



EUI WORKING PAPERS IN POLITICAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

EUI Working Paper SPS No. 92/20

**The Continuing Story of a Death Foretold
Realism in International Relations/
International Political Economy**

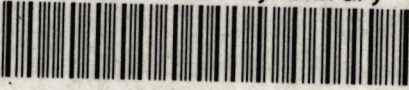
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EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE, FLORENCE

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

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International Political Economy**

STEFANO GUZZINI

BADIA FIESOLANA, SAN DOMENICO (FI)

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***The Continuing Story
of a Death Foretold
Realism in International Relations/
International Political Economy***

**(Revised and extended version of a lecture series held at
the *College for New Europe*, Kraków, July 1991)**

**European University Institute
June 1992
Stefano Guzzini**

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Preface

This introduction is based on scripts for ten lectures held at the *College for New Europe* that was organised by the *International Culture Centre* at the Jagellonian University in Kraków, July 1991.

Its main aim consisted initially in presenting the theory of International Relations/International Political Economy (IR/IPE) to an audience, where different Western understandings of international affairs could not be taken for granted. Having only ten lectures (in three weeks) at the disposal, I opted for a presentation that would be organised around the historical evolution of theories.

Since histories of theories always imply a particular view about how to find, in fact, the significant historical events (material or ideal), some assumptions should be made explicit.

Theories do not fall from heaven. There are two stories to be told about them. One is the *internal* history. It refers to intra-theoretical developments, refinements or rebuttals of already existing approaches, sometimes carried till the breaking up of a school of thought. In this respect, the theoretical discourse of IR/IPE can be said to turn around, approving or discarding, the leading school of thought of the discipline, *Realism*. Realism becomes hence the reference point of the internal history of IR/IPE.

The idea of an *external* history refers to the environment within which this debate occurs. Two parts of this should be stressed. There is, on the one hand the environment of the *scholar* in IR/IPE that will influence the way, theories are constructed, the criteria that will be accepted as 'scientific' (or at least as proper to a discipline), and the material pressures that can arise in a century of largely outside funded research. On the other hand, there is the external history of the subject-matter itself, i.e. the developments in international affairs that affect the fields of immediate interest and study, and the pertinent subjects to be treated.

It is the exchange between these two stories that is the tale of these lectures. Ten lectures on an introductory level offer, however, a limited space. Therefore, one should emphasise what this short story on the theory of IR/IPE *cannot* provide.

It is not a *history of ideas* in international thought. That would start earlier and could not be organised around a leading school of thought. It is only possible, to make such a short presentation by looking at the *disciplines* of IR/IPE as they become institutionalised first, for IR, in the after WWI period, and then, for IPE, at the beginning of the 1980s.

It is not developing a *general theory* of IR/IPE, that would be the accumulated result of past research. There is none. Putting Realism as a reference point does not entail that a whatever revised version of it is the stories' last word: another *end of history*. Quite the opposite might be true. But it seems historically justifiable to conceive, of international thought after 1945 as a constant rehearsal of the ideas that came to the forefront during and especially after WWII. The Cold War might be over now. Yet, thinking that was part of it, still lingers on. One might even argue that that the end of the Cold War makes a close look to Realism more important than ever before. Several reasons plead for this. First, Realism has been the leading school of a discipline which has been so widely influenced by and influencing U.S. academics and practitioners to be called an "American Social Science". The second reason is due to the fact that the end of the Cold War was followed immediately with the shattering of the Soviet sphere of influence. It was the end of bipolarity. Therefore, U.S. thought and politics might be now more influential than any other *national policy* after 1945.¹ Realism is the starting point for any analysis that wants to know "what the hegemon thinks." Making Realist premises clear represents an attempt to see how the intellectual agenda is set, i.e. how good or ill-prepared it is to understand and respond to the changing environment.

Thirdly, it does not cover in detail every subpart of IR/IPE. With the exception of the slightly idiosyncratic analysis of Realism and the history of IR/IPE-theory, this introduction does not aim to develop in an academic original way different schools and frameworks of analysis. Some fields are barely mentioned, as e.g. the study of internatio-

¹ The relative power of national actors has however decreased during this period.

nal organisations or peace research. Others, as e.g. foreign policy analysis, get a short entry, which will certainly not satisfy a specialist. The diplomatic and socio-economic history is rudimentary. I apologise for it. My justification remains always the same: the aim is not a comprehensive textbook on IR/IPE, but a specific view of the interaction between the practice of world politics (in a large sense) and its contemporary theoretical frameworks. It aspires to give some clues to those who want to understand IR/IPE; it tries to provide some tools to organise the ever expanding amount of information and to show how theory has attempted to give it a more coherent shape.

Finally, the linear (chronological) analysis might give the impression that the history followed rather smooth lines. This is a fallacy of exposition. Even though academic disciplines react in a more predictable way than world politics, theories of IR/IPE follow several different tracks at the same time. This introduction privileges the main one, but, for sure, not the only one.

The lectures were initially conceived for those that will never read again IR/IPE. This attempt is still visible in the way Part I, II and the Interlude are presented. The objective consisted in making clear how major statesmen have actually conceived of world politics, and in showing the historical or ideological relativity of many of the taken-for-granted arguments. This means that the participants should be introduced to look differently to world events, becoming aware of informations they had never considered relevant before. Yet, in this revised and extended version, many academic arguments have been included and especially Part III and the Conclusion aim at an original analysis of the state of the art.

Acknowledgements are due to too many people that I could list them all here. Be, however, especially mentioned the particular interdisciplinary environment at the European University Institute from whose multiple research agendas I tried continuously to profit. In Kraków, the special Central/Eastern European teaching environment forced all lecturers to collaborate and reconsider main parts of their

syllabus. To an unforeseeable extent, this College has been a common enterprise of all who were there, an ongoing process of deciding what to do together. Even though this presentation is not a close reproduction of the courses held in July 1991 Kraków, I would very much like to dedicate these lectures to those who made this very intense experience possible, to all those who participated in the *College for New Europe*.

Fiesole, March 1992

Stefano Guzzini

Part I.

**Theoretical
assumptions**

Introduction

Before starting to tackle the development of Realism and its historical setting, the underlying assumptions of these lectures will be succinctly presented.

This first lecture is about the status of International Relations (IR) and now also International Political Economy (IPE).

By status, I mean two things.

First, its 'scientific' status. I will assume that IR/IPE are part of the *human sciences*. This does not imply necessarily that it is a discipline which can come close to the ideal of a natural science. The anglo-american shorthand of *science* as reserved to the natural sciences only is a specific view which is not shared here. The assumption that the discipline of IR is a human science means exactly that the whole debate about the *scientific* status of human sciences, and in particular the *social sciences*, will be mirrored also in IR/IPE. So for instance, what are the criteria to judge that a specific work is acceptable for the discipline? What is the status of facts? How can we arrive at knowledge? Is there a direct link or is knowledge always constructed? Where do we start the analysis, at the level of the whole, or the individual level? To what extent are different methodologies compatible or mutually exclusive?

The first part of this lecture will touch this problem by presenting the basic thrust between those approaches that try to follow the natural science path, or *naturalism*, different human science or even the internal inconsistency of the explanation approach, the school of *interpretivism*.

Second, its status in the division of labour within the social sciences. How does one demarcate or distinguish IR or IPE from other fields? Is that necessary? IR/IPE has been a field which always knew an acute problem of *self-identity*: *What is International Relations / International Political Economy?* The second chapter of this first part will attempt to order different thoughts about it.

Both presentations are also used to make my own assumptions clear - and indirectly the aim of the whole series of lectures. It is impossible to provide an even remotely comprehensive account of the history and ideas in international thought after 1945. This is not the

aim. What I should try to do is to provide some tools that analysts have used to make order in the ever expanding amount of information. Especially now in Eastern Europe, the problem is less to *get* informations, but more and more, as in the West, to *select the significant ones*.

Setting the tools in their historical context should also make aware of the sometimes particular interest that made people think of some clues to be more important than others.

1

International Relations - a human science?



Broadly speaking, two schools are opposing each other about the question of *what is a human science? Is there any science different from the natural sciences?*

1.1. Naturalism

One school supports the idea, that there is only one way to understand science: like the natural science. The main proponent of this school is positivism. It is not the place to enter into epistemological discussions, but a point on methodology must be made at the beginning of these lecture series.

Methodology means the way one uses to get to propositions that will be considered *valid* following the particular standards of a field. Let us treat step by step these three items: the method, validity claim and standards.

The *method* generally employed by positivism is a deductive approach whereby one tries to subsume a particular event under a general law. The ideal aim is the finding of these *general laws*. Take the following example.

General law: The law of gravity. Any object is attracted towards the center of the earth.

Particular case: A stone is thrown. What will happen?

Hypothesis: If the stone can be considered an object, (1st condition)
if it is not hindered, (2nd condition)

it will fall down (or be attracted by the mass of the earth).

Experiment: The stone is thrown.

Result: It falls. The general law has not been falsified. The particular case can be seen as an incident of the general law.

With regard to the *validity claim*, i.e. what is the truth-claim this approach assumes? The approach assumes that there exists an *objective nature* outside, independent of the interpretation of the observer. If it is raining, you become wet, whether you think it is raining or not. Few authors would go so far as to think that the general laws discovered are *objective truth*. There are only an approximation and must necessarily remain *axiomatic*, i.e. impossible to verify.

This brings us to the *standards* to apply to a research. The subsuming under a general law and the finding of the general law should be done in a way as to *falsify* them. That is: starting from a general law, one should develop hypothesis, and state the criteria for the possible test of these hypothesis. Is a test unsuccessful, the hypothesis is considered falsified, and can be taken as an indication that the general law is may be to be falsified as well. The standards are not standards of absolute truth, but of *scientific method*.¹

Two specific fallacies, i.e. logical mistakes, are the most castigated by this approach. Both cannot be conducted to the falsification principle.

One is the fallacy of so-called *infinite regress*. Let us take an example of the literature in the political theory of power²:

- Our state is governed by a ruling elite.
- The analysis finds out that those usually held for the elite are not prevailing in the most important decisions.
- Counter-argument: This is, because behind this elite of facade there is another elite that actually rules.

¹ See C.G. Hempel, *Aspects of Scientific Explanation and other Essays in the Philosophy of Science* (London: The Free Press, 1965).

² This refers to the dispute between the (positivist) *pluralist* school of e.g. Robert Dahl and the *elitist* school (Wright Mills). See Robert A. Dahl, "A Critique of the Ruling Elite Model." *American Political Science Review*, vol.52, 1958, pp.463-469.

- Counter-analysis: This elite does not exist, because there is no clear-cut pattern that the group prevails in decision-making.

- Counter-argument: This is, because behind this elite of facade there is another elite that actually rules.

And so on.

This means that if theory and findings do not coincide, the empirical research (and not the theory) was wrong. The move consists in immunising the theory and shifting the weight of justification to the empirical findings. No falsification is possible.

The second fallacy is *tautological or circular reasoning*. This is the result of an imprecise articulation of the test. For a test to work, the hypothesis should state a relation between one independent variable (or: cause) and a dependent variable (or: effect). Circular reasoning occurs when the two variables are actually not independent from another, i.e. the result is already included in the assumptions. Take an example, still from the analysis of power:

The (often tacit) assumption is: Being powerful means possessing the means to prevail in conflicts.

Hypothesis: If two actors meet in a conflict, then the more powerful will prevail (i.e. the law of the strongest).

Hence, since power and outcome-prevailing are circularly defined, there can be no incidence to falsify this theory.

The paradigmatic case of a positivist scientific analysis is the economical or rational choice approach to social sciences.

1.2. The interpretative approach

1. Interpretative (or heuristic) approaches towards science oppose several fundamental tenets of Positivism (explanation or *Erklären*):

- *methodological monism*, i.e. the idea of the unity of scientific method amidst the diversity of subject matter of scientific investigation;
- *mathematical ideals of perfection*, i.e. the idea that mathematics and physics set the standard of the development of a science, including the humanities. This entails the research for universal or general laws as the specific research program;

- a *subsumption-theoretic view of scientific explanation*, i.e. the explanatory methodology whereby from covering (generally causal) laws hypothesis are deduced and particular cases subsumed and thereby explained;
- *falsification* as the scientific *demarcation criterion*, i.e. what separates science from other undertakings and scientific theory from ideology.³

2. The starting point of the hermeneutical approach is the idea that whereas in the natural sciences the subject of the science (i.e. the researcher) and 'its' *external* object (*nature*) are independent, humanities have to deal with an *internal* intersubjective relation. Human beings cannot be subsumed under the category of unanimated or unconscious 'objects'. Humanities always and by definition have to integrate *human mind*, in its *psychological* (individualist) and *semantic* (intersubjective or structural) component. For all of their differences Weberian historical sociology as much as post-structural discourse analysis can be put close to hermeneutics. There is an explicit claim that human beings cannot be objectivised (becoming a kind of *Plastic Man*) and the interplay of individuals is not analysable with a kind of universalised rational behaviour. Central point for the heuristic approach remains the interpretation of *meaning*, either at the individual or the communicative level.⁴

3. Consequences on the level of reception of *the other*:

- The *constructivist* position: Facts imply theory. There is no 'fact' without interpretation. Discussing Weber, Raymond Aron shows, how historians (and in this case any social scientists) have to choose what they consider the significant material, by giving an example of a novel: Michel Butor's *La Modification*. It is the story of one day in the

³ Georg Henrik von Wright, *Explanation and Understanding* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press), p.4.

⁴ For a convincing recent discussion of this approach, see Davide Sparti, *Se un leone potesse parlare. Indagine sul comprendere e lo spiegare* (Firenze: Sansoni Editore, 1992), Part I.

life of one person and it takes several hundred pages to cover this. History as a discipline would be impossible, if we would, indeed, register all what happens inside and outside the human mind.⁵

Thus, acts are not authentically explainable, because the explanation (giving of reasons) is already another act (second order observation). General theory, i.e. the critical reconstruction of shared knowledge, is only a necessary *means*, and not the *end* of scientific investigation.⁶

- The *Neo-Wittgensteinian* and *Post-Structural* position: there is no even potentially shared universal knowledge, but theories resemble incommensurable *language games*.⁷ The expression 'language game' refers to the way knowledge is acquired. One presupposes that one learns a language like a game. There are basic rules, and then the real game it is the result of an ever ongoing communication and practice. Incommensurability refers to the impossibility to find a common standard or measure on which two or more items can be ordained. Theories as languages are self-contained bodies (or structures or paradigms) from which different concepts derive their meaning. Meaning can only be assessed through a process of translation, which is always incomplete. On the way, something is lost. The claim here is *not* that translation is impossible, but that it is never exact. It is always a *reconstruction* within the other language and it acquires its meaning following the rules and the cultural system embodied in the language.⁸ This is because there exists no language of a higher level to which all languages can refer. The same reasoning applies for theories. Theories construct the reality they are then able to see and ana-

⁵ Raymond Aron, *Les étapes de la pensée sociologique* (Paris: Gallimard, 1967), p.508.

⁶ See for a recent statement of a radical constructivist position: Niklas Luhmann, *Die Wissenschaft der Gesellschaft* (Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp, 1990).

⁷ See for this line especially Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962/1970²). See also Barry Barnes, *T.S.Kuhn and Social Science* (London: Macmillan, 1982); and Peter Winch, *The Idea of a Social Science and its relation to philosophy* (London and Henley: Routledge and Kegan Paul & New York: Humanities Press, 1963).

⁸ In theoretical terms, incommensurability presupposes a holistic theory of meaning.

lyse. The shift from one theory to another denotes a shift in the construction of reality. Yet, this means, that there is no objective or neutral ground on which to judge theories. Falsification which presupposes in the empirical world this neutral ground, is therefore not possible.

4. Consequences on the level of interpretation/explanation (the status of the interpreter):

- The validity (or the *truth claim*) of a hypothesis cannot be *tested* against an independent outside world. This would not only presuppose a *direct access* to an external, that is mind-independent, world, but also a shared language among the audience for which the test has been pursued. Falsification in the sense of a test *with the real world* is, therefore, not a possible demarcation criterion for (human) sciences. The validity can only be assessed by the intersubjectively shared *conventional* criteria of the participants in a specific (here scientific) language game. These might imply a strong stress on procedures. (This, as much as the neo-Wittgensteinian position above, concerns also the natural sciences.)

- The scientific project consists therefore in *making sense* (within one's intersubjectively shared meanings) of particular moments in history. Only *ex post* rationalisations are possible, generally no predictions. For this, two main areas of research are necessary: the theoretically informed interpretation of history for its own sake (and not for getting laws) and the theoretical/conceptual *internal* criticism of the given interpretations; i.e. historical sociology, and social and political theory.

- The problem of *relativism*: Without the assumption of an at least potentially discoverable T(t)ruth and its reduction to (pure ?) convention, does, at least potentially, "anything go"? This is the mirror criticism into which the debate gets easily trapped. Positivism implies a claim for universality for which no foundation can be found. Interpretativism comes close to relativism, where it is difficult to justify any scientific criteria in the never ending translation and sociological self-critique.

2

What is IR/IPE ?



There are mainly three different ways of deciding what IR/IPE is. The first is the definition through its subject-matter, as economics (which is about the distribution of value in a world of scarcity), or sociology (which should about society as a whole), psychology (mind and consciousness), and so forth.

The second is the methodological division by defining disciplines through their approach: the economic (individual value-maximising) approach, the intersubjective or communicative approach, the holistic approach (sometimes called the sociological approach).

Finally, and following a sociological analysis, one could try to locate the particular theoretical and practical conventions that underlay the discipline of IR/IPE.

2.1. Definition by its subject-matter

International Relations encounters rather formidable difficulties to define a particular subject-matter of its own. Yet, it is on this account that it was founded.

The first chairs in International Relations⁹ were put up immediately after the Great War 1914-1918 with the explicit aim in mind to avoid a similar catastrophe. Therefore, it is the study of *war and peace* that became to be identified with the study of International Relations. More precisely, International Relations consisted in a specific focus on war and peace by drawing on a variety of different disciplines that existed before, especially international law, philosophy, and international history. Undeniably, peace and war remain central features of today's discipline of International Relations. But it is not enough to demarcate from other sciences. The explanation of war, or the avoidance of conflict are covered by different other disciplines as well, as e.g. social psychology and philosophy.

In a second step, therefore, International Relations came to be understood as what its name implies, the behaviour (conflicting or not) *between states*. This has been the taken-for-granted view of many Realist writers after World War II. The focus on the external relations of states would be the subject-matter. Yet also this demarcation seems difficult. One does not straightaway see how it would be possible to study the *external* relations of states, without knowing anything about the *internal* relations - and vice versa.

Take some examples.

The British government (as representative of the state) had lowered in the mid-Eighties the taxation of managers, in order to make economic activities more attractive to be located in GB. This had a certain impact on the ongoing decisions of the German government which was also negotiating a tax reform at that time. This is just one example, of a specific *domestic* policy which has immediate international repercussions. These repercussions must not be intended or foreseen as in this case. The change of the interest rate in New York is a domestic decision, but its repercussions are at every place which is linked to the international financial structure. There are less and less spheres where domestic decision makers are actually able to carry out

⁹ The first was founded in Aberystwyth, Wales.

decisions independently, without taking into account the direct or indirect (re)actions of other states.

In a further step, one stretches a bit the original definition. Then whatever international event that effects states could be subsumed under international relations, integrating thereby international organisations, and transnational actors, as e.g. firms. *International* actors are certainly not only states.

All this contributes to the falling down of the initial focus on external relations: it is more and more difficult to demarcate the *external* from the *internal* affairs of the state: we are living in a period of internationalisation of politics (in the widest sense: public affairs).

Finally, one could say, as e.g. John Burton does¹⁰, that *conflict* is the actual subject-matter of International Relations. This might be a good way to bypass some of the more restrictive definitions we have just mentioned. But it suffers from the opposite flaw: conflict/cooperation is one of the underlying themes of *all* social sciences.

Therefore, IR has its *specificity* in the military and political aspects of war (strategic studies). But this is certainly not enough to define IR/IPE as a discipline. As a discipline, it has tried to couch this part into larger framework of international studies. It seems thus that everything which has an international effect is at least potentially part of the discipline. Marcel Merle has, in lack of another defining principle, defines International Relations as the *flows that pass or even tend to pass a border*.¹¹

As a preliminary definition that is, however, not sufficient to encompass the whole study of International Affairs, one could point to the two levels of International Relations. The one, also called the *macro-level* treats the ruling of the international system, whereas the other, the *micro-level* deals with the foreign policies of international and transnational actors. IR/IPE can then be seen as the integration and articulation of the macro and micro-level for either the *explana-*

¹⁰ John W. Burton, *Global Conflict. The Domestic Sources of International Crisis* (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1984/1986²).

¹¹ Marcel Merle, *Sociologie des Relations Internationales* (Paris: Dalloz, 1982³), p.90.

tion and prediction of outcomes or the *understanding* of specific historical phenomena.

2.2. Definition by its own approach

In the social sciences, it has become usual to presuppose one common *social science*, that is, to give up the difficult definition of disciplines via their subject-matter, and to declare all human affairs at least potentially part of any discipline. The division of labour between disciplines does thus not consist in cutting out a specific part of the cake, but by approaching the whole cake from different angles. Since my aim is not a presentation of different methodologies, I will take one as an example, and quote some others.

One of the possible angles, and probably the most advanced "scientifically" is the *economic (rational choice)* approach to the social sciences. Its name indicates that it has become absolutely preponderant within economics, in a way that other approaches have to be content to get the labels *economic history* or *political economy*. This approach can be presented as both methodological individualist and positivist. Since positivism has already been dealt with, just a succinct account of the meaning of methodological individualism.

