influence and contacts with other societies. It is an attempt to influence and a means of generating an appropriate internal and external environment that will facilitate the successful implementation of a set foreign policy goal. For its theorist Nye, for example, the use of public diplomacy to manage *soft power* is considered increasingly difficult due to the fact that most modern societies are democratic, and the wide and free access to information, which makes targeted actions aimed at shaping public opinion difficult.

Place and role of *soft power* in foreign policy

2.1. Foreign policy – formation and importance

The foreign policy process is complex in its content. It consists of specifying goals, as well as forming a set of means that will serve to achieve them. Specific actions are also needed in this direction. In each country, the foreign policy process is two-component and

concerns political activity on the world stage and steps to implement foreign policy decisions. In liberal democratic regimes, pluralism plays a major role, since political diversity creates competition in views and lines of foreign policy.

2.2. Evolution of forms and methods of diplomacy

Diplomacy is also the main means by which the subjects of international relations achieve their foreign policy goals and includes methods such as peaceful negotiations and treaties. In essence, it is the main peaceful means of foreign policy. The remaining means of foreign policy have a supporting role. According to legal theory, for example, the goals of diplomacy should correspond to the goals of foreign policy. But diplomacy should not be confused with the concept of international relations and their system. Diplomatic relations themselves are a type of social relations, but a large part of international relations is not diplomatic. International law protects common human interests, and therefore, a state that conducts a foreign policy that contradicts it and the interests of the international community enters into conflict with the community. The international order exists under the condition that force is subordinated to law.

2.3. State and intergovernmental diplomacy in interaction with the non-governmental sector

The growing international tension after the fall of the Iron Curtain, the collapse of the USSR and the expansion of NATO can be managed with the help of approaches that ensure more active participation of civil society, as well as through the establishment of an international network of non-governmental organizations that would contribute to better coordination between all its structures. When these organizations maintain informal relations with official institutions, it is permissible for their messages and proposals for solutions to problems to be the basis for measures to be taken by government bodies. Their influence can be characterized as effective, and their role to some extent described as mediatory.

2.4. Digital diplomacy in contemporary international relations

The past few years have witnessed radical changes in international relations, with new technological and political trends transforming traditions in diplomacy. The technological revolution has created a global society, and hence a global economy. The process of technological development turns scientific knowledge into reality, and this synthesis of science and technology plays a key role in the development process.

2.5. New media, social networks and media platforms – elements of digital diplomacy

In postmodern society, narratives such as democracy, security, freedom and society continue to remain interconnected, but gradually acquire a different appearance than they had twenty years ago, for example. They begin to lose their mobilizing essence as instruments for controlling society, acquire ambiguity and other specificity. With the development of information technologies and the loss of sovereignty to some extent, diplomats are faced with the challenge of simultaneously preserving this sovereignty, but also adequately ensuring the inclusion of the state in global processes. At the same time, the new plane of international relations requires developed countries to make more efforts to gain a more favourable position in the global plan. And because of the undoubtedly rapid information flow, and because of easy communication despite the distance. Virtual space ignores territorial borders.

2.6. Economic and cultural diplomacy

Diplomacy responds to this challenge as an element of foreign policy again through *soft power* as a means of public (unofficial) diplomacy, because culture can play a moderator role. In Western societies, for which examples were given, the priority is to encourage the use of soft power strategies in social and cultural interactions.

The essence of *soft power* as a means of increasing the international influence and authority of a state is realized through the application of non-political and, above all, non-military methods of imposing its values, priorities, ideas and views, draws attention to its application to culture. With its help, the boundaries set by hard power are expanded, establishing contact with society, the subject of a completely different existential level, even on the plane of spiritual connection.

2.7. Education and science – spheres of influence through *soft power*

There are many examples of bilateral or unilateral promotion and exchange with the sphere of education and science. But the central question is how this exchange is effective and how it achieves its goal. In order to have a result that will subsequently prove an established influence on the attitudes of society, the “work” of *soft power* through education and science should be sustainable and long-term.

