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**Benjamin J. Cohen, *Advanced introduction to international policy economy*,
Elgar 2014, pp. 151**

In 1970, on the pages of “International Affairs”, the economist from the think tank Chatham House, Susan Strange, published an article entitled *International economics and international relations: A case of mutual neglect*. Her reflections concerned the lack of interlinkage of research on the international economic system and the international political system. She criticized the too-low contribution of economists to researching international relations, and even accused them of “political naivety”¹. Strange used an example from European studies and explained that internationalology should draw on theoretical investigations on international economic relations. She stressed the need for interdisciplinary scientific meetings and supported the activities of economists within the Chatham House.

When in 2014 Benjamin J. Cohen published *Advanced introduction to international policy economy*, he announced that Strange’s appeal to construct bridges between international relations and international economic relations met with understanding of researchers. In the twenty-first century, there is a series of interactions between international economic relations and international political relations, and we can observe the interpenetration of both disciplines.

The goal of the last (so far) of many books² by Cohen, professor at the University of California, was a “tour d’horizon” by international economic relations to show the state of scientific discipline in various areas of the globe. Cohen reminded that in an earlier monograph, i.e. *International political economy: An intellectual history*, he undertook research on international economic relations in selected Anglo-Saxon countries, such as the USA, Canada, Great Britain and Australia. The professor’s ambition was to broad-

¹ S. Strange, *International economics and international relations: A case of mutual neglect*, “International Affairs” 1970, No. 2, pp. 304-15.

² They are, among others, B.J. Cohen, *Global monetary governance*, London 2008; B.J. Cohen, *International political economy: An intellectual history*, Princeton 2008; B.J. Cohen, *The geography of money*, Ithaca 1998; B.J. Cohen, *Crossing frontiers: Explorations in international political economy*, Boulder 1991; B.J. Cohen, *Developing-country debt: A middle way*, Princeton 1989.

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en the research area. In the new book, he devoted chapters to continental Europe, Latin America and China, and he also continued to disseminate the subject of international economic relations in the Anglosphere countries. Even so, Cohen remarked that readers may miss analysis on the development of international economic relations in Africa, Japan, or the Middle East.

Cohen offered readers an extremely interesting technique of exploring international economic relations. The professor advised them to recognize the importance of ontology, agenda, research goals, openness to other scientific disciplines and the theory of cognition in studying international economic relations. Undoubtedly, according to Cohen, awareness of the importance of the science of being, allows to evaluate and study better the role of participants in international economic relations, e.g. states or enterprises. The setting of the agenda helps to distinguish matters that are trivial and important, shows the issues to be dealt with, such as cooperation and conflict management. On the other hand, the distinction between an investigator belongs to the representatives of normative economics or positive economics is necessary to determine the scholar's attitude. Positive economics strives for impartiality, normative economy over objectivity prefers "improving the world". Underlining the importance of interdisciplinarity is *sui generis* a milestone ahead of Strange's expectations. The Briton appealed for contacts between experts in the field of international political relations and international economic relations, and Cohen sees the need for cooperation with sociologists, anthropologists, lawyers and representatives of other areas of science. Who is interested in epistemology, knows more ways to explore the world – the researcher pointed out.

The structure of the book was based on a geographical criterion, although Cohen drew attention to the difficulties resulting from such a system that poses the danger of simplifications and omissions, while it requires the ability to distinguish between dominant and marginal matters. Cohen, giving the chapters of his book a "geographical corset", showed his own perspective by opening himself to a dialogue with other researchers, such as Robert Cox identified with two schools (the British and Canadian schools) and Robert Gilpin from the USA, who stressed in international economic relations the significance of liberalism, realism and Marxism.