The pure case of the economic approach is the rational actor model (rational choice approach). The analysis starts with the individual. It assumes that these individuals have specific preferences. It is considered rational that they will try to realize as much of their preferences as they can afford, i.e. they are assumed to be value or utility-maximising. Since they have only limited (or scarce) resources at their disposal, value-maximizing implies that every decision be submitted to a calculus of estimated costs and benefits. The final choice is the winner of this calculus. Rational choice theory is obviously not as simple. The decisions have to be made under particular constraints, so e.g. under conditions of insufficient information. Another difficulty is the explanation of *collective* behaviour. These have become refinements

of the theory.¹² This has not changed the basic tenet of its methodological individualist methodology: collective behaviour can be sufficiently explained by the aggregation of these individually understood actions. The *social* is the addition of the *individual*. At least as an explanatory device. The economic approach is increasingly applied also in other disciplines than economics. In International Relations, it was originally applied to strategic studies (e.g. deterrence), but has subsequently become part of present mainstream IR (see Part III).

Another approach to the field of humanities is the *historical* approach. It is part of the hermeneutical tradition. This was very prominent in International Relations, and it is still so, when IR comes close to diplomatic history.

Finally, there is the *sociological or structuralist* approach which is the opposite to the individualist one. Generally it is anti-positivist, sometimes influenced by anthropological studies. It starts from the critique of individualism that collective actions is not possibly understood only through the aggregation of individual behaviour. The whole is more than the sum of its parts. This methodology was imported into International Relations when system-theory became the prominent approach of sociology and political science in the 50's and 60's. The more anthropological approaches are rather uncommon and to be found primarily in recent literature.

Unfortunately, there is no *internationalist* approach (this concept does not even exist) which could be demarcated at the methodological level. Therefore, the definition of IR/IPE through its methodology is as impossible, as it is for political science, for example. This does, however, not mean that one can mix indiscriminately insights from different other disciplines or approaches to the social sciences. The specific substantial and methodological mix must always be stated and justified.

¹² Mancur Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965).

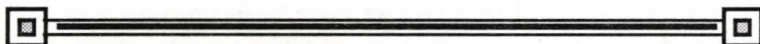
2.3. A Historical-sociological definition

Therefore, it seems that a mixture of the first thematic and this last historical-sociological definition seems most appropriate to deal with the *discipline* of International Relations. The thematic definition tries to see the *internal logic* of theory-building. And indeed, disciplines and their debates seem to follow a certain logic that can not be subsumed under historical explanations. It is, however, not enough to give a sufficient appraisal of international studies. It is my assumption, that the sole reference to this internal logic is not enough. I follow thereby the more hermeneutical tradition for the understanding of the phenomena of international studies: there is no even slightly ahistorical subject or methodology on which accumulation of knowledge can occur as it is supposed to be in the natural sciences. A discipline is a construct. Its knowledge is also construct of the particular scholar and the academic community as a whole. Yet, this knowledge is not developed, the debates are not insulated from the environment in which research occurs and from the way the academic community defines the criteria to judge research and truth. Therefore, this more *constructivist* vision must integrate an *external history*, that is a *historical-sociological* definition.

Realism is taken here as the meeting point of the internal and external history. It worked *like* a paradigm. Thereby it defined internally the boundaries of the subject-matter and of the scientific community. But it is simultaneously shaped by its external environment which happens to be largely dominated by one superpower, the U.S. Thus, IR can only be understood as it historically emerged after 1945, i.e. as the analytical tool provided for the understanding of world politics and actual policy formulation of Western powers in a bipolar world. Realism is the paradigm of this mainly USAmerican discipline.

3

Realism - the USAmerican paradigm



A paradigm governs, in the first instance, not a subject matter, but a group of practitioners. Any study of paradigm directed or paradigm shattering research must begin by locating the responsible group or groups.

Thomas S. Kuhn

(The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, p.180)

3.1. The concept of paradigm

The first meaning of paradigm is embedded in Kuhn's approach to "mature science". Here lies his own definition of paradigm:

"one or more past scientific achievements", which were

1. "sufficiently unprecedented to attract an enduring group of adherents away

from competing modes of scientific activity"

2. "sufficiently open minded to leave all sorts of problems for the redefined group of practitioners to resolve."¹³

If these achievements are "universally received" (p.13), "Pre-Paradigm-science", characterized by an "inter-school debate" about assumptions ceases to exist and science becomes "mature" or "normal science". Normal science can start with exploring the unresolved, but

¹³ Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, p.11.

now defined problems, "puzzle - solving". It develops the potential richness of the underlying framework, the paradigm.

Without paradigm, there is no deepening, no criterion to chose problems (p.37) and for establishing the main focus of research, legitimising, and legitimated by, the scientific community. Without paradigm, no scientific community, no firmly established discipline (p.19), no "mature science".

Kuhn's central idea of "revolution" will introduce a *second aspect of paradigm* which is more abstract or "metaphysical", because it is "far wider than and ideologically prior to theory, i.e. a whole Weltanschauung."¹⁴ For Kuhn, revolutions, i.e. the replacement of one paradigm by another, are changes of "world view": "When Aristotle and Galilei looked at swinging stones, the first saw constraint fall, the second a pendulum."¹⁵ This is, what Kuhn refers to as a "gestalt-switch".

Since paradigms constitute the basic tool of research, of "normal science", normal science in turn cannot correct the paradigm (p.122). Hence, a new paradigm can only be born by a radical new world view, by the abandonment of the old paradigm. This is why Kuhn calls it a "revolution". A revolution comes after a debate between proponents of competing paradigms. Since their logical contact is incomplete, "paradigm debates always involve the question : which problem is more significant to have solved ?" (p.110)

The "gestalt-switch" will come not because the new paradigm explains all things better, or more phenomena, than the replaced one did, but because it resolves some important problems, "anomalies" and promises greater achievements. It also can correspond to changed values in the environment.

Kuhn does not elaborate this last point. He stresses more the consequence of the necessary "gestalt-switch" for the notion of progress. Since a revolution changes only the way we see the world,

¹⁴ Margaret Mastermann, "The Nature of a Paradigm." In Imre Lakatos and Alan Musgrave, eds., *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge* (Cambridge et al.: Cambridge University Press), p.67.

¹⁵ Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, p.121.

Kuhn merely sees a "process", but towards no goal, i.e. no "progress". He cannot see "truth" residing in the real world, which ever refined theories might discover. Paradigms that guide research, also determines perception. "Truth" is limited to the paradigm.

Hence, two views of paradigms exists. Paradigms are once constituting factors of a "mature science" and its scientific community, once a "Weltanschauung". This last definition is linked to important concepts: "revolution" as "gestalt-switch" after a normative "paradigm-debate" of limited logical contact. It is the notion of "incommensurability" which is the logical consequence of a concept of paradigm which expresses a Weltanschauung.

3.2. Paradigms and social sciences

In social sciences, two different attitudes towards Kuhn prevail.

A *first group* of scholars attempted to reformulate the history of social sciences in a Kuhnian way. Part of them discussed the notion of incommensurability and applied it to a normatively conceived paradigm debate within IR/IPE.¹⁶ Others focused on the first concept of paradigm as "normal science", i.e. as a legitimated and dominating theoretical source for puzzle solving¹⁷. A last category finally refused to consider, at least in some special sciences, Kuhn's "revolution" as convincing. The more cumulative (albeit also not teleological) view of

¹⁶ See e.g. Michael Banks, "The evolution of International Relations" In his edited *Conflict in World Society. A new perspective on International Relations* (Brighton: Harvester Press), pp.3-21; Michael Banks, "The Inter-Paradigm Debate" In M. Light & A.J.R. Groom, eds., *International Relations. A Handbook of current theory* (London: Frances Pinter), pp.7-26; K.J. Holsti, *The Dividing Discipline. Hegemony and Diversity in International Theory* (Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1985); and Margaret Mastermann, "The Nature of a Paradigm." In *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge*.

¹⁷ See e.g. R.W. Mansbach & J.A. Vasquez, *In search for theory: A new paradigm for global politics* (New York et al.: Columbia University Press, 1981); John Vasquez, *The Power of Power Politics: A Critique* (London: Frances Pinter, 1983).

scientific progress as superseding research programmes, seemed to fit reality better than a "gestalt-switch": Lakatos versus Kuhn¹⁸.

A second group of scholars refused to ask how social sciences fit Kuhn's approach, but what Kuhn's approach contributes to social sciences.¹⁹ This understanding of Kuhn emphasises the reasons why one specific paradigm has been chosen by pointing to the "profoundly purposive, goal-oriented character of all human activity and cognition (p.114). Thus, the sociologist has to ask which interests guide the judgements in the scientific community, vested professional interests of scientists and/or socio-political interests of their environment. This latter attitude will be followed here. Although chapters 10 and 16 will treat it in detail, some reasons will be given here for discarding the first and usual application of Kuhn to IR/IPE.

The first problem is linked to the very applicability of Kuhn's history of science to social sciences. Kuhn thinks that social sciences (he calls them proto-sciences) have not acquired a universally received paradigm, although he does not exclude this possibility. Social sciences are at the pre-paradigm stage. Therefore, some scholars proposed to consider social sciences as "multi-paradigm sciences"²⁰, where Kuhnian normal science applies to the level of subfields. On the general level of the discipline however, the discussion about fundamentals remains and long-run progress (as opposed to local progress) fails to occur. Popper in his discussion of Kuhn, insists that this also happens in "mature" science.²¹ To have one dominating paradigm is neither necessary, nor impossible.

Kuhn later admits that the "proto-sciences" are qualitatively different from "mature science". Social sciences are, in other words, in

¹⁸ This is the view of Robert O. Keohane, "Theory of World Politics: Structural Realism and Beyond" In his edited *Neorealism and its Critics* (New York: Columbia University Press), pp.158-203; and Marc Blaug, "Kuhn versus Lakatos, or paradigms versus research programmes in the history of economics." *History of Political Economy* vol.7, no.7, 1975.

¹⁹ Barry Barnes, *T.S.Kuhn and Social Science* (London: Macmillan, 1982).

²⁰ Margaret Mastermann, "The Nature of a Paradigm", p.74.

²¹ Karl R. Popper, "Normal Science and its dangers." In Imre Lakatos and Alan Musgrave, eds., *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge*, pp.51-58.

a permanent crisis. Kuhn does not follow Mastermann's conception. He probably prefers a strong concept of paradigm limited to "mature" science to a looser one in all sciences, where the implications of 'paradigms-as-Weltanschauung' and of the central concept of incommensurability might not apply. He acknowledges, that Popper's method of criticism and falsification is essential in "proto-sciences".²²

Thus, and this is a second problem, the concept of *incommensurability* is far from being sufficiently analysed. If it applied to IR/IPE, it would provide a comfortable intellectual solution for the little accumulation in social sciences. Debates do not cumulate, because they are about assumptions, value premises, in short, because they are incommensurable. Yet, this might not be Kuhn's position. When Kuhn restated his concept of incommensurability, he used a language metaphor.²³ Theories are as incommensurable as different languages are. They can be learned. They can even be translated. But during the translation, the ontological environment of the language is, at least partly, lost. The best translation will not be the same as Popper's neutral language, which provides the ground for 'objective' tests.

Yet, a translation still occurs. Communication is limited, but possible. Even though the choice for one language/theory is, in the last resort, not made on rational grounds, theories/languages develop and can come closer when communication continues. Incommensurable does not mean entirely incomparable, but that, once the debate has eliminated inconsistencies, the last choice will express a preference which can not be rationalised. Kuhn's concept of *Weltanschauung*, his second definition of paradigms, implies more than just incompatible values: People can see the same world, and judge it differently.²⁴

Therefore, "paradigm" will be used in its sociological meaning, i.e. as being constitutive for a discipline and its scientific community, and

²² Thomas S. Kuhn, "Reflections on my critics." In Imre Lakatos and Alan Musgrave, eds., *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge*, p.244.

²³ *ibid.*, p.267.

²⁴ In chapter 10, we will see that in the discussion of IR theory, not all the writers are aware of the fact that to use Kuhn's concept of paradigm without its metaphysical sense might lead them to old conclusions only wrapped up in an erudite "Kuhnian" blanket.

as a body of resonance of its mainly USAmerican environment.²⁵ Realism does not imply a coherent world view. It is not inherently linked to a specific ideology, even though it reflects the interests of "its" practitioners in a global context dominated by the North (West). It implies specific assumptions about world politics that are continuously reshaped by internal debate and external constraints and opportunities. It is the pivotal point of reference for academics and practitioners alike and a place of intellectual struggle for both (in the West).

3.3. The sociological approach to paradigms in IR

In IR, two different ways to introduce "paradigms" for a better understanding of the evolution of IR theory can be identified. They are by no means exclusive. But their focus is slightly different and this will be emphasised, for the purpose of easier presentation.

Common to both approaches is the perception that IR has or had one single paradigm: the realist school or simply, realism. Yet, the first approach focuses on why and how realism developed as a paradigm, whereas the second stresses the present "crisis" and the resulting debate between competing paradigms, the so called "Inter-Paradigm Debate". We will now take up the first discussion. Realism in crisis will constitute the interlude to Part III.

A sociological approach stresses two things. First, Realism is the school of thought which suited the best the interests of the scientific community and its social and political environment. Second, Realism is the consequence of the fact that after 1945 the overwhelming part of this scientific community happened to be located and paid in one country, the U.S. *More bluntly, if IR is an American social science, then realism is its paradigm.*

²⁵ Sometimes the scholars are not even aware of their implicit Western bias. Only on the Western side of the Elbe did "Since the birth of the modern nation-state in Western Europe, a single paradigm ... held sway over efforts to theorize about global politics." See R.W. Mansbach & J.A. Vasquez, J.A., *In search for theory: A new paradigm for global politics*, p.3.

Kuhn's description of the function of a paradigm fits well the development of realism and of its discipline, IR. Starting from an analysis of the scientific community in IR, i.e., its activity, the resources available for that activity and the communal goals towards the attainment of which the activity is directed, some scholars have identified similarities in the development of IR theory after World War I and World War II²⁶. They analysed the link between the dominance of certain states in the international system and the study of IR in and outside these countries.

Idealism after World War I had thus the same function as Realism after World War II: it provided legitimacy for the foreign policy of the dominant states and for the state of the international system.

This is not to make the functional fallacy to assume these to be the *only* reasons. Nor to see idealism and realism as necessarily consciously used tools of legitimation. Only when peaceful change, advantageous for less powerful states, appeared more and more difficult, this function became important. In E.H.Carr's words:

The utopian assumption that there is a world interest in peace which is identifiable with the interest of each individual nation helped politicians and political writers everywhere to evade the unpalatable fact of a fundamental divergence of interest between nations desirous of maintaining the status quo and nations desirous to change it.²⁷

World War II was seen as the bankruptcy of the idealist position. "Anti-appeasement was the new consensus. The dynamics of changing power relations were acknowledged, peaceful change discredited. The only way to cope with change was to "contain" it by "power-politics".²⁸ As Britain before, the U.S. perceived itself as having "global responsibilities" as a superpower. Thus, for national purposes, the scientific community was encouraged to look at global phenomena. A distinct discipline developed. Yet, this "American school" differed on

²⁶ See e.g. Stanley Hoffmann, "An American Social Science: International Relations." *Daedalus*, vol.106, 1977; and Steve Smith, "The Development of International relations as a Social Science." *Millennium*, vol.16, 1987.

²⁷ Edward Hellet Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis* (London: Macmillan, 1939/46), p.53.

²⁸ For a discussion of more moderate versions of containment, see chapter 7.

one very important point from the British scientific community: the ties to "politics"²⁹. *The American academic community* was characterised by:

- a "scientific" approach to social sciences, inspired by "economics"
- the dominance of scholars emigrated from Europe with strong historical backgrounds and who "wanted to find out the meaning and the causes of the catastrophe that had uprooted them, and perhaps the key to a better world"³⁰
- the general desire of social scientists to be helpful to the national community, i.e. for IR scholars, to reflect and improve American foreign policy.

Moreover, the ties between university and power (the so-called "Kissinger-Syndrome") and the network of research foundations laid the ground for the development of one school to a "paradigm" which suited best American foreign interests: Realism³¹. Realism functioned as a paradigm in setting the boundaries of "legitimate" research. As John Vasquez has shown, it provided the basic tool of analysis for generations of "puzzle-solvers". Or, in his own words, it "tells the scholar what is known about the world, what is unknown about it, how we should view the world if we want to know the unknown and finally what is worth knowing".³² Thus, Realism has another very important paradigmatic function. It defines a community by setting the boundaries of the discipline. The community, in turn defines the discipline. This aspect is of double importance. First, it explains why, once IR established as an independent discipline in the U.S., the new departments created outside the U.S. tended to adopt Realism as its leading paradigm. In the beginning, these countries imported the

²⁹ The following relies heavily on S. Hoffmann, *An American Social Science...; S. Smith, The Development of International Relations... See also Alfred Grosser, "L'Etude des Relations Internationales: Spécialité Américaine?" Revue Française de Science Politique*, vol.III, 1956, pp.634-651.

³⁰ Stanley Hoffmann, "An American Social Science: International Relations", p.47.

³¹ Fred Halliday notes very rightly that American IR theory knows a great diversity within and outside the realist paradigm, but that this was denied by mainstream scholars. See his "State and Society in International Relations: A second agenda." *Millennium*, vol.16, 1987, p.227.

³² John Vasquez, *The Power of Power Politics: A Critique*, p.5.

department with its constituting research-programme. In a certain sense, *IR and Realism were identic*. Perhaps only in the UK where IR had an older tradition, an independent, so-called "British school of IR" survived. On the other hand, in Germany, where IR is still today overwhelmingly part of the political science department, the dominant power-approach linked both. Realism became the American up-to-date formulation of the traditional German "Realpolitik", the echo of German emigrants back home³³. Secondly, and perhaps more important, by one of its assumptions, Realism gave IR a very suitable *demarcation* from other sciences. Beside the assumption of the state being the most important actor, and power the most important goal of politics, Realism claims that there is a qualitative difference between the laws which govern domestic societies and the "nature" of the international system³⁴. As R.Aron described it:

Mais tant que l'humanité n'aura pas accompli son unification dans un État Universel, il subsistera une différence essentielle entre politique intérieure et politique étrangère...Les États ne sont pas sortis, dans leurs relations mutuelles de *l'état de nature*: il n'y aurait plus de théorie des relations internationales s'ils en étaient sortis.³⁵

Therefore the following chapters in Part II will try to present Realism as it became the leading school after 1945 and the evolution of Realist thought till the crisis of Realism at the beginning of the Seventies.

³³ The Munich school of "Neorealism" claims to be a German-American synthesis. See Gottfried-Karl Kindermann, ed., *Grundelemente der Weltpolitik* (München: Piper Verlag, 1977/1986³).

³⁴ Some scholars, considered generally within the Realist school, do however not subscribe to this assumption, so e.g. E.H. Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis*: "War lurks in the background of international politics just as revolutions lurk in the background of domestic politics...and the international community has in this respect the closest analogy to those states, where the possibility of revolution is most frequently and most conspicuously present to the mind." (p.109), or "Those who seek international conciliation may study with advantage the conditions which have made the process of conciliation between social classes in some degree successful."(p.237)

³⁵ Raymond Aron, *Paix et guerre entre les nations* (Paris: Callman-Lévy, 1962/1984⁸), p.19. Original italics.

Part II.

**Realism from
Containment to
Détente**

4

Classical Realism: Carr, Morgenthau and the Crisis of Collective Security



Nous entrons dans l'avenir à reculons
Paul Valéry

The conception of politics is strongly influenced by the historical context in which it is formulated. Thus, the lessons of the "the Great War", World War I brought many people to the conviction that a new policy must be implemented. The massive destruction, the use of mass-destructive weapons (gas), the collapse of the European Concert and its traditional (aristocratic) diplomacy, and the impossibility to treat war as a limited means for the achievement of certain political goals¹ seemed to require a political rethinking. As often, the new policy is defined as the opposite of the classical one. Unable to distinguish between the really important reasons of the past failure, a radical change is sought after: it implies domestic politics, the means and ends of foreign policy, the very *Weltanschauung* that had guided

¹ This alludes also to the actual outbreak of WWI which was more the mechanical consequence of diplomatic and strategic moves, than of intention.

behaviour before. And for the first time, Europe was not able any longer to decide about its destiny. The end of the War is sometimes seen as the rise of the two new superpowers. It certainly is the beginning of the US' international role. And it was the US President Wilson who became the most fervent advocate of a radical policy change. "New Diplomacy" should avoid another disastrous war.

Here lies the birth of a discipline of International Relations: the study and recommendations for the avoidance of war. 'War and peace' is the first main subject of our discipline. The avoidance of war its main purpose, the study of the behaviour of nations in a potential world community its basic paradigm.

We will treat first the basic tenets of Idealism, its critique by Carr and eventually the presentation of a fully worked out Realist alternative by Morgenthau.

4.1. The Crisis of Idealism before World War II: basic tenets and their applications to IR

The basic tenets of a idealist approach to IR derive largely from the tradition of Enlightenment (*Aufklärung*). Take just those points that will be particularly different from the Realist tradition.

First, the *view of human nature*. The idealist strand of thought that was prominent after WWI in international affairs was deeply convinced of the idea that human behavior is not reducible to egoistic motivation and material needs. Without taking into account specific aims and the way ideals influence these aims, human behaviour cannot be sufficiently understood.

Second, the *view of ideals*. The ideals that deeply affect human aims and therefore human behaviour are understood as potentially *universal*. By this is meant that they represent the real long-term interests of mankind, i.e. individuals, states and the whole international political system. There exists a potential *harmony of interests*.

Third, the *importance of reason*. Reason is the way, mankind can overcome its state of nature, understand these universal principles

and translate them rationally in norms, ethics and behaviour. (Kantian approach).

These basic tenets have been applied generally to politics and particularly to International Relations. Politics should thereby be concerned with the rational and public understanding of the universal principles and their translation into law and government. In order to fulfil this function, it should

- encourage the education of people in order to make them understand their own long-term interests
- encourage the democratization of politics.

International Relations and foreign policy had consequently to be conceived of differently. The basic aim was peace *as the avoidance of war*. Idealist politics derives from a specific view of the different causes of war. There are, on the one hand, the objective causes linked to human nature and the nature of politics, and, on the other, the subjective causes that are to be found in the traditional diplomacy that the European system had known after 1648.