Conclusions from Chapter Four

Despite its name, the concept of *soft power* is a variety of power, an element of it and part of its structure. It is clear that without power, states could not achieve their foreign policy goals. **In this regard, *soft power* is of great importance, not only for diplomacy, but also**

for political practices themselves. The study of foreign policy and diplomacy presented in the fourth chapter successfully distinguishes their role in shaping international relations. A conclusion is drawn regarding the effectiveness, significant function and essential application of *soft power*.

CHAPTER FIVE

SOFT AND HARD POWER AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 21ST CENTURY

The end of the Cold War

1.1. The unipolar model

After the end of the Cold War, states began to form new configurations, various alliances changed their political beliefs and took on opposite economic and value lines of development from the current ones. The arms race during the Cold War created a state of structural pressure. Structural realism, whose representative is Kenneth Waltz, explains the bipolar model of world governance through balance in international relations, the achievement of which is key to establishing peace. Competition in the "cold" conflict undergoes a transformation without the use of weapons. The United States continues to actively work towards building leadership positions in a number of spheres of public life, both regionally and internationally. They form a strong economy that reaches a world leadership position, offer the world a model of governance that is both acceptable, attractive, and protects the rights and freedoms of the individual. They pursue a more sustainable consolidation of world leadership, while Russia is fighting to return to its positions from before the end of the Cold War.

1.2. The USA as the leader, the rise of China, the weakening Russia

After analysing the subsequent events and the policies and strategies pursued, it becomes clear that **neither country wants to give up the achieved superiority**. On the contrary, it seeks to increase them. **The competitor, for its part, does not undertake a policy of reconciliation and retreat, on the contrary, it continues to demonstrate to the international community that its place and role are among the Great Powers**. The United States methodically arms and modernizes its fleet. The Russian Federation opposes the expansion of NATO borders through *hard force*. And China increases budget funds for modernizing its army and strengthening its positions in strategic areas.

Is soft power effective?

3.1. From inclusion to contestation

If *soft power* is examined from the perspective of public diplomacy, it can be confirmed that the method itself is successful. But if *soft power* is a method for achieving foreign policy goals, but not through the prism of public diplomacy, in the field of diplomatic relations between states, for example, this success would not be achievable. ***Soft power fails to ensure long-term cooperation and understanding between world powers. Despite the attempts of soft power to avoid military actions or to end them, the conflicting nature of the players remains their constant feature.***

3.2. In the context of other conflict points around the world

When there is a strategic pause and dominance of the winner from the previous stage and distribution of global leadership, control over a certain pole state is difficult, and balance is almost impossible to achieve. A contest of power is ahead. Since there are many players, each pursues divergent foreign policy interests, policies, etc. **The analysis of the latest strategic documents of the Great Powers allows us to conclude that *hard power* will play a fundamental role in shaping new relations between states in the short and medium term. Power will be the basis of their foreign policy.**

The Institutions of Constructivism – Collapse and Hard Power

5.1. The UN and the Security Council

Although it is an international organization with the highest authority among others, the UN allowed the outbreak of war, and on the territory of Europe. The organization that regulated international relations in the difficult for humanity 20th century, is unable to actively enter into its role as a balancing party in the event of a dispute in the new 21st century and in the context of a new security architecture. In the context of the war in Ukraine, the UN does not retain the image of an organization and a body for cooperation through which the states in conflict can find a solution to the conflict and to achieve peace. The ongoing military conflicts around the world are indicators of the main role that *hard power* has in the field of international relations. The inability, for example, of the International Criminal Court of the UN to impose effective sanctions and implement coercion forms the conclusion that **the**

institutions of constructivism work ineffectively. And they clearly push military power to take its leading role in relations between players on the international stage.

5.2. Other organizations

Institutions that have played a leading role in shaping international relations, especially since the end of the Cold War, include the Council of Europe, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, and the largest economic union, the European Union (EU). The Council of Europe needs reforms to increase the organization's capacity to act, while the EU, although essentially a *soft power* and a powerful economic union, has struggled for two years to reach consensus on its policy towards Ukraine and on sanctions restricting certain countries.