Cohen dedicated both the United States and the United Kingdom two chapters each. In the first, he wrote about the American school, in the second he completed the issues marginalized during the discussion of the American school. The third chapter concerns the British school, and the fourth one its achievements in Australia and Canada. Cohen pointed out that in American school international economic relations are part of international relations as a scientific discipline. Theodore Cohn defined international economic relations as "interactions between states, territorial units and the market"³. American researchers, above great conceptualizations, prefer medium-level theories. They claim

³ B.J. Cohen, *Advanced introduction to international policy economy*, Elgar 2014, p. 15.

that their goal is not to judge, but to understand how the world economy works. They are particularly interested in studying state actions in international relations. The research of David A. Lake on Open Economy Politics (OEP) became popular in the USA. Lake, drawing in his analysis of Robert Bates' achievements, argued that OEP is useful in studying the behaviour of states in terms of articulated interests, research into the functioning of institutions and international negotiations. According to Lake, the OEP is used to study a number of issues in the field of the global economy, such as trade policy, migration, foreign direct investment, migration or development aid. Alongside the OEP, the Americans emphasize the importance of system governance, i.e. the study of how governments deal with multilateral relations. In this management, the power centers and the rules of the game are important. Cohen criticized the theory of hegemonic stability theory (HST). From the perspective of American researchers, he pointed out that the drawback of this theory is the collapse of the hegemonic position and the inability of such weakened actor to realize the expected functions in the system. In this way, Cohen saw the advantage of the governance system over HST. The advantage of the American school is, according to Cohen, initiation of debates over the problems of the global economy, e.g. the TRIP project (Teaching, Research and International Policy), or the activity of the Political Economy Section at the American Political Sciences Association. Cohen emphasized that Americans attach great importance to quantitative research techniques and draw on neoclassical economics.

The next chapter deals with theories "overlooked" by the "orthodox" mainstream in the US, often referred to as "radical" or "heterodox", because in contrast to the traditional American school of international economic relations they minimize the importance of the state in the global economy. They differ from the classic American school that they are closer to sociology than to international relations. Cohen analyzed Marxist themes, showed new factions and referred to the theory of the global system. From the perspective of researchers referring to Marxism, like Harry Magdoff, not the state but international corporations are dominant. Among the "neglected" theories, Cohen also noticed globalization studies by Richard Appelbaum and William Robinson. Another issue, the theory of the modern world system, serves to show various centers in the system – the dominant core and more or less distant regions. In this system there is a struggle for power, in which corporations also participate, the capitalist economy and the international division of labour dominate. Professor Craig N. Murphy conducts research from the perspective of "neglected theories" in Wellesley.

Presenting the British school, Cohen said that it is normative, based on classical political economy and open to other research disciplines, and its aim is "to identify injustice"⁴. Its formation was influenced by colonial history. While in the US research on the functioning of states and systems management is important, in Great Britain the populari-

⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 51.

ty of problem research, for example in the field of globalization, development or poverty, has gained popularity. Cohen distinguishes among the leaders of the British school Strange and Robert Cox from Canada. Strange saw the advantage of international economic relations over international relations, and also stressed the importance of the social factor in the global economy. Thus, in her research, she often asked the question: *cui bono?* Cox shared with Strange the affirmation of the importance of social issues in research on the global economy. He rejected state-centricity, he was researching ideas, institutions and material resources. He was a supporter of critical theory.

According to Cohen, the success of the British school was to instill its ideas into researchers from Australia and Canada. Therefore, he decided to identify in the work the chapter showing the specificity of Australian and Canadian research. At the beginning, Cohen drew attention to certain nuances, for example, the attachment of Cox to both British and Canadian schools, or a number of convergence of Canadian scholars not only with the British school, but also with the American. Cohen believes that the Australian school is inspired by history and sociology, based on normative economics, belief in qualitative methods and constructivism. As the leading representative of the Australian school Cohen recognized John Ravenhill, who is famous for insisting on using the term global political economy instead of international economic relations. Ravenhill's research is dominated by the issues of globalization, trade, finance and emphasizing the importance of regional studies, in this case the Asian one.

It is not possible to present a Canadian school without Cox, who inspired many economists and argued for the use of critical theory and research into the transformation of the system. From the perspective of Cohen, Cox taught that many social and ethical issues must be taken into account in economic research.