With regard to *the objective causes of war*, they are derived from the basic tenets of idealism. Since mankind is considered potentially good, since there exists at least a potential harmony of interests, war is the failure or breakdown of the rational communication that politics should provide to translate the more harmonious universal principles into reality. Thus, not citizens, but *governments* are responsible for the outbreak of war. They start it - against the interests of their citizen. The avoidance of war is done through the democratization of politics, starting from local to national to international politics. Non-democratic governments are one of the primary causes of war. WWI was interpreted as the result of the non-democratic politics that boosts egoism to nationalism which inevitably leads - in a non-democratic environment - to war.

The *subjective causes of war* were the features of a wrong foreign policy: the "Old Diplomacy" was considered responsible for not having avoided war.

1. The diplomats were deciding in many countries over the top of their people. Foreign policy should become democratized and open to the will of the sovereign, the people.

2. The primacy of foreign politics (*Primat der Außenpolitik*) not only meant its independence from the domestic environment, but even the disclosure of information from other diplomats: *secret diplomacy*. This diplomacy was only considered responsible for the outbreak of the war, implying that if Germany had known about the two front war *and* the British solidarity with France, it would have avoided a war it could have hardly won. Instead of stabilising the international realm, secret diplomacy eventually de-stabilises it. In line with the overall philosophy, there is also the general mistrust of non-publicised policy, because it avoids the clash of reasoning and the eventual prevailing of the most reasonable solution coming near to the potential harmony of interests of mankind.

3. The main means of international politics, the *balance of power*, far from being a guarantee against war, is the main reason for its outbreak. The balancing up done by some diplomats plays with the very possibility of conflict. One does not look for a system of international control, but clinches on the egoistic powers of the nation. *Power politics* is seen as the incarnation of the elite arrogance to *play* with politics.²

4. Therefore, new means have to be introduced on the international level to guarantee a future peace. There is most prominently the *right of national self-determination* as a recognition of the empires special role in the outbreak of WWI (why did war start in Austria-Hungary?). It comprised the idea of a democratization of nations as a prerequisite for the democratization of international politics. Thus, not power politics, but *collective security*. Not the balance of power, but *the League of Nations* should be the means of international diplomacy. Public deliberation of the best solutions for peace decided and

² For a thought-provoking critique from the radical angle of *the games diplomats play*, see Ekkehart Krippendorff, *Staat und Krieg. Die historische Logik politischer Unvernunft* (Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp, 1985); and Ekkehart Krippendorff, "Wie die Großen mit den Menschen spielen." *Goethes Politik* (Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp, 1988).

implemented by *all* nations on an equal standing against *all* nations that do not comply with the decisions taken democratically. *Peace should become possible through a procedural solution of reason: "war does not pay."*

In short, by taking national rights seriously and removing hence the nationalist reasons for international conflict, an international peace-settling and security system should override those national interests detrimental to the avoidance of war. The precondition for the acceptance of such a system is its publicity. It is the attempt to transpose the principles of the domestic liberal-democratic system to the international realm.

4.2. The Realist Critique of Idealism: E.H. Carr's attack on the *harmony of interests*

Was the first predominant approach inspired by the avoidance of a war that nobody wanted (at least that way it actually happened), so is Realism inspired by the will to avoid war that *is* actually considered a privileged aim of foreign policy. Idealism presupposed the underlying principle of 19th century diplomacy, moderation, and tried to apply it to a new context, where war was considered no possible means of politics any longer. It aimed at applying a system of collective security to *moderated* states. Realism, on the other hand, wants to adjust international politics to the phenomenon of total war which results in the reversal of the Clausewitzian dictum, i.e. that peace becomes the prolongation of war with other means. Here, the balance of power is reapplied, because in an epoch of total war, no satisfactory security can ever be achieved. Power politics is no historical accident, but a logical necessity.

The certitude that international politics does not conform to the wishes and the entire *Weltbild* of Idealism becomes more and more preponderant with its policy failures:

- the world economic crisis (1929-1933) with its impact on the international monetary system (end of gold standard), the breakdown of

international cooperation and the reappearance of mercantilism ("beggar-thy-neighbour")

- the failure of the disarmament conference in Geneva (1933/34),
- the failure of the League of Nations to provide security *even for its own members* (Ethiopia 1935),
- the remilitarization of the Rhineland 1936,
- and finally the symbol of Munich (1938) and the politics of appeasement which were held responsible for the outbreak of World War II.

Carr's critique of the prevailing Idealism of the inter-war period (written in 1939) organises the analysis around a basic dichotomy: *utopia and reality*. He concedes that aims precede (human) sciences. To have -even utopian- ideals is necessary for the very outset of disciplined thinking: the purpose provides the stimulus and the aim of research. Yet, then he departs, at least *prima facie*, from idealism. After the breakdown of a phase of applied utopian thinking, a *necessary second stage* has to come in: Realism.

Both are actually two sides of the same coin. They are just needed in different epochs of thought. The utopian climax of the inter-war period required, so Carr, now a Realist period. This Realism remains merely defined in opposition to Idealism. His actual aim is to provide a synthesis of utopianism (his word for idealism) and realism that tries to avoid the shortcomings of both approaches. Utopianism suffers from its impracticability. Pure Realism³, on the other hand, lacks perspectives and would reduce politics to a daily, blind and pragmatic adjustment to the *necessities* of international relations; being able to defend itself (building up power) and being exposed to the power aims of the others. It is fatality and determinism. As a historian and also as a politically responsible person, Carr refuses this deterministic approach to politics. His synthesis proposes to start from the historical limitations Realists set out - without ever forgetting the Realists' restrictions on intellectual creativity.

³ It is important to note that for Carr, there does not yet exist a *Realist school*. His Realist references are therefore including not only prominently Machiavelli, but also Marx - and even Hitler.

But let us first see, why he considers Utopianism unrealisable. There is first of all, and this is the main subject of his critique, *the non-existing harmony of interests*. Idealism operates from a priority given to reason, to ethics over politics, and theory over practice. Realism starts from the opposite side. It is a *consequentialist* reasoning. Not the theoretical blueprint, but its actual work, its effects and consequences are used to judge and justify politics. Realism has thus a strong *utilitarian bias*. It does not address the possible dynamics of preferences, it takes them for granted and tries to adapt to them - and not vice versa, as in the doctrine of *the harmony of interests*.

The first criticism of the harmony of interests is levelled against *the derivation from enlightenment*, the primordial place assigned to *reason*.

In pursuing his own interest, the individual pursues that of the community, and in promoting the interest of the community he promotes his own. This is the famous doctrine of the harmony of interests. It is a necessary corollary of the postulate that moral laws can be established by right reasoning. The admission of any ultimate divergence of interests would be fatal to this postulate; and any apparent clash of interests must therefore be explained as the result of wrong calculation.⁴

Second, Carr criticises the *derivation of values from power, ethics from politics*. If the actual world shows anything, but a harmony of interests, then it is no use to take that as the general underlying *potential* feature of mankind. Or stronger. Since ethics derive from politics and not vice versa, the claim to a harmony of interests is nothing more than the result of a specific configuration of power and the successful implementation of a particular interest so as to let it appear a universal one.

Once industrial capitalism and the class system had become the recognised structure of society, the doctrine of the harmony of interests acquired a new significance, and became...the ideology of a dominant group concerned to maintain its predominance by asserting the identity of interests with those of the community as a whole.(...) No country but Great Britain had been commercially powerful enough to believe in the international harmony of economic interests.⁵

⁴ E.H. Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis 1919-1939*, p.42.

⁵ *ibid.*, p.44, 46.

Finally, Carr makes it obvious that the harmony of interests actually corresponds to *the powerful's ideology of the status quo*.

The utopian assumption that there is a world interest in peace which is identifiable with the interest of each individual nation helped politicians and political writers everywhere to evade the unpalatable fact of a fundamental divergence between nations desirous of maintaining the *status quo* and nations desirous of changing it.⁶

Carr criticises very strongly the behavior of the victorious powers after World War I who regarded every change (and be it by peaceful means) as disturbance of peace. Yet, if peace meant nothing else than the keeping of the status quo of benefits and power, then it is doomed to fail. Politics is in a continuous change and must readapt. The question of collective security as used by the winners of 1918 mounted not to the management of conflict that necessarily arises between agents, but to the very negation that such a conflict can exist.

A *new foreign policy* has to derive from this critique of utopianism. Since one denies the legitimate existence of conflict, idealism cannot perceive the conflict when necessary, and consequently, that collective security as realized after 1918 provides no means to cope and to manage conflict between nations. This is not so much a critique of *collective security* as such. Since Carr argues for taking the necessary adjustment as starting point, *peaceful change*, i.e. the mechanical reordering without resorting to war, becomes *the central task of a foreign policy*. In those situations where conflicts cannot be avoided, *conflict management* is the best we can and should do.⁷

Concluding on Carr, one should once more stress his conception that not only Idealism, but also Realism is a limited approach.

⁶ *ibid.*, p.53.

⁷ This is also the main point of one of the main critics of Power Politics in the early 60's, namely Inis L. Claude jr., *Power and International Relations* (New York: Random House, 1962). By overstressing the extent to which Realist writers are compelled to believe in the balance of power, critics of Realism have quoted Claude for an idealist critique. Yet, Claude certainly shares the reserves about the implemented collective security system that existed in the inter-war period and also the Realist assumption of conflict and not harmony. He argues forcefully against the kind of Realism that wants to reduce international politics to the law of the jungle. Conflict management is possible and is not exclusively founded on force.

Realism's determinism leaves no role for human action, i.e. foreign policy, and for willful *change*. Realism becomes utterly unrealistic when pushed to its extreme, because neither relativism, nor fatalism, nor stasis is what actually characterises the international realm. Mankind is not powerless.

In the four criticisms he advances, i.e. that realism excludes a finite goal, emotional appeal, a right of moral judgement, and a ground for action, it is certainly the last that retains his interest. In the perpetual move between the deconstruction of the universal values of an epoch and the reestablishing of new ones, Realism is ill-prepared to provide a help for the second. Yet, politics is, by its nature, for a Realist, ambiguous. The truth of today is the myth of tomorrow. Truths are nevertheless part of and guides for human action.

4.3. The new paradigm: Morgenthau's *Politics among Nations*

This mitigated Realist critique did, however, not prevail in the aftermath of World War II. The anti-totalitarian struggle that nearly failed against Hitler (and Japan) should not repeat the mistakes made by appeasement. Even though Morgenthau was not so Machiavellian as he is often interpreted to be, there is a certain change in tone compared with Carr. Whereas Carr's anti-idealism addressed also the last imperial power, Great Britain, so is Morgenthau's power politics developed in an epoch where a new hegemon arises that has not yet been scrutinized for its ideological posture. Anti-Idealism is not yet implemented against the USAmerican version of the harmony of interests. So, the critique is strongly against a collective security system and the general move to reapply concepts from the domestic to the international sphere. Whereas Carr did not at all treat the balance of power, and only little the nature of power, the struggle for power becomes the main feature of Morgenthau's power politics.

Morgenthau's book⁸ became the most widely read textbook of International Relations and provided the basic tenets to at least one generation of scholars and probably more practitioners. The modern and USAmerican discipline of International Relations starts here.

Yet, had Morgenthau written in a time where the Cold War was not starting, his critique of a pure Hobbesian state of nature, of Machiavellism, of the United Nations (also because it could have been a really collective security system) would have not been so quickly forgotten. Instead, it was the struggle for power that impressed most readers. This is partly Morgenthau's fault. Since he wanted to influence and advise the foreign policy of the most powerful, yet internationally very unexperienced country, he stressed the necessary, inevitable aspects of Realist reasoning. Those *necessities* should be the base for any rational foreign policy. Thereby he gives the impression to remove the uncertainties of the study of international politics that he is aptly describing in his historical examples.

In a nutshell, his approach can be characterised as: an elaboration of the basic tendencies and forces of international politics (the objective background) that are necessary to assess the possibilities of the preservation of peace through self-regulatory mechanisms (balance of power) and normative limitations (law, morality, world public opinion).

The study of international politics should provide the analyst with the ability to ascertain the national interest, maximising thereby the instrumental rationality of available means to possible ends. *Staatsräson in the atomic era*. He uses thereby an approach that derives war fundamentally from human nature. Let us take Figure 1 as the line of argument from the anthropological foundation to actual foreign policy.

We start with *the anthropological foundation*. Morgenthau posits three basic drives of "all man" (p.17): the drive to live, to propagate,

⁸ Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations. The Struggle for Power and Peace*. (New York: Knopf, 1948).

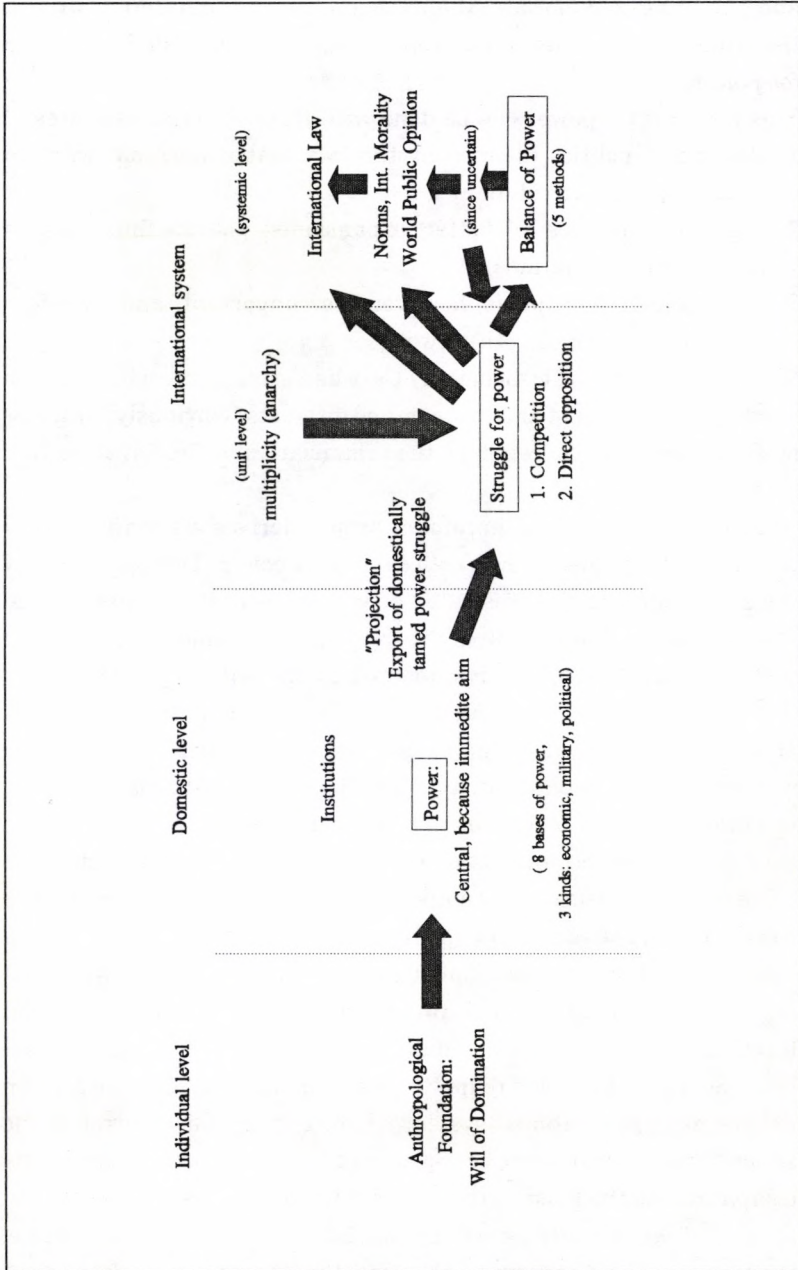


Figure 1 A synthesis of Morgenthau's *Politics among Nations*.

and the drive to dominate. If one aggregates these different drives, then must result (at least in a world of scarce resources), the *struggle for power*.

This struggle for power can be done with three different postures:

1. status quo politics (defined by the fact that it does not want to change the power relation)
2. imperialist politics (or better: expansionist politics that want to change power relations)
3. prestige politics (that is, however, less important, and therefore subsumed under the other two)

We meet here the basic dichotomy Carr had already introduced in his ideological critique of the harmony of interests. Obviously, order or stability are main concepts for the organization of Realist thought.

From this foundation in human nature derives a specific view of politics at the domestic level, called *national power*. This specific view finds its origins in the frustrated power drives *within* societies. The state of law is able to control the individual struggle for power, but not to eradicate it. It remains unsatisfied and will be projected unto the international scene (p.74), i.e. what Morgenthau (and nobody else afterwards) calls *nationalistic universalism*. He thereby means the universalization of nationalist drives - as opposed to the primacy and isolation of foreign policy from domestic affairs. Morgenthau argues that the greater the stability of a society and the sense for security of its members, the less nationalism. In other words, he argues for a close relation between social disintegration, personal insecurity, and the ferocity of modern nationalistic power. This implies, as well, that one can start the analysis of International Relations at the national level: the projection of individual power struggles on the national level means that one can reapply the arguments derived from human nature to a international system where exactly this control of the struggle for power cannot be coped with by an overarching authority comparable to the state at the national level. The basic international feature of *multiplicity* (or what came later to be called *anarchy*, i.e. the lack of a world government) entails that states are stuck in a con-

tinuous struggle for survival, where no guarantee of a higher order is available. The reference to human nature increasingly drops out in the course of the text. *National power and the nations' struggle for power* is Morgenthau's reception in the literature, also partly because arguments based on human nature are not exactly easy to sustain.

Power has hence become the central concept of analysis. Morgenthau, aware of it, tries to circumscribe the concept. First, he starts a favorite game of International Relations scholars, namely to describe the important *elements* of power. He mentions *eight elements*: geography, natural resources, industrial capacity, military preparedness, population, national character, national morale. The list is inductively construed. There is no general derivation of it.

Second, he appeals to the readers to be aware of the possible errors in evaluating power. There are three possible errors:

1. Power has no *absolute character*. Therefore, one needs to correlate the power of one nation with the power of other nations.
2. Power has no *permanent character*. This implies the need to correlate actual power at one time with possible power of some future time.
3. The fallacy of the single factor. There is no one element that is decisive in power calculations, explicitly not the military one.

Finally, Morgenthau derives the international system from this interplay of national powers and wills in a context of multiplicity of sovereign states. The system-level is characterised by the *balance of power* and *normative mechanisms*.

The *balance of power* (bop) is, in harsh contrast to Idealism, considered natural and inevitable. In an analogy to the working of the market, the Bop is the natural outgrowth of the power struggle (which, in turn, was derived from the drive for domination). Its goal is the stability and the preservation of all elements of the system. Morgenthau goes at length to explain the articulation of the bop: the work of central (and great) powers, buffer states, protectorates, and, what he calls the lack of interest-states, that is those, that are

unimportant for the big power struggle. He then gives examples of its methods, as e.g. "divide and rule", compensation arrangements, armaments, alliances, the role of the "balancer".

The boP is, however, unable to guarantee an efficient conflict management. The exact weighing of powers are only possible *ex post*, that is, only after a conflict has shown the correlation of forces. Therefore, Morgenthau considers the working of the boP as

- non-existent: there is no proof that the boP has avoided war, but it has certainly been a cause of war; and as

- inadequate: The boP presupposes its legitimate acceptance and a code of conduct (which in a democratic age, so Morgenthau, is missing, because of the incompatible and uncompromising forces of nationalistic universalism). Therefore, one needs to integrate *normative mechanisms* for the management of international affairs. If their creation fails, the system will always fall back on the brute clash of national forces outside a state of law. These struggles will establish balance mechanisms, that, in turn, ask for normative mechanisms to function, and so on. *National Power and the BoP are the fall-backs of any international system.* This is the basic Realist stand.

Normative mechanisms are necessary for a stable system, but cannot be taken for granted. Different levels of mechanisms can be distinguished:

- at the weakest normative level: Ethics, Mores and Law; then
- world public opinion; eventually
- international law. International law is conceived in the law-positivist and contractarian tradition: derived from actual practices, power differentials, and consent of sovereign states.⁹

⁹ His treatment of *sovereignty* is typical in this regard. He defines it as 'legal authority within a delimited territory.' Sovereignty presupposes *ius necessarium*, i.e. a frame where sovereignty as such is recognized (traditionally to be said to apply since 1648). Otherwise, all international law derives from sovereigns (p.244). Yet, it is not to be confounded with freedom from legal restraint, freedom from regulation, equality of rights, or actual independence.

4.4. Realist Theory and Practice in World Politics after World War II

Diplomacy of high quality will bring the ends and means of foreign policy into harmony with the available resources of national power. (105)

This exact calculation is the *national interest*. It must presuppose the objective forces (national power, the Bop and also the normative mechanisms) that constrain the options open to national politics. As for Carr, the general aim of international politics is to allow the smooth *peaceful change*, to manage or limit an ever possible conflict.

1. *The domestic level*

Morgenthau says that the democratic selection and responsibility of government officials has destroyed international morality as an effective system of restraint.

The basic, and recurrent, idea in Realist writings, is that in order for an international system of the Balance of power to work, such a system needs a code of conduct, the acceptance of a limited interest and limited aims. This code of conduct is said to have existed during the Concert of Europe, the golden age of balance of power politics.

Whereas for Idealism the democratization of politics was the prerequisite for the avoidance of war, it is this very democratization, with its attack on the *raison d'Etat*, the independence of foreign policy formulations, that Morgenthau sees as leading to the unlimited and irreconcilable clash of power struggles today: nationalistic universalism.

2. *The Balance of power*

With the moral and intellectual consensus destroyed, the balance of power works very precariously today:

- it is inflexible (because bipolar)
- there is no "balancer"
- there is no colonial frontier on which conflicts can be exported.