Conclusions from Chapter Five

Despite the attempts of *soft power* to avoid military actions or to stop them, the conflicting nature of the players remains their constant feature. Although Hegel's dialectics claims that each subsequent stage is higher than the previous one, the conclusions of the present study show that the thesis is not applicable to power. If *soft* and *hard* are previous stages, and *smart power* is higher, then the latter is not the most successfully applicable and effective. Players on the international scene use *hard power again*, returning relations to the times of the dominant *hard power*, from which we can conclude that there is a cyclical nature in power as a method. Nye's statements *that smart power is the highest level should not be taken as classical, because it does not dialectically remove the previous two levels.* The analysis of the most recent strategic documents of the Great Powers allows us to conclude that *hard power will play a fundamental role in shaping the new relations between states in the short and medium term.* From this analysis, the conclusion follows that if these strategies remain unchanged, the rivalry between the Great Powers will continue, even intensify.

Today's events are testing not only organizations such as NATO and the EU, but also the international organization with the highest status, the UN. **The Security Council is not working effectively, consensus in adopting a decision in the body is not possible.** The blocking of the work of the UN is a fact. **As a result of the analysis of the work of international institutions, a reasonable conclusion is formed that although they are a product of liberal political thought, and created for the purpose of inclusion, collective resolution of disputes, disagreement and preservation of peace, *the soft power* that they**

generate does not work in favour of peace and consensus. Since, despite institutions, the international scene is in a state of constant dynamics, saturated with changes, including military conflicts, it does not follow a clear order, does not observe international legal norms. Modern theory is experiencing **difficulties** in finding an answer to the question of **how the future of international relations could be determined through the prism of *soft power*.** **No matter how much the international community or individual states want it, diplomacy does not have a leading role. All institutions, as well as theory, find it difficult to interpret soft power.** A factor in this is that relations between states are in a state of unpredictability. The desire for power and influence prevails, and ***hard power* becomes an invariable ally of the players. Diplomacy has no future as a primary method, since relations between states on the international stage are in a state of unpredictability and the constant measurement of *hard power*.**

CONCLUSION

In a complex international environment, states are under constant threat to their security and progress. As a result of regional problems, they are forced to invest efforts in mobilizing resources, to apply strict measures and regulations in economic terms, planning to strictly observe fiscal discipline. Adherence to such policies is implemented mainly by Western societies. They have to cope with a number of difficulties in a crisis international environment, although they value freedom and fully enjoy the privileges they have won. Western liberal civilization today has a new strong competitor in the face of Asian countries, Russia and China with its completely different culture. All these realities force states to focus more resources on their military power rather than on the instruments of *soft power*. This contradicts the optimistic expectation from the end of the 20th century that the times of global military conflicts have completely passed.

The present doctoral thesis analyses some of the realities in today's world and the resulting processes and trends related to the politics of states on the world stage. The set basic thesis and working hypotheses are proven through an analysis of international relations as a system relative to reality, with a definition of the factors of change on the world stage and a presentation of the image of the political system after the end of the Cold War, as well as the role and place of foreign policy in international relations. Tasks have been formulated, the implementation of which shows the main processes influencing relations between states, and the understanding of power in the main theoretical lines is also presented. **They are**