Due to the linguistic diversity in continental Europe and numerous intellectual cultures in European countries, it was difficult, according to Cohen, integrate researchers in the field of international economic relations. Despite the lack of favorable conditions, Cohen noted achievements in the field of international economic relations in selected regions of Europe. He appreciated the contribution of Helge Hveem from the University of Oslo. According to Cohen, scientists from Northern Europe have contributed to the development of research into the Nordic state of prosperity, European integration, and international organizations. Cohen appreciated the activities of the Oresund/Öresund network and the prestigious importance of the Nobel Prize awarded in the field of economics. In Germany, Cohen saw the influence of the Frankfurt School, Marxism and historical institutionalism on shaping international economic relations. The contribution of the Germans was seen in studies on globalization (Elmar Alvater, Birgit Mahnkopf), European integration (Hans-Jürgen Bieling, Andres Nölke), and the financial system (Suzanne Lütz). Cohen noted the activities of the Max Planck Institute. He included Dutch scientists Henk Overbeek, Kees van der Pijl and Canadian-based, Geoffrey Underhill. According to Cohen, in Italy the development of international economic rela-

tions was influenced by Paolo Guerrieri, Pier Carlo Padoan and Manuela Moschella. In France, he drew attention to the school of regulation established in the 1970s by Michael Aglietta and Robert Boyer. Pending the reflection of Cohen on the Polish contribution to the development of international economic relations will remain unsatisfied.

The peak of the development of international economic relations took place, as pointed out by Cohen, in the fifties and sixties. Both structuralists and supporters of the theory of dependence derived from historical materialism. Latin American economists polemized with the theory of the invisible hand of the market and spoke of an uneven exchange in which they lose the “dependent periphery” and gain a “dominant core”⁵. He drew attention to the importance of CEPAL (Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe) for the development of ideas and concepts in the field of international economics. Cohen among the leading structuralists mentioned Albert Hirschman, Raúl Prebisch, studying the social underdevelopment of Celso Furtado, and among the representatives of the dependency theory Fernando Henrique Cardoso. As emphasized by Cohen, weakening the development of research in the field of international economic relations resulted from the political situation. Latin American authoritarian governments used a series of repressions against scientists opposed to the policies of prevailing regimes and thus inhibited the development of research. Cohen, however, drew attention to the gradual rebirth of the Latin American path in international economic relations and the emerging network of contacts in the form of FLASCO (Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales) and LATN (Latin American Trade Network). The state and public policies take the lead in the agenda of Latin American international economic relations.

Cohen emphasized that the situation of China is distinguished by the transition from supporting Marxism to modern theories and the appreciation of some Confucianists by some scholars. While Marxism and dependency theory were supported in China by the 1990s, Chinese scientists began to appreciate the analysis of Strange, Robert Gilpin and Robert Keohane, which caused a revolution in the perception of the role of international economic relations in China. At the end of the twentieth century, Chinese economists studied international organizations and economic relations in the Asia-Pacific region. The Asian economic crisis in 1997-1998 also affected research interests of scientists. Above all, the role of the state in the international economic system was particularly important to Chinese experts. Observing the situation in Asia, they emphasized the importance of the development state theory, i.e. the state, where economic development is a priority.

The next two chapters are synthesizing considerations about research schools, which Cohen described. In addition to the summary of research on epistemology, ontology, agenda, goals, and the issue of openness to other disciplines, the researcher raised the issue of the insular character of the American school and considered the importance of

⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 97.

hegemony and pluralism in international economic relations. Finally, he appealed for the appreciation of international economic relations that take into account a wide spectrum of problems, ideas, actors, and transformations.

To better understand the message of the book and to navigate the meanders of international economic relations, which Cohen unveiled, you need to learn about theories of international relations, the history of international relations and political geography. The advantage of the book is a rich bibliography and simple language, as well as the experience of the researcher, who shares not only with experts, but also students, encouraging them to take away international economic relations as a science in which not only institutions, but above all people play an important role. National politics and nations, from Cohen's perspective, do not dominate as research areas and actors in research on international economic relations.