3. Normative mechanisms

While the democratic selection and responsibility of government officials destroyed international morality as an effective system of restraint, nationalism destroyed the international society itself within which that morality had operated. (p.189)

4. How to achieve peaceful change ?

Disarmament is no solution, if the underlying problem, namely the individual and national strive for power is not settled. *Collective security* is a good means only if perfect conditions prevail. In fact, they do not. In such cases, and opposed to the Idealists, *it not only fails to avoid war, but, on top of that, has all the disadvantages of an alliance policy: it compels more countries into the process of war, countries, that otherwise would have remained outside. There is no possibility to limit the conflict.*

4.5. Conclusion

The historical context of Munich and appeasement gave Realism, as opposed to the Idealist approaches prevailing in the inter-war period, an enormous persuasive force. Carr's undermining of the basic principles of Idealism (Utopianism) and Morgenthau's establishment of a coherent approach to the analysis of world politics looked much more suitable in the general catastrophe of nazism and world war.

The reason why I got at length presenting these two authors is the possibility to present fundamental Realist ideas that are the most recurrent references of main future debates¹⁰ - and also in order to give a first set of basic criteria to analyse world politics and its actual application.

In Morgenthau we have already present the three levels on which usually the causes for conflict (war) are found: the individual level

¹⁰ See for empirical analyses of Morgenthau's (and Realism's) hegemonic place in thought and teaching: John Vasquez, *The Power of Power Politics: A Critique*; and K.J. Holsti, *The Dividing Discipline. Hegemony and Diversity in International Theory*.

(human nature), the domestic level (the nature of the political regimes) and the international level (anarchy).¹¹ This debate has not finished yet. Morgenthau stresses those concepts that will be the basic tools for analysis in the years to come, as e.g. power, *raison d'Etat*, national interest, code of conduct, balance of power, anarchy/sovereignty. The world-view is pragmatic, but not cynical. The values underlying it are derived from consequentialist thinking. Weber's ethic of responsibility comes close to it. The main aim consisted in the avoidance of *great* war through the management and limitation of conflicts by a working balance of power supplemented by international law. Conflicts, however, will always arise. Their abolition is impossible. For the Realists, foreign policy implies choices that nobody wants to take. Diplomats do not play for fun. On the stage of world politics with a risk that brute forces clash unfettered, diplomats enter a play of tragedy. This is the statesman's fate. Realist policy is not the external projection of a military or even reactionary ideology; it is the constant adjustment to a cynical reality. Realpolitik is not a choice that can be avoided, it is necessity.

¹¹ This famous triad has been formally introduced into IR literature by Kenneth Waltz, *Man, State, and War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959).

5

The evolution of Realism's central concepts



5.1. Introduction: Morgenthau's Six Principles of Realism

Let us take as a starting point Morgenthau's famous six principles of Realism (that appeared in later editions of his textbook) which did not only define the paradigm for the science, but helped enormously to *constitute or demarcate* International Relations as an established and emancipated "science":

1. "Theory consists in ascertaining facts and giving them meaning through reason ... Political realism believes that politics like society in general, is governed by objective laws that have their roots in human nature."

2. "The concept of interest defined in terms of power" is considered the key concept of political theory which permits to demarcate the political sphere from other spheres of social action, and to make intelligible political behaviour. Power is treated like an instinct in Man.

3. The "National interest" defined in terms of power becomes the guide to a rational foreign policy formulation.

Power is defined as a concept of domination: "The concept of power covers all social relations that serve [the goal of domination], from physical violence (force, strength) to psychological phenomenon, through which a will can dominate another." Morgenthau uses the concept of National Interest in a descriptive and prescriptive way.

The description is generally couched in a means-goals framework. The prescription derives from it linking National Interest to *zweckrationalem Handeln* (Weber's instrumental rationality) and to the traditional concept of *raison d'État* as formulated by Friedrich Meinecke, an historian Morgenthau admired and whose definition he accepted as being analogous to his own:

The 'reason' of a state thus consists in realizing itself and its environment and to derive from this understanding the maxims for action... Due to the singularity of the state and its environment, the choice of the ways to the end is limited. Strictly speaking, only one way to the end has to be regarded, namely the best possible one in the actual situation. For every state in every situation, there exists one ideal logic of action, one ideal *raison d'État*. This to recognize is the insistent attempt of the acting statesman and the reflecting historian.¹²

Kindermann has elaborated a description of Morgenthau's *objective* notion of interest which is explicitly accepted by the latter:

Seen objectively, i.e. as a reality independent of reflection, the National Interest can be understood as the essence of possible behaviour whose realization in a concrete historical situation maximizes particularly the existential (interests) of a state (security, power, wealth).¹³

There exists, therefore, always a best rational choice, independently of whether the actor is aware of the options or not.

In this context we have to integrate another central concept of Morgenthau's which is a "natural and inevitable outgrowth of the struggle for power": the "Balance of Power also described as "a universal instrument of foreign policy used in all times by all nations who wanted to preserve their independence".¹⁴

4. Morgenthau follows Weber's distinction between ethic of responsibility ("Verantwortungsethik") and ethic of ultimate ends ("Gesinnungsethik") refusing the latter's application to politics.

¹² See Gottfried-Karl Kindermann, "Zum Selbstverständnis des neorealistischen Ansatzes" in his edited *Grundzüge der Weltpolitik*, p.20 (my translation).

¹³ *ibid.*

¹⁴ See Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations* (1960³), p.187.

5. Starting from the power-oriented interest of the state, Morgenthau refuses to equate possible normative elements in the foreign policy of some states with universal ethical rules and obligations.

6. Realism is seen as a constitutive factor to demarcate politics (and in following: IR) from other social sciences. To make out of the concept of power the key concept of politics is a reduction which is consciously done and legitimised by a kind of "scientific division of labour."

Let us now examine the main debates around central concepts of Realism as it evolved during the 60's.

This will be:

1. The debate around the derivation of international relations: the choice for anarchy and the security dilemma
2. The so-called "second debate"¹⁵ about its status as a science: "Objective laws", power, the BoP, and the "National Interest"

5.2. The advance of the Third Image: The security dilemma

An important debate arose around the *foundation* of IR discourse. As Kenneth Waltz has succinctly summarised, there are three ways to explain war and peace: one by pointing to the human nature (the first image), one by starting from the particular domestic regimes (the second image), and one deriving the behavior of states from their specific environment, namely anarchy (the third image).

In every image there are optimists and pessimists, or in other words Idealists and Realists. The specific Idealist discourse that Carr castigated, e.g., was of an optimist second image. Morgenthau is certainly using a pessimist first image. Herz, Waltz and subsequently the mainstream of International Relations will use the third image as a basic explanation: the *security dilemma in international anarchy*.

¹⁵ The first being Idealism versus Realism.

1. The security dilemma as a foundation

The anthropological foundation has suffered from severe criticism. Not only the obvious uneasiness of behaviouralists to deal with such a "metaphysical term" as the power-instinct. But it is mainly the search for specificity of IR as a discipline that made the anchoring of Realism at the anthropological level little convincing.

The main reason is a tension between, on the one hand, the assertion that politics has to be demarcated from other social sciences through the concept of power and, on the other hand, the statement that political action in the international realm is of a different kind than in the domestic realm. If politics is always power politics, than we do not need a discipline of international relations to study the international society. Generally, the tension was resolved by abandoning the anthropological foundation of political action in power. Political scientists found their own way to demarcate the discipline from other social sciences, while scholars in International Relations sought for alternative explanations, that would capture the main features of the international realm and preserve a distinction from domestic politics.

One solution that permitted to derive the feature of international "power politics" differently was the so-called "security dilemma."¹⁶ The basic idea is that "power politics" is not the result of the mean human nature which in an endless strive for power subordinates any moral or other consideration to this goal, but that it is the unfortunate, yet logical, consequence of the relation between actors *without an overarching authority that could settle conflicts or judge issues*. The survival of the state can in this *realm of anarchy* only be guaranteed by an effort of self-help, of egoistical usage of the contextual opportunities to build up defence and by a ceaseless awareness of the

¹⁶ The concept is derived in the 50s from another highly important writer in the Realist tradition. See J.H. Herz, "Idealist Internationalism and the security dilemma", *World Politics*, vol.2. Later Kenneth Waltz strongly criticised the first image (anthropological) foundation of IR, preferring also an approach close to the here quoted one. See his *Man, State, and War*. More recently, Robert Jervis uses it in "Cooperation under the security dilemma", *World Politics*, 1978, vol.30, n.2.

other's efforts. The system of self-help engenders a spiral of competition, aimed at making each actor more secure. Yet, an anarchical system composed by security seeking actors produces over-all insecurity: this is the dilemma.¹⁷

This concept proved compelling at first sight for providing IR again with a specific realm of study (paradigmatic function). Moreover, it seemingly accounted for the unavoidable nature of war and peacetime competition. Yet, very early two main Realist writers have introduced refinements of this model of anarchy. They were driven by the idea that not *all* international relations could be easily subsumed under the *state of nature* (i.e. of war). Thus, Raymond Aron and Henry Kissinger introduced the existence of two distinct forms of international relations under anarchy.¹⁸

Kissinger makes the distinction between a *legitimate* and a *revolutionary* international order. His approach limits the use of the concept of "power politics" to the analysis of a revolutionary international order. Thereby, another kind of international relations, that seemed not meaningfully to be apprehended through pure power politics, namely the legitimate order, can be accounted for within the Realist approach. For example, contemporary German-French relations cannot be entirely grasped by referring to a framework that was developed to describe the superpower-conflict during the Cold War ("power politics") and the German-French relations before World War I and World War II.

Stability, then, has commonly resulted not from a quest for peace, but from a generally accepted legitimacy. "Legitimacy" as here used should not be confused with justice. It means no more than an international agreement about the nature of workable arrangements and about the permissible

¹⁷ In today's writings a variation of the theme is couched in game-theoretical terms: such as for instance the prisoner's dilemma.

¹⁸ These are taken as examples. Actually, the differentiation of the security dilemma is a recurrent theme. One could take as other prominent classical examples Arnold Wolfers' continuum of *power politics* and *indifference* in his *Discord and Collaboration. Essays on International Politics* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1962). For a further discussion, see this chapter and chapter 11.2.

aims and methods of foreign policy...A legitimate order does not make conflicts impossible, but it limits their scope. Wars may occur, but they will be fought *in the name of* the existing structure and the peace which follows will be justified as a better expression of the "legitimate", general consensus. Diplomacy in the classic sense, the adjustment of differences through negotiation, is possible only in "legitimate" international orders.

Whenever there exists a power which considers the international order or the manner of legitimizing it oppressive, relations between it and other powers will be revolutionary. In such cases, it is not the adjustment of differences within a given system which will be at issue, but the system itself... To be sure, the motivation of the revolutionary power may well be defensive; it may well be sincere in its protestations of feeling threatened. But the distinguishing feature of a revolutionary power is not that it feels threatened - such feeling is inherent in the nature of international relations based on sovereign states - *but that nothing can reassure it*. Only absolute security - the neutralization of the opponent - is considered a sufficient guarantee, and thus the desire of one power for absolute security means absolute insecurity for all the others.

Diplomacy, the art of restraining the exercise of power, cannot function in such an environment...And because in revolutionary situations the contending systems are less concerned with the adjustment of differences than with the subversion of loyalties, diplomacy is replaced either by war or by an armaments race.¹⁹

Within "the nature of international relations based on sovereign states" (without overarching authority), the feeling of insecurity and threat is considered inherent. Yet, only some specific orders display the features of the US-Soviet Union relations in the heyday of the Cold War, or Napoleon's European policy or the German sentiment in the inter-war period. Others, as the Concert of Europe in the 19th century and the relations within the Common Market today are in Aron's words a "compromis historique entre *l'état de nature* et le *règne de la loi*."²⁰

Aron himself makes a similar distinction between what he calls "système homogène" and "système hétérogène":

J'appelle systèmes homogènes ceux dans lesquels les États appartiennent au même type, obéissent à la même conception de la politique. J'appelle hétérogènes, au contraire, les systèmes dans lesquels les États sont orga-

¹⁹ Henry A. Kissinger, *A World Restored* (New York: Gollancz, 1957) p.1-3.

²⁰ Raymond Aron, *Paix et guerre entre les nations*, p.143.

nisés selon des principes autres et se réclament de valeurs contradictoires.²¹

The distinction is similar, yet not identic.

Whereas Kissinger seems more to appeal to an international code of conduct which could be distinctive from the national rules of legitimacy, Aron seems to imply a direct link between domestic and international policies. For Kissinger, different social systems can agree to settle their interstate relations following other rules than the domestic ones. This carries the public/private distinction of liberal domestic policies to the international realm. In this distinction, everyone is allowed to pursue her own faith in the private realm (and where everyone is protected against the intrusion of the public realm: constitutional rights here equates national sovereignty), but must refrain from the attempt to impose it on the collectivity.

Aron, on the other hand, assumes that there is a *certain* link between, on the one hand, the organization *within* the states that form an international system, and, on the other hand, the nature of relations *between* those states. In other words, the domestic organization in part determines the nature of the international system.²² Yet, only in part. As he himself notes, the heterogeneous principles of legitimacy before 1917 did not hinder the European powers to moderate their foreign policy aims: the *destruction* of another regime was never on the agenda.²³

Since Kissinger applies his definition to a regime which happened to be also domestically a revolutionary regime (France from 1789 to 1815), and plays down Talleyrand's skills by pointing to the regime change at home as the more important explanation for the readmission of France to the Congress (and the European Concert), both seem to imply the heterogeneous definition of legitimacy at the domestic level as a prerequisite for the "revolutionary" international order.

²¹ *ibid.*, p.108.

²² In Waltz's terminology, this would make out of Aron a pessimist "second image" writer.

²³ Raymond Aron, *op.cit.*, p.111.

Finally, this domestic derivation is not even a necessary one: Kissinger quotes Versailles as an example of an international system which has been resented as oppressive by one of the actors (therefore revolutionary), even if the Republic of Weimar was following similar lines of domestic organisation as the other states - with the exception of its sovereignty, curtailed in the Peace - a "Diktat". And Aron describes as "perhaps the most frightening heterogeneity" the one which "develops out of a basic community."²⁴

The domestic system gives therefore only an *indication* of the resulting international order: unreconcilable contradictory values, as they are pursued at the international level, seem to be the more important ingredient for a "revolutionary" or "heterogeneous" order. The distinction is, however, necessary to differentiate the international realm in subsystemic relations where the "security dilemma" applies fully and where it applies much less.

Thus, no anthropological foundation is needed any more. Yet, the debate about the origins of war still lingers on: human nature, the nature of the political regime (remember Wilson's "New Diplomacy") or international anarchy.

2. Anarchy

Traditionally, the international realm is compared with a Hobbesian state of nature. This has provoked very much debate regarding the accurateness of the description. What all writers stress, is the difference between the realm of law and the realm of... Yet, how exactly the international realm has to be described is a matter of dispute. Traditional Realism would describe it as a Hobbesian "state of war".²⁵

Yet, already in 1966, *Hedley Bull* makes a departure from this very specific Hobbesian Realist approach without leaving entirely the Realist terrain when he defines his research-programme for Interna-

²⁴ *ibid.*, p.112.

²⁵ See also Stanley Hoffmann's contribution (in Aron's tradition) to the theory of IR, especially his *The State of War* (New York: Praeger Publisher, 1965).

tional Relations: *the study of order* in world politics. In this respect, Bull strictly follows the Realist tradition and the tradition in international law where he comes from. His departure consists in a redefinition of this external/internal difference. *He rejects openly what he considers to be the base of the reasoning of Realpolitik: the state of nature in the international realm.*²⁶ Analyzing Hobbes' account of the state of nature's characteristics, Bull rejects this conceptualization: neither the non-existence of legal and moral rule, nor the absence of trade, industry (old sense), navigation, nor, finally, the state of war appear to characterize convincingly the international realm - even if the latter is still conceived as different from the domestic sphere. Bull prefers Locke's account of the state of nature. He remains within the Realist paradigm in another sense as well: rules, institutions as far as they exist are the result of a contract, reflecting divergent interests and powers. Except that the general context of the contract is not a Hobbesian one. But then, which one?

Bull defines the international realm as a "society" (later he calls his major work "The Anarchical Society"²⁷), i.e. a venture among sovereign states to regulate conflict and cooperation without overarching government. In this sense, war is not seen as an expression of the disfunction of the international "society", but is an integral part of the ordering principles of this special kind of society. He argues for a comparison with anthropological studies on "primitive" societies. Yet, he develops certain characteristics which plead for the uniqueness of the international society.

This special conception of a "society" is named the "Grotian tradition".²⁸ Bull distinguishes within this tradition between Grotius and Oppenheim. Whereas Grotius derives the law, i.e. the rules, out of the natural law tradition and hesitates to limit them to the inter-

²⁶ Hedley Bull, "Society and Anarchy in International Relations", in H. Butterfield & M. Wight, eds., *Diplomatic Investigations: Essays in the Theory of International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966).

²⁷ Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society* (London: Macmillan, 1977).

²⁸ Hedley Bull, "The Grotian Conception of International Society", in H. Butterfield & M. Wight, eds., *Diplomatic Investigations...*

national sphere (he pleads for intervention), Oppenheim registers more the actual agreement of the contracting parties (the states). Whereas Grotius pleads for intervention for the "right" cause (*ius ad bellum*) which can create a logical and moral tension if the victory necessitates means of warfare traditionally not justifiable (*ius belli*), Oppenheim remains cautious about the first and endorses strongly the latter. Here, Bull remains "realist":

The view of pluralists [i.e. Oppenheim] is not to be dismissed as a mere rationalization of state practice; it is a conception of international society founded upon the observation of the actual area of agreement between states and informed by a sense of the limitations which in this situation rules may be usefully made rules of law. (...) But it may still be held that the method, [Oppenheim] employed of gauging the role of international society in relation to the actual area of agreement between states is superior to one which sets up the law over and against the facts.²⁹

By presupposing a *society*, i.e. a larger area of agreement which is possible by the specific characteristics of the international realm, Bull tries to integrate idealist and realist thought: a substantial role of norms (the liberal or idealist part) and their derivation from power (the realist part).

Bull makes explicit the distinctiveness of his "anarchy" compared with the Hobbesian state of nature:³⁰

1. The international realm is characterised by economic interdependence.

2. States are less vulnerable than individuals.

3. Equal vulnerability of every man to every other makes anarchy intolerable. Too great discrepancy in power moves anarchy to hierarchy. Yet the international system is characterised by great and small powers. This inequality is supposed to have a cooperative and stabilising impact on state behaviour.³¹

4. States are more self-sufficient than individuals.

²⁹ *ibid.*, p.71/72 and 73.

³⁰ See Hedley Bull, "Anarchy and Society..."

³¹ See also Kenneth Waltz, "International Structure, National Force and the Balance of World Power" (1967), reprinted in James A. Rosenau, ed., *International Politics and Foreign Policy: A Reader in Research and Theory* (New York: Free Press, 1969), p.312: "Extreme equality is associated with instability."

Hence, "anarchy" remains undoubtedly a central feature of the Realist approach. Yet, since it is the basic explanatory tool, the lacking preciseness of its content, the ambiguity of the relations it should covers shade a twilight on the capacity to *demarcate* international relations, or in other words, not to subsume it under a special category of hierarchy. This debate around *formal anarchy and substantial rule* is one of the strongest debates today (see also chapters 11, 13.5., 16).

5.3. The 'second debate'

The *first great debate* of IR is the inter-war and immediately post-war debate between *Realism* and *Idealism*. The 1960's display a new debate about the scientific status of the discipline. Generally scholars in IR came from international law, and international or diplomatic history. With the heyday of the behavioral revolution within political science (and its ascendant star: positivism in its deductive-nomological style), however, *traditional IR* came under severe attack. Not considered explicit enough on its assumptions, not stringent enough about its hypothesis, traditional IR was after all nothing more, so the argument runs, than either purely descriptive history or (moralistic) normative theory.

This had to change. The dispute that resulted was called the Bull-Kaplan debate, for its chief protagonists or also the traditionalism vs. scientism debate. This tension is, however, already present in Morgenthau, who in the first editions of his textbook already talks about *objective laws* and does eventually integrate the search for these laws into his principles of Political Realism.

In the following, the traditional writers will get more space, because, first, they tried by contradicting the positivist claims of their opponents to expand and refine the central concepts of Realism. And second, because Neo-Realism in the 70's and 80's resurrects the scientist strand and will be partly discussed then.

The two central concepts for the elaboration of a positivist IR will be discussed: the balance of power as the objective constraint (Macro-level) and the National Interest as the objective best rational (Micro-level) for foreign policy.

1. The Balance of Power

The critique of the Balance of power concept is now legendary. Yet, in spite of sometimes piercing criticism, it seems to be a kind of canonical law, that every Realist writer uses in one sense or another. Morgenthau quotes four different meanings - and adds a fifth one:

- "(1) as a policy aimed at a certain state of affairs
- (2) as an actual state of affairs
- (3) as an approximately equal distribution of power
- (4) as any distribution of power"³²

The fifth one is what Ernst Haas describes as an analytical concept claiming to be a universal law³³ and Inis L. Claude as Balance of Power "as-a-system", a kind of self-regulatory mechanism.³⁴

Both these critics find four categories for the usage of the Balance of Power concept:

- 1. a descriptive category: a situation (see Morgenthau 2-4)
- 2. a prescriptive category: a policy (see Morgenthau 1)
- 3. an analytical category: a system (Morgenthau 5)
- 4. an ideological category: symbol and propaganda

Our discussion will focus on the analytical and prescriptive category in Morgenthau's approach. Since the Balance of Power is considered *the universal law of Realist International Relations*, it gives us another insight to what extent the concept of power can be seen as a central and scientifically applicable concept.

Let us start with the analytical concept which, at least logically, should precede it as a prescriptive category.

³² Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations* (1960³), p.167, fn.1.

³³ Ernst Haas, "The Balance of Power: Prescription, Concept or Propaganda ?" *World Politics* vol.V, 1953, p.467.

³⁴ Inis L. Claude jr., *Power and International Relations*, p.27 ff.