highlighted the more significant theories of power and it is made a comparison between those from antiquity, the Middle Ages and modern times. The essence of the roles and functions of *hard, smart and soft power* in the field of international relations. The text presents an analysis of the features of power, as well as its role in international relations during the Cold War, including its projection into the future, **their the effectiveness of the three types of power in the field of foreign policy and diplomacy, as well as the causal relationships between the concepts.** Can be made a conclusion that she has successfully analysed the application of the main theories of power in the period after the end of the Cold War, **with an emphasis on the processes related to the use of force, as well as a clear theoretical focus through the study of *hard power*.** It is generalized the activities of some of the international institutions and military alliances in terms of their role in regional security, while at the same time **establishing regularities that follow from this activity on the global stage. The author has presented her own point of view on the problem of which theory of power is most relevant to modern international relations.** Although we are contemporaries of an interconnected world, developed communications and widespread use of own and external technologies, the role of foreign policy should not be neglected. Institutions continue to work. International forums still provide an opportunity to express views and formulate solutions by consensus. **At the same time, however, a number of military conflicts remain unresolved and without an implemented peace plan or agreement.** Many diplomatic missions and intermediary states have failed to slow down the process of continuing arming of states in conflict, as well as the provision of weapons, technologies and warfare strategies by their close allies. ***Smart power* is increasingly becoming a new factor through computer networks and space-based satellites and military technologies. They play a significant role in military conflicts and help achieve superiority. But *hard power* remains leading,** along with the mobilization of human resources and financial capital, which are invested in the modernization and increase of military equipment and armaments. The role of economic growth and prestige of strong states is being displaced **by the indicators that form their military power. While diplomatic experience and their successful foreign policy remain less noticeable.** In the constant competition between states, the most experienced, the most powerful economically, and the one who most skilfully builds a foreign policy strategy, knowing their rivals, will always have the upper hand. **The advantage among states is gained mainly by building an impressive *hard power*.** Since it will be the sustainable factor that deters the gaining opponent or forces it to accelerate the increase in its own power to reach that of the leader or leaders.

General conclusions from the dissertation research

After the end of the Cold War, the world was waiting for the supremacy of *soft power*, but the subsequent military conflicts in the Middle East and Eastern Europe caused a reversal and structured a completely different reality, in which *hard power is the leader*. The thesis has been proven that although the three concepts act at one and same time there is a tendency for the dominance of *hard power* on the global stage. This trend will continue in the coming decades.

The scientific novelty in the present dissertation work has the following dimensions:

1. The empirical information provided and the analysis made support the thesis that **gradually *soft power* begins to give way to the methods of *hard power***. This contradicts the expectations of the first years after the end of the Cold War and attempts to impose the thesis that *soft power* can have a leading role in international relations, surpassing *hard power*. **In this sense, the scientific new moment is related to the reduced scientific argumentation for a new direction in the understanding of the dynamics between soft, hard and intelligent power in international relations.**

2. Different aspects of the relationship between *soft, hard and intelligent power* can be brought out and presented in the first, third and fourth chapters as a novelty. The application of power theories in the post-Cold War period is examined. The dependence between foreign policy and power as its basic component has been proven.

3. **The systematization of the way of work and the result of the decisions of some significant international institutions** regarding attempts to end global crises and conflicts is also new.

As **scientific contributions** of the dissertation work can be deducted the following:

1. **The PhD work explores the phenomenon of power, the evolution of the understanding of power after the Cold War, as well as the evolution of the theory of power during this period.** In other words, the development of power as object and the evolution of the theory of power are studied, keeping in mind that the theory follows the object and that sometimes the coincidence of object and subject is possible. Such a research object is new for Bulgarian political science in the form of a dissertation study. The topic of *soft power* is addressed in a doctoral dissertation in PD 3.6. Law.

2. The text explores **the application of *soft power* in the field of public diplomacy.** For the first time, it also examines authority in its dynamics since the end of the Cold War.

3. **A comparative analysis was made between studies by other authors on the leading role of *hard power* after the end of the Cold War.** The indicated systematization represents a unique contribution to Bulgarian political science and a basis for subsequent analyzes on the subject.

4. The present text is distinguished by its generalization of the **perception of power in the period of antiquity and the Middle Ages as authority, while in modern times power is interpreted broadly.** The understanding of power in these three periods is compared.

Scientific publications on the topic of the dissertation

1. “*Soft Power* in the Discourse of Contemporary Events”, Collection of Reports on Modern Research and Technologies for Defence, ARTDef- 2022, Institute of Defense “Prof. Tsvetan Lazarov”, ISSN 2815-2581.
2. “Application of *Hard* and *Soft Power* in International Relations”, Proceedings of the Annual University Scientific Conference 2023, Volume 12, Scientific line “Social, Economic and Legal Sciences”, Publishing House of the Vasil Levski National Military University, ISSN 1314-1937.
3. "The United Nations in the Context of the Events in Ukraine", Anniversary Scientific Conference of the Department of Economics, UNWE, ISSN (print): 0861-9344, ISSN (online): 2534-8957.