Morgenthau uses it in the following way

The aspiration for power on the part of several nations, each trying either to maintain or overthrow the status quo, leads of necessity to a constellation which is called the balance of power and to policies that aim at preserving it. We say 'of necessity' advisedly. For here again we are confronted with the basic misconception...that men have a choice between power politics and its necessary outgrowth, the balance of power, on the one hand and a different, better kind of international relations on the other ... It will be shown... that the international balance of power is only a particular manifestation of a general social principle to which all societies composed of a number of autonomous units owe the autonomy of their component parts; that the balance of power and policies aiming at its preservation are not only inevitable but are an essentially stabilizing factor in a society of sovereign nations; and that the instability of the international balance of power is due not to the faultiness of the principle, but to the particular conditions under which the principle must operate in a society of sovereign states.³⁵

Morgenthau describes the balance of power as "a universal instrument of foreign policy used at all times by all nations who wanted to preserve their independence."³⁶ What kind of balance of power is inevitable?

Leaving aside the truism that "any configuration of power distribution" is necessary, Morgenthau claims to use the term in the meaning of equilibrium. This is patently false. The British "Balance of Power" Policy in the 19th century has aptly been described as "Balance for the Continent and Power for Britain". It was British neutrality which could step in to deter a continental challenger by the tipping of the balance strongly to the defender's side. Only when Germany perceived herself strong enough to equate or even overtake her opponents-plus-Britain, did the balancing policy not work any more. A stalemate situation with an arbiter interested in the status quo is a better description for this epoch than "equilibrium".

Balance of Power cannot mean a *policy directed towards equilibrium*, either. Since the struggle for power is not limited at any given point, every power seeks superiority, not equilibrium.

³⁵ Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics among nations* (1947), p. 125.

³⁶ *ibid.*, p.28.

Finally, it does not mean that *balance of power is the necessary international system for the management of peace and war*, because Morgenthau himself quotes other techniques (international law, diplomacy...).

In Claude's analysis, Morgenthau cannot prove any necessity of the balance of power.³⁷ He concludes that it is essentially a *redundancy in his theory of international relations*. States fail to do what the Balance of Power would require. The Balance of Power does not necessarily adjust from one equilibrium to another equilibrium. What Morgenthau wants to say, is that, if states *want to preserve their independence* in a world of power struggle, of state of war, they must be as strong as their ubiquitous challengers. For Morgenthau, then, the *raison d'état* imposes that the nation *should* be as strong as possible. But this is obviously only an iron law, if in any case where one country was not as strong as its possible challengers, there was invasion and annihilation of the nation, which will always, in turn, provoke countermeasures by the remaining powers to equilibrate the upset balance. Since the measurement of force is always easier *a posteriori*, it seems impossible to validate this "law". We see instead a permanently changing attempt to balance power by power accumulation and power struggle. This can become then a description somewhat "synonymous with the state-system itself."³⁸

The whole weight of the argument shifts to the characterisation of the international realm. Only if its indeed an endless competitive power struggle, i.e. a state of war, we would expect the balance of power to work. Morgenthau, however, himself admits that the balance is only *one* of the possible means of foreign policy. And as we have seen in the foregoing discussions, the power struggle has been de-linked from its anthropological roots, and has been either circumscri-

³⁷ Inis L. Claude jr., *Power and International Relations*, p.25-37. See for a short restatement and actualisation: Inis L. Claude jr., "The balance of power revisited." *Review of International Studies*, vol.15, 1989, pp.77-85.

³⁸ Martin Wight, *Power Politics*, edited by Hedley Bull and Carsten Holbraadt (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1946/79), p.179. This particular chapter on the balance of power is an intermediary draft of the late 50's to his better known analysis "The Balance of Power" in: Butterfield & Wight, eds., *Diplomatic Investigations*, op.cit.

bed to "revolutionary" (Kissinger) or "heterogeneous" (Aron) systems, or simply dismissed and replaced by a Lockian state of nature, i.e. an "anarchical society" (Bull).

Yet, even after this onslaught, the concept of the Balance of Power is repeatedly used as a central concept in International Relations.

2. "Objective laws" and "National Interest"

The analogy with the neo-classical market-model is the basic thrust of the scientist critique. Applied to IR, the market and its equilibrium correspond to the balance of power and the strive for utility maximisation corresponds to the national interest expressed in terms of power. In an anarchical context, without central sanction mechanism, the impulse to survive pushes actors to maximize power at least as an intermediate goal. *Therefore, power becomes comparable to money in neoclassical theory.* The aggregation of the individual strives for power results in an international competitive order which, as market prices in the economy, decide the external constraints on national actions. The National Interest is the utility maximization in this context: it corresponds to the Pareto optimum in neo-classical economics.

Aron argues forcefully against such an approach where the national interest would replace utility in an economic function.³⁹ The national interest defined in terms of power cannot be equated with an economic utility defined in terms of money. Aron does not deny the centrality of the concept of power in IR. But for two reasons the concept of power is unable to provide the necessary analogy with money and therefore the analogy between utility and national interest.

³⁹ Raymond Aron, *Paix et guerre entre les nations*, p.28/29: "Certains théoriciens ont voulu trouver, pour les relations internationales, l'équivalent de la fin rationnelle du sport ou de l'économie. Un seul but, la victoire, s'écrie le général naïf, oubliant que la victoire militaire donne toujours des satisfactions d'amour-propre, mais non toujours des bénéfices politiques. Un seul impératif, *l'intérêt national*, proclame solennellement un théoricien, à peine moins naïf que le général, comme s'il suffisait d'accrocher l'adjectif national au concept d'intérêt pour rendre celui-ci univoque ..., faute d'objectif univoque de la conduite diplomatique, l'analyse rationnelle des relations internationales n'est pas en mesure de se développer en théorie globale."

First, he considers as too vague and ambiguous an end to base a rational choice theory (means/ends relation) on it.

If power is treated as the ultimate goal (the national interest), thereby rationalising the account of the diplomatic-strategic behaviour (this is Aron's term), then Aron asks: which power ?

"Power-as-resource" (i.e. the potential capacities) does not seem very rational. Why would the extension and the accumulation of in the future usable resources be *the* guide for foreign policy behaviour ? To what extent is the extension of the territory and its population a threat for the virtue and the coherence of the national community? Why would it be always preferable?

"Power-as-force" (i.e. of actually mobilised resources) is, for Aron, obviously a bad candidate as a rationale for a-temporal foreign policy. The accumulation of resources has always been judged with regard to the external threat. Aron underlines the dialectics of accumulation where more security can disrupt a process which finally leads to less security.

"Power-as-effective coercive capacity" cannot always be seen as an end, but surely also as a means to attain other ends. Aron cites peace, glory, influence on humanity, pride to diffuse an ideal (*idée*).

Aron develops a triad of "eternal" foreign policy goals: power (*puissance*), security and glory/ideals. He quotes examples where it seems impossible to reduce the foreign policy behaviour to one of the three, and he refuses to see either in power or in security a rational choice behaviour which all homini diplomatici *should* share. In view of the plurality of "eternal" foreign policy goals which can be subordinated rationally to more contingent and various historical goals, the "national interest" cannot be "rationally" defined, even if one leaves aside the ambiguity of concepts of collective interest. *There is no unambiguous objective to be followed.*

Second, power is not as fungible⁴⁰ as money. It is true, that also economists cannot exactly know all the particular preferences of the

⁴⁰ The term *fungible* refers to the idea of a moveable good that can be freely placed and replaced by another of the same class. It connotates universal applicability in contrast to context specificity.

economic actors. Yet, they are able to reduce the multitude of preferences to one utility function, because of *money*, the universal standard of value and universal means for the acquisition of goods. Power is not as liquid as money and the use of particular powers (say, an atomic bomb) for the control of a specific outcome (say, inducing another state to sign a convention on environmental matters) is far from obvious.

Therefore, Aron concludes that

1. The number of powers and the search for equilibrium in the vague sense of a search not to be dependent on others⁴¹, are insufficient to elaborate a model, that could predict the outcomes of particular international events or allow for a kind of *eternal advice*.⁴²
2. The possible theorisation is, therefore, limited to a framework of analysis that justifies the focus and selection of certain variables considered significant and to apprehend or *understand* particular historical constellations of world politics.⁴³ There is no theory of international relations comparable to positivist (deductive-nomological) neo-classical economics.

Si la conduite diplomatique n'est jamais déterminé par le seul rapport de forces, si la puissance n'est pas l'enjeu de la diplomatie comme l'utilité celle de l'économie, alors la conclusion est légitime qu'il n'y a pas de théorie générale des relations internationales, comparable à la théorie générale de l'économie. La théorie que nous sommes en train d'esquisser tend à analyser le sens de la conduite diplomatique, à dégager les notions fondamentales, à préciser les variables qu'il faut passer en revue pour

⁴¹ Raymond Aron *Paix et guerre entre les nations*, p.140, 154: "Le maintien d'un système donné a pour condition la sauvegarde des acteurs principaux, mais chacun de ceux-ci n'est pas rationnellement obligé à mettre le maintien du système au dessus de tel de ses intérêts propres...La seule règle universelle et formelle est celle de l'équilibre au sens vague que lui donnait David Hume: chaque acteur (j'ajouterai principal) s'efforce de ne pas être à la merci des autres."

⁴² *ibid.*, p.154: "La combinaison de la 'volonté de ne pas être à la merci' et d'une configuration typique permet d'esquisser des modèles de systèmes. Mais les modèles, caractérisés par les deux seuls traits - volonté d'équilibre et configuration du rapport des forces - restent à trop d'égards indéterminés pour qu'on en puisse dégager les lois de fonctionnement et d'évolution."

⁴³ *ibid.*, p.140: "Il n'est possible ni de prévoir les événements diplomatiques à partir de l'analyse d'un système typique ni de dicter aux princes une conduite en fonction du type de système. Le modèle de l'équilibre pluripolaire aide à comprendre des systèmes historiquement réalisés..."

comprendre une constellation. Mais elle ne suggère pas une 'diplomatie éternelle', elle ne prétend pas à la reconstruction d'un système clos.⁴⁴

5.4. Conclusion

Three points should be just shortly restated.

First, it is important to see that the initial anthropological foundation has been dropped for the derivation from the *security dilemma*. The debate which of the three images should account for the emergence of conflict and war has been reduced to two, or more precisely, to the exact articulation of the systemic and the unit dynamics.

Second, the systemic level has been widely analysed following a continuum from (to take Bull's concepts) anarchy to society. The problem if anarchy is at all a useful concept has not yet been resolved: formal anarchy, yet substantial rule seems to characterise contemporary international relations.

Third, this evolution of central Realist concepts took place in what is generally called the *second debate* between 'traditionalists' and 'scientists' and which had provoked some 'traditionalists' made their conceptual and methodological framework more explicit (this is especially the case for Bull and Aron). Yet, the debate subsists today in the vast critique of the more 'scientist' Neo-Realism.

⁴⁴ *ibid.*, p.102.

6

Marxist Theories of International Relations: The Soviet Approach



This chapter breaks with the view of the Realist West. It has been initially conceived for a comparison of Western Realism with the leading theory of that part of the world where Realism was not predominant, namely the Soviet theory of international relations. It is only during the preparation that a further comparison appeared increasingly plausible: the extent to which superpowers adjust analytical tools to their global interests. Thus, there appear to be in Realist thought corollaries for major concepts in Soviet theory. Overstretching the point, one could say that *Soviet* theories of imperialism become *de facto* a kind of Soviet Realism. Hence this chapter will first introduce classic marxist thought on imperialism. Whereas Soviet theories are discussed here, marxist thought outside the Soviet grid will be presented in chapter 13.

6.1. Classical Imperialism

1. *The concept of imperialism*

Marxist theories of International Relations are above all theories of *imperialism*. Yet this concept requires some preliminary remarks before we engage in its analysis.

1. In order to avoid confusion with other Western concepts of *political imperialism*⁴⁵ or *sociological imperialism* (Schumpeter), the concept is sometimes used as *economic imperialism*. Yet, this expression can be confusing. On the one hand, for Marxism, imperialism is always economic, the expression tautological. On the other, it has sometimes come to signify a *historical period* where imperialism was pursued primarily by economic means and not military or political ones. This is the case in the after-war debate around neo-colonialism and informal rule. *Economic* can therefore refer both to the *causes*, and to the *means* of imperialism.

2. There exist different periods of thought on the subject of imperialism:

a) Classical imperialism which focuses on intra-"bourgeois" state relations: the view from the core

b) Imperialism in a "World System" which developed as a response to the issue of underdevelopment despite of decolonization: the view from the periphery

3. The basic tenet is equal, namely, imperialism results from the inherent contradictions of capitalism which requires its expansion. The different approaches display, however, a considerable variety for the exact location of the contradiction and the causality they imply: For Marx and Lenin, both contradiction and causality are deduced from the mode of production of domestic societies. For some non-marxists, it is the drive for market power, inherent to capitalism, or the class conflict over distribution (Hilferding) that cause expansion. Finally, international and not domestic reasons are more recently given: - Emmanuel's unequal exchange (international sphere of exchange)⁴⁶ - the internationalization of production (closer to the original Marx)⁴⁷

⁴⁵ See e.g. Benjamin J. Cohen, *The Question of Imperialism: The Political Economy of Dominance and Dependence* (London et al.: Macmillan, 1973).

⁴⁶ Arghiri Emmanuel, *Unequal Exchange: A Study of the Imperialism of Trade* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972).

⁴⁷ See e.g. Christian Palloix, *L'internationalisation du capital* (Paris: Maspéro, 1975).

4. Finally, the development of imperialist theories took place in (at least) two very different ideological settings. The background of 19th Century imperialism and of World War I, neocolonialism, and ideological underpinning of communist regimes gives quite different inputs to theory formulation.

2. *Marx' legacy*

Marx did not develop a far-fetched theory of imperialism or of international relations. There are some ideas about the need for foreign markets as a reaction to the tendency of the rate of profit to fall. But the Third World is not very widely treated, and if, then in general as a kind of mirror image of the first stages of historical materialism. Marx shared the view of the progressive impact of capitalism with the major liberal thinkers. Yet, he saw it only as a first step. Up to the industrial revolution, capitalism's external relations were mediated through merchant capitals and did not necessarily transform other societies drawn into the world market. Once industrial capital has taken charge, capitalist conquest could play a progressive (though brutal) role initiating industrialization. It is a question of dogmatic debate, if every social formation has to go through a capitalist phase before reaching socialism. Yet, imperialism can have a *positive* function for socialism. It speeds up the development and demise of capitalism.

The most important legacy of Marx' ideas can be found at the paradigmatic level. In view of the fact, that the basic (economic) forces of change do not know any borders, Marx redirects the attention to the *transnational* nature of international relations.⁴⁸ This is reflected in the difficulties to catch the phenomenon of *nationalism* as a basic factor of change in the context of international relations.

⁴⁸ See for this argument, Marcel Merle, *Sociologie des Relations Internationales*.

3. Classical Imperialism: Hilferding, Luxemburg, Lenin

The *historical context* of classical imperialism was a particular period of international capitalist development: the pre-war period before 1914.

The characteristics, that Marxist or closely related thinkers, took up to incorporate into the ("concrete") historical analysis⁴⁹ of capitalism were

- extreme rapid growth (in the core countries)
- features of monopoly capitalism, such as cartels, trusts, and the rising importance of large banks
- a return of tariffs
- a tremendous colonial expansion
- a change in the very nature of the bourgeois class, that increasingly collaborated with an ever more important state.

The classical theories which emerged can be analysed as exemplifying this theoretical adaptation process. The orthodox Marxist approach begins with an analysis of the mode of production, capitalism (in one country). It then moves towards the historical actor (the class), the derived superstructure (politics, and in particular, the capitalist state), the expansion of the state(s) which eventually leads to the outbreak of war (See figure 2).

Let us take up the different links of the argumentation, first the *link from class to state and the central concept of monopoly*.

Certainly, Marxists do not need the concept of monopoly for linking classes to the state. Since the state (the whole political sphere) is part of the dependent superstructure of the society, it is seen as representing the interests of the ruling class (in our case, the "bourgeois" class). Nevertheless, the concept of monopoly specifies this link in a *particular historical period of capitalism*. Hilferding retraced the

⁴⁹ This wording is extensively used by Varga for describing the *empirical* check of the general laws of Marxism. See Yevgeny S. Varga, *Politico-Economic Problems of Capitalism* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1968. Transl. from *Ocherki po problemam politekonomiki kapitalizma*, first published in 1965).

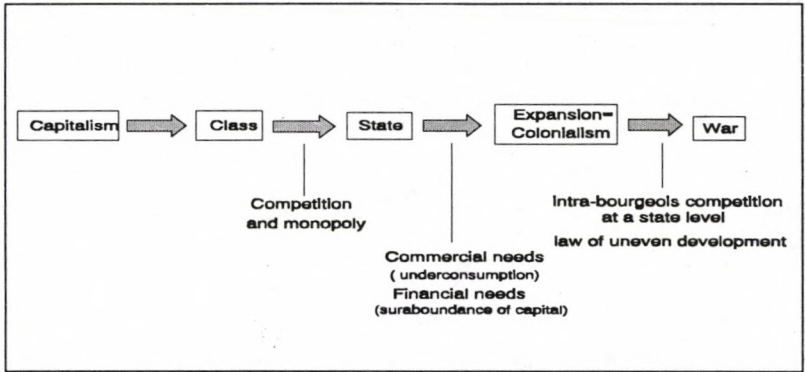


Figure 2 Classical Theories of Imperialism (Hilferding, Luxemburg, Lenin)

path of concentration, cartelisation to the merger of financial and industrial capital into "finance capital." The industrial economies are, thus, not dominated by a large bourgeois class, but by its elite, a small monolithic group. The state acts in their interest - which can sometimes be against the interests of other bourgeois strata (but objectively never against the interests of the bourgeoisie and capitalism as such). Hilferding analysed in detail how states are pushed to protectionist policies and to expansion in order to sustain the process of monopolization - against foreign monopolies, but also against small national producers and consumers. The concomitant development of monopolies (or more precisely: oligopolisation) and increased state intervention are considered by *Lenin* as the basic features of state-monopoly capitalism or, in other words, *imperialism* as the highest stage of capitalism. These theses are followed generally. The thinkers differ on the reasons given for state expansion.

The next link in the chain is the treatment of *the causes of expansion/colonialism*. Since the state is not an autonomous actor, but a means of the ruling class and only a surface phenomenon of capitalism, expansion/colonialism is approached from the interest of the monopoly bourgeoisie and the inherent logic of capitalism. Here the approaches diverge.

Hilferding bases his explanation on the domestic "finance capital" whose attempts of cartelization will eventually overcome the anarchy of capitalist production (markets) and economic crises, yet not the contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. Imperialist expansion is explained in terms of the needs of monopoly capitalists:

- new areas of raw material exploitation
- export markets for the output of monopoly capitalists
- profitable markets for capitalist investment

In other words, expansion occurs for *financial and commercial needs*. Imperialism becomes here the internationalisation of a tamed domestic intra-bourgeois competition. Finance capital requires a *strong state* that will help it in its foreign expansion (neo-mercantilist policies for the worldwide competitive struggle for dominance of markets). In order to mobilize enough domestic resources for imperialism, the state needs an own ideology which is provided by the impact of international competition, the "ideology of imperialism": a mixture of racism, nationalism, and militarism.

Luxemburg derives the need for expansion from the inherent *underconsumptionist* feature of capitalism. In a capitalist society, capital accumulation creates a productive capacity larger than consumption: competition and the need for economies of scale generate overproduction. At the same time, the natural tendency of the income distribution is disadvantageous to wage-earners. And since capitalists have a higher propensity to save, the economy of a mature capitalist society displays an inherent tendency towards oversaving, i.e. an insufficient effective demand. Overproduction and oversaving cause underconsumption, or the impossibility for capitalists to realize their surplus (exchanging goods vs. money on the market). For *Luxemburg*, mature capitalist societies need therefore pre-capitalist societies for the realization of the surplus: *commercial needs* explain expansion.

The coercive element of imperialism (colonialism) and the role of the state, is accounted for by recurring to Marx' theory of value. Pre-capitalist societies must exchange labour-intensive (thus more value-including) goods against capital-intensive ones. Force is needed to let this unequal deal happen.

Finally, among the classical thinkers, Luxemburg is the only who had thought about the impact of imperialism on pre-capitalist societies, the destruction of the "natural economy", the appropriation of the means of production, and the "proletarianisation", i.e. expansion of wage-labour. However, her view is on this subject limited to the foreign impact and

excludes any consideration of internal forces and contradiction within the pre-capitalist mode of production.⁵⁰

The final link is the explanation of war. Writing in 1916, *Lenin* expanded the antagonistic view of inter-state relations that Hilferding and Bukharin had proposed before, to the phenomenon of war. *Lenin* was not an underconsumptionist. Some scholars sustain that he failed to analyse the exact cause of imperialism⁵¹. He argued as if he did not question Marx' tendency for the rate of profit to fall as the primary cause of imperialism.⁵² "Surabundance of capital" and the "law of uneven development" were the central points of his argument.

Because of the *uneven development* of different branches and countries, capital is driven from the most developed ones (and where the rate of profit is the lowest) to those where the profit is highest. Capital export becomes the most important feature of capitalist imperialism. Not commercial, but *financial* needs lead to an international competition between monopolies on a world scale, a re-division of the world among the most powerful countries and, finally, war. War eventually must break out because Kautzky's thesis of *ultra-imperialism* (the alliance of capitalism for joint exploitation) is not viable in the long run: the law of uneven development invites the fastest growing state-monopoly to reverse the alliance.

In this theory, where an international phenomenon, war, is of fundamental importance, the conception of the *state* approximates that

⁵⁰ Charles Á. Barone, *Marxist Thought on Imperialism: Survey and Critique* (London et al.: Macmillan, 1985), p.34.

⁵¹ *ibid.*, p.53.

⁵² See James O'Connor, "The Meaning of Economic Imperialism." In R. Rhodes, ed., *Imperialism and Underdevelopment* (London, 1970), pp.101-149.

of an actor and requires perhaps the most monolithic or black box concept of the state: monopoly and state become nearly identical.

6.2. Soviet approaches to International Relations

Before presenting Soviet approaches to IR, two of its particularities should be mentioned.

First, they IR display a disproportionate close link between the theory and practice of Soviet foreign policy. Based on the objective laws of Marxism, the theory is supposed to interpret the past, to guide present decisions, and to forecast the future. Yet, if foreign policy behavior fails or the international system does not display the expected features, theory adjusted. In a world of truth, theory and practice must be in perfect harmony. Second, even though Soviet analysts spent a considerable amount of time in refuting "Western" approaches, the actual outlook of main concepts resembles conspicuously what has come to be called *systemic Realism*. Is this the result of a common concern with superpower-politics? Or the mirror-image of a country exposed to the calamities of international Realpolitik?⁵³

1. *International anarchy: Correlation of forces vs. Balance of power*

A Soviet analyst gives the following *definition of the correlation of forces (cof)*. It is the relation

among the totality of economic, political, legal, diplomatic and military contacts and interrelationships among peoples, among states and state systems, and among the main social, economic and political forces and organizations functioning in the world.

These relations constitute

⁵³ Since I am not a Soviet specialist and do not read Russian, the following section relies heavily on secondary literature - as presented by Western writers. It is therefore highly probable that the Realist analogies at the end reflect not only similar attitudes, but the conceptual bias of the Western writers to whom I refer.

the objective circumstances in which both world politics as a whole and the foreign policy of individual states are developing.⁵⁴

The cof thereby integrates class forces, material and moral forces and give it the central explanatory role for foreign policy analysis (micro-level) and international politics (macro-level). It takes into account every possible national, transnational, subnational actor or force (implying non-intentional or non-conscious action by actors or natural forces).

The cof is conceived in rather *dynamic* terms. The cof can change at all times either by *objective* forces (international factors) or *subjective* forces (internal political constraints on *use* of force). The subjective element is introduced in order to distinguish the *potential* forces from the *actually* used ones - and thereby to save the explanatory value of the Cof approach. Avoiding the pitfalls (or internal inconsistency) of having a subjective element in a theory supposed to be entirely objective, this subjective element is, in turn, **sometimes** derived from recurring to objective forces.

The *change of the cof* was a major topic in the explanation of the after World War II international environment. The objective forces of change often quoted are: the rise of Soviet Union military power, of Japanese and W-European economic power, and the development of national liberation movements. These objective forces were said to have shifted the cof to the detriment of U.S. (imperialist) interests. Linked to the subjective unwillingness to use force during and after the Vietnam war, the decline of U.S. power was more important than the actual rise of Soviet Union power for the new correlation of forces. This change was then used to explain for instance the US acceptance of détente (imposed through Soviet Union atomic parity, European pressure), and the US debacle in Vietnam.

⁵⁴ Quoted in Allen Lynch, *The Soviet study of international relations* (Cambridge University Press, 1989), p.91.

The cof is conceived to consciously avoid some of the shortcomings of the balance of power (bop) concept. The bop approach is supposed

- to increase the propensity to use force (whereas the correlation of force invites to consider other aspects of power than the military one);
- to reinforce the ideology of the status quo (whereas the cof implies change);
- to contribute to the confusion of foreign policies that are qualitatively different: imperialist and anti-imperialist policies.

A comparison of both approaches reveal, however, many similarities.⁵⁵ To start with, there is a zero-sum view of power. In both, this zero-sum conception of power is not necessary. Yet, in fact, by reducing the central balance to two powers and the Cof to two main forces, those of imperialism and those opposing it, a zero-sum argument can easily follow.

With regard to the range of components of what has to be considered power, both theories provide rather exhaustive lists. The military or single factor fallacy⁵⁶ is, at least theoretically, avoided.

Both are also well aware of the historicity of power components. For Lenin power without historical process was useless (against the tide of the time).⁵⁷

Finally, both concepts are absolutely central for respectively Realism and Soviet theories of imperialism. The bop and the cof are the objective forces to delimit the range of possible outcomes in international politics and the possible rational behavior of states.

As far as the differences are concerned, not all of them are *real*, and not only *alleged* differences. Both theories assume that there is *a tendency towards an equilibrium and a status quo*: a certain homeostatic equilibrium is conceived as the independent variable which explains foreign policy behavior and international politics. In so far as the bop is often used in the context of military power, and since the use of military power (war) is the very thing to be avoided, bop *can*

⁵⁵ See also Margot Light, *The Soviet theory of international relations* (Brighton: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1988), pp.286ff.

⁵⁶ See Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics among Nations*, pp.116f.

⁵⁷ See Morgenthau for the fallacy of *permanent power*. Ibid. pp.114f.

imply a conservative bias - if it is used as a *legitimation* of foreign policy behavior. Yet, this also seems applicable to the use of the cof as an argument for a specific Soviet Union intervention or defence.

It is also more a question of conviction if there is indeed a *qualitative difference between imperialist and anti-imperialist forces*. In so far, as a shift in the balance is considered positive, the two positions resemble mirror images. In "imperialist" circles as well, there exists the view that a balance tip to the right side might justify politics that otherwise would be considered "expansionist" and detrimental to the international order (i.e. as implying war).

Then only *the integration of the class actor* is indeed a theoretical difference with respect to the definition of those forces that one needs to take into account. A non-Marxist derivation of relevant actors at the level of social groups will not share the same explanations. With respect to the actual *function* of this actor within the explanation, both face the same opportunities and problems. The integration of the class actor can allow an explanation where states attributes do not change, and yet the Cof does. It allows to see change where the focus on the state would not see it. In this respect, the integration of the class actor into Soviet theory resembles the integration of transnational actors into Bop theory, or the integration of *market forces* in more recent IPE. Now, all these approaches have a considerable difficulty in actually measuring or just accounting for the effects *and*, above all, in integrating these different forces into a coherent approach showing the interplay of international and transnational relations. The Soviet Union might, as Lenin did, point to the centrality of international class relations. In fact, the Cof theory increasingly emphasised the relations between states at the expense of its initial focus on classes. These traditionally *derived* inter-state phenomena, often called *subjective*, seem to acquire a more *autonomous*, or at least a *dialectical status*. As we will see in the following discussion of the concept of *peaceful coexistence* the integration of these two levels of analysis is far from being achieved.

2. *Transnational vs. Inter-state relations: Peaceful Coexistence and Containment*

Peaceful coexistence is a policy that is based on a duality of cooperation and confrontation. Even though the reasons for war are to be found in imperialism, an at least temporary stalemate can be achieved.⁵⁸ The therefore *at least tactical cooperative aspect* is based on the following features:

- decoupling international competition from the military sphere and redirect it to the economic and ideological sphere;
- the reciprocal acceptance of the principal of non-interference (respect of international law);
- the existence of common goals (in particular, the avoidance of mutual nuclear destruction).

Obviously, the international *confrontation* between imperialist and anti-imperialist forces is not forgotten. The Soviet Union must help the latter forces to prevail. In other words, *peaceful coexistence* should provide a peaceful environment for consolidating (international) socialism *and* for changing the existing political and social status quo.⁵⁹

Unfortunately, the double twist of this policy became *in its Soviet realisation* contradictory in two important arenas of international politics. There is, on the one hand, the Third World. In order to avoid the clash between inter-state coexistence and trans- or international anti-imperialism in the Third World, Brezhnev had posited that peaceful coexistence does not apply to national liberation movements. Yet, it is exactly the expansion of the Soviet Union in the Third World (and the implicit shift in the bop) which will trigger U.S. reaction and an attempt to *link* this Soviet foreign behavior to other levels of Soviet-U.S. relations (See Kissinger, chapter 5). In addition, peaceful coexistence does only exactly conform to the principle of non-

⁵⁸ The reasons for this stalemate have changed over time. Lenin believed that it was in the economic interest (and necessity) for capitalism to cohabit peacefully with socialism. After World War II, this changed to the central role now played by the new correlation of forces that stop imperialism to start war.

⁵⁹ This is exactly the mix of antagonistic and cooperative politics, that containment in its detente version was supposed to realize. See chapter 9.

interference, if one does not want to exclude those countries from this basic right that are not linked to a system of states (alliances). On the other hand, the Soviet Union faces the problem of the domestic class struggle in the West: the help for anti-imperialist forces manifestly clashes here with the principle of non-interference. Here the Soviet Union lets the inter-state principle prevail. Between security and *proletarian internationalism* (=international class-relations), the Soviet Union chooses the first.

But is *peaceful coexistence* then anything else than a *mirror image* of *containment* policy?

At the *psychological level*, both presuppose the driving force for war in the other (expansionism). At the *foreign policy level*, both conceive politics in terms of limiting conflicts, not of roll-back (Dulles). Hence, they generally accept the respective spheres of influence (and de facto the Brejnev and Monroe doctrines), and only occasionally, if the risk is limited, interfere in them. The hope to change (win) is not forgotten, but upheld in delay: if there is to be a decline of one superpower, then it should come under no directly military strains (excluding arms production and transfers) and, if possible, *from within*: the 'impossible war and improbable peace' (Aron) pushes to invest in domestic changes (US) or in sustaining the objective forces that will dissolve capitalism (Soviet Union).⁶⁰ Thereby, *diplomacy retains a central role* in finding out the exact link between containment and an acceptable interference for change. Foreign policy, so the *golden rule* (Pierre Hassner), consists not in imposing issues, but in peacefully changing the policy priorities of the adversary to one own's interests.

3. *Intra-socialist relations and "embedded liberalism"*

Intra-socialist relations are characterised by the ambiguous status of a *sovereign* and *socialist* country. On the one hand, socialist countries

⁶⁰ This is, in the American context, especially George F. Kennan's view.

are denied a *national* profile. It is a version of the *domino theory* which underscores the danger of the "weak link of socialism". On the other hand, the very basis of intra-socialist relations is said to be the respect of (state, not national) *sovereignty*.

Soviet theories' proposed solutions are, however, only re-proposing this ambiguity as different puzzles. Soviet theory makes an analytical distinction between the laws of socialism as a socio-economic system (within one country) and the laws of socialism as a system of international relations. Yet, it seems to be the case that intra-socialist do not form a unique system, but rather correspond to a specific subsystem of international relations.⁶¹ This applies, because state (and national) divisions based on sovereign juridical status significantly inform the context of international relations even between socialist states, and because it is recognized that the socialist character of a country does not automatically entail a *socialist character of international relations* (China!).⁶²

One Soviet writer goes so far to compare intra-socialist relations in this particular historical context to capitalist relations between socialist states, each state is seen as the private property of its respective nation.⁶³

Thereby, the Soviet theory's ideal solution, namely the harmonious combination of the *state* interest of (socialist) member countries with the *common* interest of the socialist commonwealth reminds very much the solution of intra-capitalist economic (and political?) relations along the lines of what John Ruggie has called *embedded liberalism*. Here the necessary Keynesian politics (that imply a *limit* to international exposure) should not exceed a certain threshold in order to avoid the breakdown of the international economic and

⁶¹ See Allen Lynch, *The Soviet Study of International Relations*, pp.121-124.

⁶² This recognition is of greatest importance. Not only for arguing against Waltz that Leninist inspired approaches must not necessarily be reductionist. It is because the very concept of the state changes and allows for the discipline of international relations to exist: since the state does not wither away before *international* (and not only the sums of *national*) socialism is created, *inter-state* relations are for along time to come - may be to remain.

⁶³ *ibid.*, p.124.

financial system ("beggar-thy-neighbour"), as it was the case during the inter-war period. The organisation of international economic relations put up for it (Bretton Woods, Gatt) was supposed to maximize the advantages and constraints of an open international liberalism with the domestic sovereignty of its members.⁶⁴ In both cases, the compromise fails, whenever the tension between both principles becomes too strong - for the *leader* of the respective system. The explicit reference in the East is the Brejnev doctrine, where the most powerful partner decided that the common (and automatically Soviet) interests should prevail. The "exorbitant privileges" of the US (and the fall of Bretton-Woods) also indicates that the most powerful partner might upset the compromise when the domestic costs of adjustment exceed the international (and for superpowers comparatively low) cost of breaking up.⁶⁵

Realism in its U.S. or Soviet version has difficulties to analyse relations with their alliances.

4. Spheres of influence and the Third World

The orthodox treatment of socialist-Third world relations is based on clear cut responsibility of capitalism for underdevelopment. North-South divide, politics of "equidistance" and "non-alignment" are anathema for Soviet theory, because they imply an equal treatment of imperialist and anti-imperialist forces. Third World countries do, however, not need to pursue a capitalist phase before reaching socialism. Analysing the practices that occurred during early Soviet decolonisation of the peripheral areas of the Tsarist Empire, Lenin already argued that decolonisation to socialism is possible, if helped by socialist and already industrialized countries.

Yet, the implementation meets several difficulties. The first is what one could call the problem of the *intermediate strata*. How to

⁶⁴ For this argument, see chapter 14.

⁶⁵ See especially David Calleo and Susan Strange, "Money and World Politics", in Susan Strange, ed., *Paths to International Political Economy* (London et al.: George Allen and Unwin, 1984), pp.91-125.

deal with countries that have escaped imperialism, ought to be considered on your side, but do not share your ideology? How to find the progressive class ally in those countries, where the working class does hardly exist?⁶⁶ *Theoretical* solution: One defines an intermediate strata of revolutionary democrats which could develop a class consciousness independent of class origins (flat contradiction of Marx?): petty bourgeoisie led by intellectuals and, most importantly, the military. This is an apt justification for *practically* sustaining Third World regimes that have nothing to do with socialism. It resembles very much the different strategies employed by Western countries to legitimate their support for regimes that followed a so-called third way between "totalitarian" dictatorship and Western democracy (e.g. military regimes).

This approach has been more and more criticised (from left and right), because some puzzles remain unresolved, as e.g. the explanation of religious revolutions⁶⁷, war between two socialist countries (e.g. Kampuchea and Vietnam), and war between two underdeveloped countries (Iran vs. Iraq). Criticisms and a re-invigouration of imperialist theories that are not too much compromised by being formulated in the country of one of the superpowers will be dealt with in a later lecture on IPE as a critique of realism.

6.3. Conclusion

1. "Socialism within one country" and the identification of the international socialist with the Soviet survival have produced an ambiguous theory where traditional inter-state relations are superposed with transnational relations (which are the system's dynamic).

⁶⁶ For a Marxist criticism of the Leninist confusion of Third World national bourgeois forces with anti-imperialist forces, see Bill Warren, *Imperialism: Pioneer of Capitalism* (London: New Left Books, 1980).

⁶⁷ If one does not take the explanation that the Iranian case was a socialist revolution that lost against a counter-revolution - and then to explain why it lost against a counter-revolution, that is certainly not in the objective interest of capitalism.

2. The close link between theory and practice has resulted in a continuous readjustment of Soviet theory to make it finally nearly indistinguishable from systemic Realist approaches. The practice of a kind of Superpower - Realpolitik (as an intermediate stage perhaps, for whatever future socialist development) has pushed Soviet theory in the direction of just another version of Realism. If neither the domestic regime change, nor Third-World anti-imperialism create new *socialist* relations, the international system *in its totality* is capitalist and can be analysed accordingly. This would imply the equal treatment of the US and the Soviet Union, a treatment that Soviet Union theory persistently refuses. Yet, the dislocation of domestic socialist evolution and socialism at the international level creates a space, the international realm, for which other laws than the socialist apply. As already seen, these seem to be quite similar to the Realist ones: force, correlation of forces, spheres of influence in a bipolar zero-sum competition with antagonistic and cooperative elements, where diplomacy should take over military relations.

3. It shares with realism all pitfalls concerning the exact definition of central concepts, the difficult integration of transnational factors, and the status quo outlook with regard to a new international economic order or the domestic changes within "systems of states" (alliance systems).

East-West Conflict: U.S. National Security Policy from Containment to Détente



After three theoretical chapters, the following two will attempt to introduce both into the *use* of theories and concepts in actual analysis (chapter 8), and into the history of their development (chapter 7). Here, the internal evolution of Realist thought is interrelated with its external environment.

The policy-concept of containment is the main subject of this chapter. Yet, it is rather ambiguously used.

On the one hand, it designates the official U.S. foreign policy approach of the Cold War (after 1948). Therefore, it has a specific content and historical context. On the other hand, containment is part of *every U.S. East-West policy since 1947*.

In the following analysis, both aspects will be tackled in four steps:

1. the *historical analysis of the genesis of containment* which is couched in the larger historiographical debate around the *Origins of the Cold War*. Unable to settle this dispute, I should rather try to see how on the level of foreign policy formulation the years 1944-1947 have been *perceived*.

2. the *theoretical analysis of the content of containment*. Here the thoughts of the "inventer" of this specific strategy, George F. Kennan, will be presented.

3. the *political analysis of its application* will be analysed, including the Marshall Plan, the Truman Doctrine and the Vietnam War.

4. the *reformulation of containment in detente* will be touched here the theoretical approach and actual politics of Henry A. Kissinger that are analysed in detail in chapter 9.

7.1. The origins of *containment*: the "Riga axioms" prevail

In the Forties, two strategic conceptions fight each other in the U.S. administration, what Daniel Yergin has called the "Yalta axioms" and the "Riga axioms".⁶⁸ It is only between 1944 and 1947 that eventually the latter prevail.

1. The "Yalta axioms"

President Roosevelt is often presented as a modern Wilsonian. During the war, his foreign policy came under strong attack either from traditional isolationists (Senator Taft) or from those that wanted to be tougher against the Soviet Union. Roosevelt got a distinct reputation for having an Idealist penchant. There are some reason to this.

Roosevelt's general conception of world politics has certainly the same *anti-isolationist tendency* as Wilson's. He perceived that the US that with a possible hegemon on either its transatlantic or transpacific front (Germany and/or Japan) was a security threat of the US, and that therefore it had to go to war. On top of it, Roosevelt was convinced that the non-entanglement policy after WWI (League of Nations), and the attempted complete disengagement of World affairs (with the notable exception of the *financial sphere* !) constituted a major reason for the failure of the collective security system.

Roosevelt's perception of the USSR was largely pragmatic. Although Roosevelt was explicit about the dictatorship in the USSR,

⁶⁸ Daniel Yergin, *Shattered Peace: The Origins of the Cold War and the National Security State* (Boston: 1977).

this did not imply for him that the Soviet Union should be treated as an outsider in the international system. First, and this is a Realist argument: since the Soviet Union is the largest power in Europe, no international system can exist without it. The attempt to isolate (as e.g. in Versailles) will make this country a "revolutionary" one, to use Kissinger's words. Second, Roosevelt did not conceive of the Soviet Union as necessarily expansionist and ill-disposed because of its ideology. Totalitarian regime could very well be pragmatic and defensive in foreign affairs. The hostile Soviet policy was interpreted as a reaction to allied anti-Soviet acts since 1917: the allied intervention at the end of WWI, the installation of a "cordon sanitaire" (buffer zone), Western policy isolating diplomatically the Soviets in the 1930's, the refusal to accept an alliance against Hitler before 1941, and finally the conference in Munich which, without the Soviets allowed Hitler to draw near the Soviet border.

U.S. foreign policy had, therefore, to demonstrate its goodwill and its acceptance of the international weight of the USSR. In other words, the Soviet Union should be treated as a traditional great power, less directed by ideological aims, than by pragmatic considerations of the *national interest*. "One could make business" with it. The Soviet Union apt for cooperation. Roosevelt wants to offer on the one hand the Soviet Union's participation in the new international order and a recognition of its spheres of influence for the creation of common trust and therefore Soviet cooperation on the international level and moderation in its spheres of influence.

2. The "Riga axioms"

Daniel Yergin named them after the *Soviet Service* installed in Riga in the Twenties when the US had not yet recognized the USSR officially and therefore had no diplomatic relations. In Riga, as Kennan describes it as a kind of emigrant Saint-Petersburg, a small group of Sovietologues attached to the U.S. Embassy was responsible for getting information from the USSR and for analysing them. The

most prominent figures were Loy Henderson, Charles Bohlen, and especially George F. Kennan.

Their perception of the actual Soviet policy was quite different from the one discussed above:

1. The totalitarian character of the domestic regime was reflected *also in foreign affairs*. Thus, the USSR was expansionist and profoundly anti-democratic.

2. The ideology, far from being only a propagandistic make-up for traditional power-politics, is the coherent reference of Soviet foreign policy.

3. Diplomacy is only a subordinated means for this end - it is *emphatically* not comparable with pragmatic bargain and *not trustable*.

3. *The three phases of the prevailing of the Riga-axioms*

The climax of Roosevelt's diplomacy is Yalta. During this conference, Roosevelt got the Soviet Union to accept the United Nations (with Veto principle of the Security Council, though), to join in the war against Japan, and to sign the "Declaration of the Free Europe", bargained on a recognition of spheres of influence. But quickly, the ambiguities of Roosevelt's policy came to the forefront. Since he tried to avoid the fate of Wilson's policy, he mobilised domestically a consensus for his foreign policy around subjects he knew would work: the moralistic tone so typical for U.S. politics. It was the *Atlantic Charter* with a vision of a "one-world" without spheres of influence and without blocs and alliances and the universal opening of markets ("Open-door policy") that rallied the U.S. population behind his foreign intervention ("Save the world - and nothing less - for democracy", as Kennan sarcastically noted in his diaries). This created a contradiction between a 'domestic' (idealist) and a 'foreign' (realist) foreign policy.⁶⁹ Yet, even if he had a more realistic conception of Soviet politics, the expectancies that he had created in the population were

⁶⁹ Wilfried Loth, *Die Teilung der Welt, Geschichte des Kalten Krieges 1941-1955* (München: dtv, 1983'), p.32.

rather quickly disappointed - and he died before he could in some way resolve this ambiguity. Since the U.S. have shown good will, the Soviet policy in Eastern Europe gives right to the principles of Riga.

The first phase could be called the phase of *non-appeasement*.

The climax of Yalta is quickly followed by an anti-climax: on the one hand, Soviet politics, especially in Poland, on the other hand, the endless postponing of the second front⁷⁰, and the abrupt cut of the lend-lease agreement (by Truman after Roosevelt's death, the 12.4.45)⁷¹. Truman, the new President, a newcomer in international matters, was not able to fill the conceptual and political void left over from Roosevelt. Taking Roosevelt's declarations literally, He could not but feel disappointed and even cheated by Soviet behaviour. The *principles of Riga*, more and more defended by the State Department gained influence in the whole administration. Only two persons still believe in Roosevelt's foreign policy: Byrnes, the Secretary of State, and Hopkins, personal adviser to Roosevelt and now to Truman. Yet, Byrnes must renounce to a compromise during the first Foreign Minister Conference in London (11.9.-2.10.1945) for not being treated as a *politician of appeasement*. And Hopkins after having finished a journey to Moscow dies in January 1946.

At this point, one could speak of a second phase of the introduction of containment policy, *the uniformisation of the perception of the Soviet Union* (Feb.46 - Feb.47).

In February 1946, the State Department asks the U.S Embassy in Moscow to analyse the rather aggressive statement by Stalin from the

⁷⁰ John Spanier, *American Foreign Policy since World War II* (New York, 1980*), p.16f: "From the Marxist viewpoint, the Allies were doing exactly what they should be doing - namely postponing the second front until the Soviet Union and Germany had exhausted each other. Then the two Western powers could land in France, march bloodlessly into Germany, and dictate the peace to both, Germany and Russia...destroy both their two major ideological opponents at one and the same time." This could actually also be a Realist viewpoint.

⁷¹ This is probably a big diplomatic mistake. By cutting unilaterally this help, Truman gives a possible bargaining chip away. There is no quid-pro-quo - and if, as it seems to be, the economic carrot could have been used against the USSR at least to a certain extent, it is rather unfortunate to have given it away against nothing. See George C. Herring jr., *Aid to Russia, 1941-1946: Strategy, Diplomacy, the Origins of the Cold War* (New York: 1973).

9.2.46. The answer is the famous *long telegramme* (8000 words) de George F. Kennan from the 22.2.46. Here, Russia and the Soviet Union are analysed as expansionist powers - within and outside their territories. By linking the Soviet behavior neither to a traditional big power behavior (Roosevelt), nor to a new kind of totalitarian foreign policy, but to the imperialist tradition of the Tsars, Kennan filled the conceptual void in the U.S. administration.

The historical record gave him, at least in the eyes of U.S. politicians, right: the crisis in Iran (Feb./March 46) and the crisis of Turkey (August 46), where Stalin asks for a change of the Montreux Treaty regulating the access of the Dardanelles. Now, the Soviet Union appears as overtly imperialist. And since the Republicans win the election to the House of Representatives and to the Senate in Nov.46, the pressure for a policy change is very strong.

The new policy, formulated in the third phase, is *containment*. The 21.2.47, Great Britain declares not being able to guarantee the security of Turkey and Greece, where a civil war was raging. The United Kingdom thereby declares its retreat from being a superpower. Only the US could represent their interests in Europe. The world had become bipolar. The Greek resistance, seen as a new vague of communist expansionism⁷², were integrated into the general European context. Afraid of the effects the "fall" of Greece and Turkey could have for the still "free" Europe (the *domino theory*), the U.S. engaged themselves in the protection of anti-communist regimes. The 12.3.47, in a famous speech, Truman sets up a guarantee for all anti-communist forces: in the international struggle between the free world and totalitarian communism, the U.S. are obliged to help those threatened in their freedom. The *Truman Doctrine* meant that the US took their responsibility in a bipolar world.

In July 1947, a high official of the State Department published under the name of *Mr. X* an article in Foreign Affairs, entitled "The

⁷² Even though historiographies of the cold war are by now saying that Stalin did actually not encourage them. See also John Lewis Gaddis, *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War* (New York, 1972); Daniel Yergin, *The Shattered Peace*; and Wilfried Loth, *Die Teilung der Welt*.

Sources of Soviet Conduct". It quickly became the official version of the new policy against the Soviet Union, based on the long telegramme's perception of the USSR and applied with the Truman Doctrine. It was Kennan:

In these circumstances, it is clear that the main element of any U.S. policy toward the Soviet Union must be that of a long term, patient but firm and vigilant containment of Russian expansive tendencies⁷³... a policy of firm containment, designed to confront the Russians with unalterable counterforce at every point where they show signs of encroaching upon the interests of a peaceful and stable world.

7.2. Containment. The *political* conception of G. F. Kennan

George F. Kennan bases his conception on a specific *analysis of Soviet foreign policy*, on its traditions, its ideology, its ends, and means.

The tradition of foreign relations is not limited to the period after the Bolshevik revolution. Kennan expanded and looked backwards to a more geopolitical logic. For him, Russia and now the Soviet Union has been a country of open lands exposed to the multiple invasion of always hostile neighbours. This has created a perception of a traditionally hostile foreign world, and a instinctive feeling of acute insecurity.

Therefore, the *Soviet ideology* is considered of less importance for the explanation of actual *foreign* Soviet behaviour. The Marxist/Leninist dogma is a factor of legitimation for the political system and for its expansion *within the country*. This ideology does, however, not preclude a composed perception of its international relations. The USSR is profoundly pragmatic. This entails that the ideology can be adapted to the strategic and political needs. In a certain sense, the ideology depends on the international situation - *and not vice versa*. Kennan reports a course work for the linguistic perfection of Russian at the Soviet group in Riga, where they were asked to compose a newspaper

⁷³ George F. Kennan, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct", in his *American Diplomacy 1900-1950* (The University of Chicago Press: 1951. Reprinted from *Foreign Affairs*, vol.25, n.4, July 1947), p.119.

article in which the introduction of capitalism in the Soviet Union would be presented as the highest achievement of socialism.

This has also a certain effect on the elaboration of foreign policy *aims*. The main aim was, so Kennan, indeed expansionism. Yet, this expansionism was considered in the Tsarist imperialist tradition and to be understood as the attempt to create security zones and spheres of influence that depend *politically* on the USSR. Brief, the USSR tries to install *political (and non military)* hegemonies at its borders, not a World socialist revolution.

Finally, Soviet foreign policy uses *instruments (means)* at two levels: the official and the unofficial level (Komintern, Kominform). Everything is good if it improves the relative correlation of forces:

- a domestic policy based on strength (rise of military, policy, and heavy industry)
- the extension of external borders of the USSR whenever possible
- every opportunity to weaken the enemy: exacerbation of the domestic and intra-capitalist struggles; help of all the progressive (that means anti-imperialist) forces.

The aim is a political hegemony. Annexations are considered generally costly and less controllable. It is fundamental for Kennan to note that "the Kremlin is basically flexible in its reaction to political realities."⁷⁴

...its political action is a fluid stream which moves constantly, wherever it is permitted to move... toward a given goal... [but] there is no trace of any feeling that goal must be reached at any given time... [The Soviet diplomacy] is more sensitive to contrary force, more ready to yield on individual sectors of the diplomatic front when that force is felt to be too strong, and thus more rational in the logic and rhetoric of power.⁷⁵

Thereby, Kennan has given a Realist account of what appears to him as a Realist policy. Soviet foreign policy is perceived as a form of *power politics*, flexible, patient and pragmatic with untouchable spheres of influence. It is a policy that does not follow any ethical consideration, does not know the recognition of international law, at

⁷⁴ *ibid.*

⁷⁵ *ibid.*, p.118/119.

least in the Western sense, but which decides only in due analysis of its interest and the actual correlation of forces.

How should the United States react to it? Kennan develops two basic themes of U.S. foreign policy with the Soviet Union: containment and change.

The first is derived from the peculiar position of the US in the postwar system. On the one hand, only the US were able to contain the Soviet Union. On the other hand, one should be aware of its limited means. The result is a *particularistic approach*, where only five regions of the globe were judged of vital interest for the U.S. national security: US, GB, Germany, Japan, the USSR. The USSR should remain isolated. Furthermore, since the USSR were expansionist for traditional imperialist motives and not for its (socialist) ideology, and since the national security policy is defined in terms of the balance of power, the U.S. policy should be *anti-Soviet* and *not anti-communist*.⁷⁶ Finally

it is a sine qua non of successful dealing with Russia that the foreign government in question should remain at all times cool and collected and that its demands on Russian policy should be put forward in such a manner as to leave the way open for a compliance not too detrimental to Russian prestige.⁷⁷

Keeping these *conditions* of a successful U.S. foreign policy in mind, the actual policy should be conceived in a dynamic of three steps⁷⁸.

First, the containment of the political Soviet expansionism through the reestablishment of the confidence of those countries that are concerned by the Soviet expansionism. As means, one could attempt

⁷⁶ See G.F. Kennan, in: PPS 23, "Review of Current Trends, U.S. Foreign Policy", February 24, 1948. FRUS 1948, I, 526-527, as quoted by John Lewis Gaddis, "The Strategy of Containment", in his Thomas H. Etzold, eds., *Containment: Documents on American Policy and Strategy, 1945-1950* (New York, 1978), pp.25-37. For a different position which stresses the universalist and military aspects of Kennan's approach, see C. Ben Wright, "Mr X. and Containment", *Slavic Review*, vol.35, 1976, pp.1-32.

⁷⁷ George F. Kennan, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct", op.cit., p.119.

⁷⁸ See for this three step analysis: John Lewis Gaddis, "The Strategy of Containment".

to financially and economically strengthen these potential allies and to reduce the possibilities of Soviet influence through the exploitation of intra-socialist splits and anti-soviet nationalisms.

Second, the creation of a stable and multipolar balance of power.

it is clearly unwise for us to continue the attempt to carry alone or largely singlehanded, the opposition to Soviet expansion. It is urgently necessary for us to restore something of the balance of power in Europe and Asia by strengthening local forces of independence and by getting them to assume part of our burden... the present 'bi-polarity' will, in the long run, be beyond our resources.⁷⁹

Third, the long-term change of the Soviet perceptions of international relations. Containment is a means to this ultimate end.

the US has in its power to increase enormously the strains under which Soviet policy must operate, to force upon the Kremlin a far greater degree of moderation and circumscription than it has had to observe in recent years, and in this way to promote tendencies which must eventually find their outlet in either the breakup or the gradual mellowing of Soviet power. For no mystical, Messianic movement ... can face frustration indefinitely without eventually adjusting itself in one way or another to the logic of that state of affairs.⁸⁰

This last statement encloses some of the basic tensions of this approach. It can mean a form of détente policy waiting for the other system to adapt to a non expansionist policy and related to the hope that the internal (at that time Stalinist) system would gradually change. It can also be understood in the sense of forcing the Soviet system from the outside to collapse. Containment with a long-term vision has ever since been oscillating between

- A Cold War posture where open conflict was only avoided, because it became impossible with nuclear weapons and competition therefore replaced at all other levels (as e.g. arms race, economic welfare and so on)

⁷⁹ George F. Kennan, in: PPS 13, "Résumé of World Situation", Nov.6, 1947, FRUS 1947, I, pp.772-777.

⁸⁰ Kennan, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct", p.127/28. See also his hopes for internal reform that will overcome dictatorship and expansion: "America and the Russian Future", in his *American Diplomacy, 1900-1950* (reprinted from *Foreign Affairs*, vol.39, no.3, 1951), pp.136-143.

- A Détente posture where one expected from this vigilant (and not utopian) containment a long-term learning process of convergence.⁸¹ Some historical examples will illustrate this thrift.

7.3. The application of *containment*

The direct outcome of Kennan's approach was the *Marshall Plan*. The 5.5.47, a Policy Planning Staff within the State Department was set up and ordered to elaborate a financial and economic aid programme for Europe. Director of this committee was George F. Kennan. His aim was to diminish the impact of the after World War II economic distress which made Europe prone to fall into communist and totalitarian regimes and to profit the USSR. By tying aid to a political collaboration (OECE - OECD), Kennan attempted to start if not a unification process, so at least a concertation policy among European countries. This had to be seen for the future multipolar balance of power in Europe. That is, in response to a political, and not military, Soviet threat, the Marshall plan attempted to use financial and political aid for political goals.

Quite differently conceived was the well known declaration that became the Western declaration of the Cold War in March 1947, the *Truman Doctrine*.⁸²

I believe it must be the policy of the US to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities and by outside pressures.

Kennan was shocked when he heard about the speech that Truman had delivered. He opposed to the *universalist* character. As Wilson before, in an Idealist manner, Truman in a "power politics" manner gave a blank check to every possible movement in the World that claims to be anti-communist. He further criticised the *anti-communist*

⁸¹ The breakdown of the Soviet satellite system (and the USSR) after 1989 can be seen as a long-term effect of détente, but actually provoked by the Reaganite arms race. Both sides of containment, the aggressive and the defensive, are usually blend.

⁸² The Soviet pendant being Zdanov's two camp speech.

and not anti-Soviet outlook of the policy, and the military aspect of the doctrine against a specific political threat. Therefore, the Truman doctrine and the policy labelled containment made out of the first means of U.S. National Security Policy, containment, its only aim. Moreover, by alluding to the anti-communist character, it supported strongly the manicheic character of U.S. foreign policy - till its perversion of the struggle between the good and the evil, characteristic of the different strategies of *roll-back* or liberation. In other words, Kennan criticised the Truman doctrine for letting exactly that ambiguity happen that we have already encountered in the discussion of Soviet foreign policy (Chapter 6), namely, the one between a Realist inter-state relation of moderation and containment and a (ideological) transnational struggle for the demise of the enemy. Only if one subordinates the second to the first, then foreign policy works prudently, *realistically*. The aim should be peaceful change, not coercive change.

Therefore the Vietnam war can be seen as the final *collapse of Cold-War Containment*.⁸³ But before coming to the political (or even conceptual) and military failures, a short word about the *fundamental characteristics of U.S. foreign policy from 1947-1968*.

The starting point is the basic *bipolarity* of the post-war World. Bipolarity invites to think in *zero-sum* game terms. By having tied U.S. foreign policy to the dichotomy between liberty and totalitarianism (Truman), the U.S. policy is linked to this balance. The U.S. become the *world-policemen* to guarantee "freedom". As a logical result, the U.S. are held responsible for managing the border between the two blocs. This meant in policy terms global deterrence, the *pactomania* of Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, and eventually also the imbrication in whatever conflict at the borders, i.e. *frontier war*.

Thus, the U.S. find themselves trapped: for assuring a credible deterrence, they need to honour all their commitments. The failure to honour a commitment in one area might be seen by the rival as an indication that another commitment might not be honoured and

⁸³ John Spanier, *American Foreign Policy*, p.140.

induce him to test the defender's will. All commitments, whether eagerly sought or reluctantly accepted, become a matter from which it is perceived virtually impossible to withdraw without dangerous consequences. The fall of one frontier could be the beginning of the fall of a whole region (*domino-theory*). Furthermore, by being tied to the world balance of power, the U.S. cannot allow a too visible compromise or defeat, because the perception of power, its credibility is as important in a non-war situation as its actual state. So, in order to control the *psychological* factor power, which also Kennan repeatedly stressed, the U.S. found themselves in the universal obligation to *maintain the status quo*.

Vietnam was may be the most famous example of this less and less Kennan-like *containment* approach. Eugene Rostow, Presidential adviser once said:

In Indochina the North Vietnamese Government has broken the first and most basic rule of Peaceful Coexistence: that the frontiers of the two systems not be altered by military action... Yet, what North Vietnam, with Chinese backing, is attempting in Indochina - to conquer a country that the U.S. has agreed to protect - is the precise analogue of the Korean war of 1950-1953, or of the Soviet Union's early postwar probes against Greece, Turkey, and Iran.

Three *conceptual (or political) failures* of Vietnam can account for the U.S. disaster, the superpower losing against a relatively small scale liberation movement. First, there is the idea that the defense of South East Asia was crucial to the maintenance of world order. It was linked to the incapacity to make a distinction between *vital and peripheral interests*. U.S. credibility was actually more shaken by the turn the commitment took: not important enough to engage early with massive forces and too important to disengage once committed. Second, the Vietnam war suffered from the *status quo approach to containment*. A policy of stability which identifies instability and communism is at last obliged, by the very logic of this interpretation, to contain in the name of anticommunism all manifestation of popular dissatisfaction and all reformism. So, the dictatorship becomes a last, but possible solution of a policy that wants freedom, but is based on

stability.⁸⁴ Third and lastly, there was no awareness of *limited resources*, or to put it differently, of the mismatch between aims and means of foreign policy. Commitments in one sphere could furthermore distract resources from other obligation, see Johnson's "Great Society".

Finally, the *military failures* should also be shortly mentioned. Broadly speaking, it is the in-adaptation of the doctrine of *flexible response* to a guerilla war. *Flexible response* was conceived as a doctrine of *calibration*, i.e. a counterinsurgency concept to:

- orient Saigon' military and security forces increasingly toward counterguerilla tactics; and to
- identify the population with the Vietnamese government's struggle against communism (economic, political reform program).

It consisted in the progressive mounting in scope and intensity of military pressures against North Vietnam for the purpose of convincing North Vietnam, that it is in their own interest to cease aid the Vietcong and to respect the security of the Soviet Union. In other words, it amounted to an action strong enough to end the existing deteriorating situation but not so violent as to knit the North Vietnamese people closer together, to provoke Chinese intervention, arouse world public opinion, or preclude opportunities for an eventual negotiated settlement: keep for Hanoi a carrot for desisting as well as a stick of continued pressure.

It failed because the initiative passed to the other side: to proclaim that one intends to do only what is necessary to counter aggression and no more is, after all, to yield control over one's action to those undertaking the aggression. Instead of vaccinating South Vietnam, North Vietnam could by this step for step approach adapt itself. It misunderstood the guerilla tactic. The guerilla tactic consists in capturing the power of the government from within and to do so by eroding the morale of the army and by undermining popular confidence in the government. It is often a *hit-and-run tactic* engaging

⁸⁴ There are many other examples, as e.g. Chile in 1973, or El Salvador during the Eighties.

only those smaller and weaker governmental forces, they can defeat. "Fight if you can win, march if you can't" (Mao) Eventually, it will try to exploit popular grievances. Guerrillas gain the support of the peasantry because they successfully represent themselves as the liberators from colonialism or foreign rule, native despotic government, economic deprivation or social injustice. The U.S. counterguerilla tactic was de facto, however, *mainly military* ("search and destroy").

Vietnam is the failure of a foreign policy of the status quo, a policy of the "world policeman" which became, "in the long run, beyond our resources." (Kennan)

7.4. Conclusion: Détente as a consequence of the Vietnam War

This is certainly not the only way to explain the shift to a détente policy. Yet, it should not be underestimated. The Vietnam war had an impressive impact on U.S. strategic and domestic power.

On the *strategic level*, it put a stop to the U.S. hegemony in the Pacific. The winning of the Chinese guerilla tactics meant that it could be also successfully applied elsewhere. The U.S. strategy changed: it reintroduced the distinction between vital and peripheral interest in order to have more flexibility not to be engaged in all frontier challenges. It opened up to a vision of world politics, not only in terms of a constant sum game.

On the *domestic political level*, and may be most importantly, there has been a break of the bipartisan consensus in international affairs. This became visible in the Carter administration which tried to combine so different personalities as Vance (Secretary of State) and Brzezinski (Director of the National Security Council and principal adviser to the President). In the aftermath of the U.S. commitment in Vietnam, domestic affairs became more important and there was a clear attempt to curb Presidential power in foreign affairs (War Power Act).

On the *international political level*, the U.S. became more and more seen by the World Opinion as an imperialist and anti-democratic power. The Soviet Union tried to exploit this situation (arms race,

diplomatic offensive versus the Third World, India, e.g.). And the U.S., in turn, tried to reestablish a certain legitimacy through Carter's Human Rights Policy. One can agree with the Soviet interpretation that the Vietnam war changed the correlation of forces and induced the U.S. to a more collaborative stand.

This does however not mean that the new détente policy was actually that different from the concept of containment. It certainly derives from a prudent version, like e.g. the original Kennan one. Just to give two examples (Kissinger's détente will be analysed in more detail in chapter 9).

First, it is certainly more aware of the limitation of means available and asks then for a *particularistic policy*, the regionalisation of conflicts: the *Nixon or Guam-Doctrine* of July 1969:

First, the United States will keep all of its treaty commitments. Second, we shall provide a shield if nuclear power threatens the freedom of a nation allied with us or of a nation whose survival we consider vital to our security. Third, in cases involving other types of aggression, we shall furnish military or economic assistance when requested in accordance with our treaty commitments. But we shall look to the nation directly threatened to assume the primary responsibility of providing the manpower for its defense.⁸⁵

Second, it analyses clearly the threat as a Soviet and not that much Communist threat.⁸⁶ This opened the U.S.-Soviet Union and China triangle, i.e. it became possible to deal with the communists against the communists.

Yet, just to points already to a basic difference to Kennan: it lays exactly in the integration of a *permanent negotiation into the containment process*.

⁸⁵ Quoted in John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment. A Critical Appraisal of Postwar American National Security Policy* (Oxford University Press, 1982), p.298.

⁸⁶ The border case being the Third World countries where communist or related regimes appeared and the U.S. did not hesitate to intervene; or also the enormous pressure on Italy where the Communist Party was on the edge of becoming the major political force in the 70's not to let Communists into any national government; or finally the pressure after the Portuguese Revolution. Here anti-Sovietism and anti-communism collude.

Foreign Policy Decision-Making: Crisis Management



Introduction

This chapter is centred around three main points:

1. Its purpose is to highlight a second way to approach the analysis of foreign policy. The last lecture was concerned with the elaboration of the general security policy and its implementation. Now, we are more interested in the way to analyse specific situations and what actually occurred. We dealt before with the political analysis of diplomatic history, so is this the so-called approach of foreign policy decision-making.

2. By focusing on a particular event, a crisis, in the East-West relations at their turning point, it wants to complement the different stages of US-SU relations already introduced by the lecture on containment with its stress on the origins and the end of the Cold War.

3. The decision-making approach is one of the features of what has come to be called the *crisis of Realism*. Its focus on the governmental bargaining supplements the Realist explanation we have encountered so far. But it also contradicts at least to ascertain extern the assumption of *rationality* implicit in Realism. Not only is the Cuban Missile Crisis a turning point in *historical* East-West relations, but it also a *theoretical* departure of the established paradigm, Realism.

Before embarking on it, some preliminary remarks. First, foreign policy analysis is one of the two big sub-fields of international relations: the micro-approach, whereas the analysis of the international system would correspond to the macro approach.⁸⁷ Decision-making is thereby one of the possible approaches to foreign policy analysis. It is generally emphasised because the decisional phase is considered the central stage of the political decision-making process (pre-decisional, decisional, post-decisional).

Following John Steinbrunner⁸⁸, there are four general approaches to decision-making: the analytical approach, the cybernetical approach, the game-theoretical approach (intra-governmental game), the cognitive approach (impact of perception and cognitive processing). These four approaches are interlinked in three ways.

First, they are four models of continuously restricting focus: Model 1 shows the general context of a decision. Model 2 the organizational routines which *produce* information, alternatives and actions. Model 3 focuses within model 2 on the individual leaders and the bargaining between them.⁸⁹ Finally, model 4 focuses on the cognitive processes within the mind of the respective leaders.

Second, the four models require a rising complexity of *data* for the operationalisation in actual research.

Third, the four models are suited for a rising complexity of decision: model 1 for easy straightforward decisional situations; Model 2 for conflictual, but not urgent decisions; Model 3 for crisis (when bureaucratic decision too slow); Model 4 for immediate decision without reasoning to be made by one person ("catastrophe", when crisis management too slow). (See Table 1).

The following presentation will closely follow Allison and Steinbrunner, first by presenting the different explanatory models altogether, and then by explaining them with reference to the historical

⁸⁷ For a well developed version of this distinction, see P.A. Reynolds, *An Introduction to International Relations* (London and New York: Longman, 1980).

⁸⁸ John D. Steinbrunner jr, *The Cybernetic theory of decision*. (Princeton: 1974).

⁸⁹ These three models derive from Graham T. Allison, *Essence of Decision. Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Boston, Little Brown: 1971).

Table 1 Foreign Policy Analysis Models (Allison/Steinbrunner)

	Rational	Irrational
impersonal	Model I: Rational choice (foreign determinism)	Model II: Organizational process (domestic determinism)
personal	Model III: Governmental politics	Model IV: Cognitive process

analysis of the Cuban missile crisis by answering three questions: why did the SU decide to install missiles in Cuba? Why did the U.S. decide a blockade? Why did the SU remove the missiles from Cuba?

8.1. The analytic paradigm: the rational actor model

1. *The assumptions of the model*

1. The national behavior is explained like a rational choice for given aims and under determinate circumstances (alternatives and consequences of action are considered known).

2. After a cost-benefit analysis, the national interest (attitude) consists in finding the solution that maximises the relative aims, i.e. limited value integration. Action is chosen as a calculated solution.

3. Behaviour reflects therefore intention. It is consistent and explicable.

4. The learning process is causal. All those informations are included and processed that make means and goals consistent. This can happen either by "bottom-up" expansion including those conceptions that are more general than the fixed objective, or by "lateral" expansion including new information from the environment.

5. The decision is considered individual. The actor is the government.

6. The less one knows about actual decision-making, the easier one adopts this model. This creates a tendency to become a worst-case

analysis, i.e. to cover the informational lacunae (the uncertainty), one adopts a posture to think like the worst possible enemy.⁹⁰

7. This model has only a limited explanatory value. It can provide a summary of general tendencies by identifying the weight that the relative strategic gain/loss had in the actual behaviour and by focusing on the aims in question. It has a deterministic and impersonal tendency.

8. It is the first step of every analysis. Its explanatory value derives from the logical coherence of objective = motif, only one actor, and only one act *rationally* to choose.

The models' rigor stems from its assumption that action constitutes more than simple purposive choice of a unitary agent. What rationality adds to the concept of purpose is *consistency* among goals and objectives relative to particular action; consistency is the application of principles in order to select the optimal alternative.⁹¹

"Rationality refers to consistent, value-maximizing choice with in constraints."⁹²

2. Cuba: the first cut

As a general introduction to the Cuba Crisis, a few dates are necessary to recall. The crisis lasted eleven days, from 16.10.-28.10.62. It started with the recognition of Soviet missile sites in Cuba by an U.S. intelligence plane U2. The 22.10. the U.S. decided to react by imposing a sea-blockade (called *quarantine*). The crisis ended on October 28, 1962 with the Soviet decision to withdraw the missiles.

Now, how will the first model try to explain the installation, the blockade and the withdrawal? Following the first model, different hypothesis can be deduced for the *installation of missiles* in Cuba.

There is, first, the possibility that the Soviet Union looked for a bargaining barter for the withdrawal of US missiles in Turkey. Yet, there were too many missiles for just a bargain. On top of it, the

⁹⁰ *ibid.*, p.19.

⁹¹ *ibid.*, p.28/29.

⁹² *ibid.*, p.30. Original Italics.

increase in Soviet nuclear power, particularly for a possible first strike, was relatively much more important in Cuba than it had been in Turkey.

Second, the decision to install could be considered a provocation to induce the U.S. to attack Cuba, to isolate them in world opinion, splitting NATO, and producing a mirror image for Berlin. Yet, this contradicts the very assumption of the rational actor model. The USSR withdrew before attack. Furthermore, the comparison with Berlin appears rather weak. A U.S. attack could indeed trigger world opinion against the U.S., but not enough to allow an attack on Berlin to go non-retaliated. This would mean a major war.

Third, the missiles seemed to have been asked by Castro for the defense of Cuba. But, then why did the Soviet Union not install tactical (i.e. short range missiles)? They are easier to hide, but have the same defensive effect. Why risking such a high brinkmanship just for the defense of Cuba? In other words, the rational actor model asks for a check of the relation between ends and means in order to know if a hypothesis seems plausible.

Fourth, the Cuba crisis could be seen as a further example of Cold War politics: the probe of U.S. intentions (after Cuba I and the Geneva meeting between Chruchtchev and Kennedy) for the psychological impact on the balance of power (correlation of forces). Yet, why IRBM's (Intermediate Range Ballistic Missiles)? Why choose Cuba, and not Berlin as a probe?⁹³

Finally, it could be for the inexpensive improvement of Soviet missile power. "MRBMs [Medium Range Ballistic Missiles] and IRBMs based in Cuba would provide a swift, significant, and comparatively inexpensive addition to the Soviet capability to strike the United States." (52/53) The time to reach the U.S. would be reduced from 30 to 3 minutes. The closeness would allow for a higher precision and it would make Chruchtchev's plan to achieve missile

⁹³ Here, I think Allison goes wrong. One could imagine an incremental change where the provocation should be public enough, yet not too important to generate resistance. Continuous small humiliation is a better tactic, than a big one!

parity more probable. This explains the IRBMs not explained by any other hypothesis.

Yet, four main puzzles remain.

1. Why were MRBMs installed before the SAMs were operationalisable? Failing in time coordination contradicts planned effort.
2. The omission of camouflage
3. How to rationally expect the missiles not to be seen (U2s)?
4. Why to persist in the face of repeated and explicit U.S. warnings?

Let us then turn to the second question: why did the U.S. opt for a *blockade* (euphemistically called "quarantine")?

This appears as a straightforward rational choice in a nuclear bipolar world, where nuclear war has to be avoided and inaction leads to the enemy's expansion: it was exactly the kind of medium solution that allowed for time and crisis management. Since the other option, the surgical strike, seemed impossible (only massive one possible, and even then 10% of missiles can outlast the attack), the only reasonable choice seemed the blockade (which is, after all, a war act!).

Following this model, the Soviet decision to withdraw can be explained only with the blockade backed by an ultimatum.

8.2. The cybernetic paradigm: organizational process

1. assumptions

We will start also here with the assumptions of the model.

1. The central point of every cybernetic analysis is the closed feedback loop, the homeostatic system, i.e. the conception that a decision can be incorporated into a mechanical plan. The mechanism of the cybernetical decision works following the principle of *recipé*. The decision-maker has a given repertoire of operations that he implements sequentially by working on some feedback variables. The result, the final decision, corresponds to the end of a *sequence* and not

to *one concept*. In a certain way, the process, once started, is automatic, and therefore blind for any external influence.

2. In politics, the complexity of problems, thus the abundance of information to analyse and decisions to be made lead not to an immediate decision, but to its processing: *politics becomes a process*.

The first principle of processing is linked to *Standard Operational Procedures (SOP)*. Only those informations are retained that have a relevance for these already established programmes.⁹⁴ Decision is understood through its negative, i.e. as a processed selection and elimination of data.

The second principle of processing could be called *fragmentation for simplicity*. If the decision is considered complex (amount of data, amount of aims, conflicting aims, conflicting means...), there is a tension between the capacity to adapt and the principle of simplicity. This is resolved through the multiplication of the decision-makers. The decision becomes fragmented in little parts, whose bits are less conflictual and aggregate to the final procedural decision. The organization of modern bureaucracy is a logical outlet of this phenomenon.

The third principle of processing states that *internal evolution occurs as instrumental learning*. The exclusive concentration on pre-established feedback channels limits the possible impact of new arriving informations. The evolution only occurs if the SOP had no satisfactory results and led to its modification.

The fourth and final principle of processing is *coordination*. If complex organisations, the collective decision-maker, aim at producing reasonable decisions, it is necessary that the fragmented activities be coordinated at a certain level. Coordination does not mean integration, but that the established routines should have a certain logical coherence. Yet, since the simplicity of the individual decision is

⁹⁴ Take two examples of a *fixed repertory of action*. On Dec. 7th, 1947 (Pearl Harbour) repeated informations about Japanese preparations for an attack were always implicitly interpreted as attack from within, that is sabotage. The alert measures taken were those ready for this expected action. Therefore, the outside attack found the U.S. unprepared. See also the Russian total mobilization which precipitated WWI, because a partial mobilization did not exist in the standard military procedures.

needed to process the information, the coordination is rather rigid, inflexible and strongly structured. Routines hardly change.

3. Allison's model has specific assumptions. The national behavior reflects the independent output of multiple organisations. The governmental leaders can *disturb, but not control* substantially the behavior of those organisations he depends on for his decision and which are determined by routines (SOP). These routines determine the choice by the selection of available information, the management of a limited array of alternatives and possible implementations (the two stages of the SOP!): the limit of options.

2. Cuba: a second cut

The *organizational or cybernetic model* is able to solve some of the puzzles of the rational actor model. Let us take the more precise *installation*. There were by Oct. 24:

- 6 field sites of MRBM (with 4 launch positions and reload → max. 48, 42 present. 1100 nautical miles.)
- 3 fixed field sites of IRBMs with reload → max. 24. 2200 nautical miles.
- 42 jetbombers IL-28; 24 SAMs (anti-aircraft missile), 42 MIG 21 aircrafts, most-modern anti-tank missile SNAPPER + 22000 Soviet soldiers and technicians.

These timing and carrying out of the missile installation presents numerous puzzles:

1. SAMs that would protect against U2 did only start to work *after* the installation of offensive missiles.
2. There was no radar before the 24th.
3. There was no camouflage.
4. The missile sites looked exactly like the ones the U.S. knew through their intelligence from the USSR and were therefore easily recognizable.
5. The simultaneous building of MRBMs and IRBM which is strategically not very convincing. The first is strategically much more important. Why no concentrated effort?

6. Why was there a reload? Since the sides were not hardened, they were very vulnerable to a U.S. attack and would certainly not persist after a U.S. full strike.

7. Why an anti-tank missile?

The cybernetic model is able to answer convincingly many of these puzzles. For 3, 4, and 6 the answer is just that there existed SOPs that were carefully applied - even if they made no sense for a missile installation outside the Soviet Union. For puzzle 5 and 7, similarly, these were part of the standard of a Soviet battle regiment. The radar (puzzle 2) was also there, but just the (insufficient) standard one. The installation of new one not ready before 24th. Number 1 remains still inexplicable.

How would the cybernetic model tackle the decision for a blockade? The blockade arrived at a time too late to avoid shipments to Cuba, yet early enough not to react militarily, because they were still not operationalisable. Why were the sites not recognised before? There existed different hints from the French Secret Service, Cuban emigrants,... Nobody wanted to risk U2s to be shot down over Cuba. And after a clear indication that there were missiles, a *ten-day delay* was caused by different bureaucracies that quarrelled about the responsibility for this flight.

The wrong indication that a surgical strike was not possible, and that therefore only massive strikes had been prepared is the result of procedures and opinions in the Navy and the army in general. The army had classified the MRBMs as movable and then proceeded on a standard manner. In this case, 10% of the missiles were considered able to resist an attack. It were *civilians* that resurrected this option by showing that movable meant *within 5 days*.

The cybernetic model will try also to explain some parts of the withdrawal that remained unconvincingly handled by the rational actor model: Why has the USSR not understood the different signals that should deter its installation, not expected to be recognised before everything completed, and reacted so panically when the blockade was announced with the discovery? It seems that the Soviet ambassador to the U.S. was not informed of the installation, and that gene-

rally speaking the decision to install missiles was made by a small group in complete secrecy. But why? With regard to the unprepared reactions to the blockade, it remains unanswered. Within 36 hours, the British Intelligence knew that the U.S. knew, and by Saturday the 20th, two journalists (Alfred Friendly and James Reston) knew it, as well. The Soviet Union must have known (this is a post hoc ergo propter argument). The model cannot give any further answer.

8.3. The game-theoretical model

For the game-theoretical model, decision are an outcome of intra-governmental play, the overlap of which constitutes international relations.

1. Assumptions

1. Governmental action is seen as an agglomeration or collage of relatively independent decisions.

2. The analysis starts from the *positioning* of players that define what players may or must do: perceptions, propensities, and priorities stemming from position are sufficient to allow analyst to make reliable prediction (filtered through cognitive map of person).

3. The analysis focuses on the interplay of rational actors. It is a strategic approach. The decision is the *resultant* of respective bargaining power: bargaining advantages, skill and will to use them and other players' perception of it.

4. Its explanatory power is achieved by displaying the game: the action-channel, the positions, the players, their preferences, the bargain.

In other words, it captures the interplay and conflict between different leaders

Observers of organizational output are primarily attuned to persistence in established patterns, details of operation that follow from standard operating procedures, difficulties that arise from old programs played out in new

contexts, slips between semi-independent organizations, and complications stemming from leaders' attempts to force organizations to act contrary to existing goals...Nevertheless, the political leaders who sit atop government organizations do make major decisions about *which* organizations shall play out *what* programmes out *where*.

2. Cuba: the third cut

Since no informations are available about the internal political struggle within the Soviet elite, this third model can only shed light unto the second question, linked to the U.S. decision for a blockade. Its thesis is that

A series of overlapping bargaining games determined both the date of the discovery of the Soviet missiles and the impact of the discovery on the administration. An explanation of the politics of the discovery is consequently a considerable piece of the explanation of the U.S. blockade.

The main decision-maker was the President. The model will look at how the interplay of forces was articulated around him. The President's choice had to be done in a highly critical domestic context: the Bay of Pigs (Cuba 1), the by-elections where the "do-nothing"- politics should be exploited by the Republicans (Goldwater), the uncertainty about his pragmatic and not too anti-communist policy. On top of it, Chruchtchev had lied to him by repeatedly assuring that no missiles or *other offensive weapons* would be deployed in Cuba. Kennedy seemed convinced of a strong reaction.

Allison can reconstruct that those of his advisors in the Executive Committee that he had most confidence in, i.e. his brother and Minister of Justice Robert Kennedy, the Minister of Defence, Mc Namara and his personal adviser Sorensen had all opted for a non-military solution. For the others, the blockade would just postpone the intervention, giving the SU the time to make their missiles operationalisable and thereby reduce the credibility of an air-strike threat (because of possible retaliation *near the American border and not in Europe*).

The rapid abandonment of the nonmilitary path resulted less from the balance of arguments than from the intra-governmental balance of power.⁹⁵

When on Wednesday, the blockade was not working (no reaction from the USSR), the massive invasion was ordered. Yet, 1.30 p.m. a Soviet proposal reached the White House through the Chief of the KGB in Washington: withdrawal (under UN supervision) for Cuban guarantee. 6 p.m. secret letter from Chruchtchev arrived: same deal. Saturday, 10 a.m. new official letter. New Deal: Cuba against Turkey. 1 U2 shot down by SAM. Reaction should have been the attack of a SAM site. But following the softer line of his favorite advisors, Kennedy decided for waiting and answering to the first and not the second letter. The Soviet Union accepted.

8.4. Cognitive process

The basic idea and starting point of this model is the recognition of a mental capacity to impose a structure on data that would remain otherwise diffused and that this capacity is a fundamental force in the decision procedure. One could call this the *ordering principle of mind*.

1. Assumptions

There are two main assumptions. First, the assumption of the unconscious process, i.e. a part of the decision is made without any conscious direction. Second, there exist regularities in the cognitive operations which determine the decision-making procedure. These procedures do not concern the content, but the *structure* of thought; in other words, the way to interconnect thoughts and the way how information is managed with regard to already held beliefs. These different procedures are the *memory*, which is structured by general concepts tying particular ones and the *mind* that looks for simplicity and

⁹⁵ *ibid.*, p.202.

stability and attempts to tie memory and new informations together to form a coherent whole.

2. Application to political decision-making

Cognitive approaches are most useful in crisis situations or more generally situations of high *complexity*.

The dimension of complexity is the point of demarcation between the different models of decision, there where the decisions are most distinguished. (Steinbrunner)

There are different conditions of complexity:

The first is the condition of *incompatibility*, i.e. two or more values, vital objectives are touched by the decision and there exists a dilemma between the realisation of both. The second is the condition of *uncertainty*, that is, the imperfect correspondence between the information and the environment. It applies to all situations where probabilities have to be included into the decision. Finally, the condition of *dispersion*, i.e. decision-making power is dispersed on an number of individual actors and organisational units. Therefore, crisis and crisis management can be seen as an operationalization of complexity.

In situations of high complexity, the cognitive mechanisms tend to: eliminate exclusive choices by disconnecting the alternatives and pursuing them separately and to impose clear-cut, categorical, and not probabilistic judgements. When applied to Allison's third model, new data have to be taken into account.

Allison's model presupposes the decision to result from a intra-national game where political leaders bargain with their respective preferences, authority and influence at hand for the decision's formulation and final application. The resultant is therefore a compromise more or less complex. The image is that of a *force vector*.

For the theory of the cognitive process, politics, i.e. decision-making will be different. There is no rational argument implied. Moreover, personal interests prevail for public interests. Finally, the common search for a compromise is rendered difficult by the cognitive aspects of the decision: the concentration of one value, the restrictive selection

of the feedback processes that create a rigidity with few common points and with a greater independence. Thus, the decision-making will be less coherent, than if it had happened as mutual adjustments between analytical (rational) players.

8.5. Conclusion: why studying crises?

There are, following the initial distinction between macro and micro-IR, two *concepts of crisis*. The *macro concept* is concerned with the analysis of international relations seen from the international system. It means crisis in *interstate* relations, linking state interaction to governmental politics (as a part of domestic politics). In other words, it is classical Realism applied to a concept: crisis.⁹⁶

The crisis in international relations is a process of interaction which operates at superior levels of perceived intensity than the ordinary flow of events. It is characterised by: the interruption of the ordinary flow of politics, the limitation of time at disposal, the increased perception of a recourse to violence and by the significant implications for the stability of a system (or relational structures) in international relations.

The *micro concept*, however, refers to the analysis of international relations as seen from the view of one of its actors. The focus is on the decision-making process in which international situation (crisis) works just as an input in this process. *Crisis* means therefore both *international crisis* and *foreign policy crisis*.⁹⁷

Even though generally close to a more scientific approach of international relations, crisis management has known a split in two traditions, one more strictly analytical and one in which crisis is understood more as a historical phenomenon (even if the analysis then follows more behavioural patterns).

⁹⁶ This is the approach of McClelland, Glenn Snyder, and Oran Young in C.F. Herrmann, ed., *International Crisis: Insights from Behavioural Research* (London: Collier-Macmillan and New York: Free Press, 1972).

⁹⁷ See for this distinction and for a good introduction to crisis management: Phil Williams, *Crisis Management* (London: Martin Robertson and New York: Halsted Press, 1976).

The analytical approach is represented for example by Spanier and Charles Herrmann. Their definition of the crisis focuses on its specific elements

- a) the perception of an important threat for the security of at least a part of the challenged state (Spanier) or against vital interests of the decisional unit (the government) [survival of the unit] (Herrmann);
- b) aspect of surprise, of non-anticipation of the threat;
- c) the perception of the actors to have only a limited time-frame for decision;
- d) the possibility of war (Spanier and Williams).

Yet, this has been contested. So do Snyder/Diesing and also Michael Brecher⁹⁸ not believe in the universality of the aspect of *limited time* for a crisis: e.g. the Berlin crisis went on for two years. Brecher (and eventually also Herrmann) exclude the *aspect of surprise*: being himself specialised on the Middle East, Brecher quotes the closure of the straits of Tiran by Nasser in 1967 which was expected both by Israel and the United States. Williams and Young, by emphasising the systemic aspect imply that *one of the two superpowers must be involved* (linking everything to the central bipolar balance).

The historical approach conceives crisis and crisis management as a typical *phenomenon of the post-war nuclear stalemate*. At first, crisis is seen as an intermediate situation between war and peace (Brecher, Snyder/Diesing, Lebow).

Nearly all wars have been preceded by a crisis, although obviously not all crises end in war. The crisis is a sort hybrid, neither peace, nor war, but which contains elements of both including the potential to change peace into war.

This opens up for a cross-historical comparative study of crisis (Stanford project of conflict and integration, directed by Robert North, Princeton project for 1914). But Williams distinguishes crises even with regard to the means form their solution: the nuclear arms. War is not anymore a reasonable instrument of politics, not anymore a le-

⁹⁸ Michael Brecher, *Decisions in Crisis: Israel '67 and '73* (London and Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980).

gitimate objective when the two superpowers or more generally nuclear arms are involved. Thus, decision-makers are obliged to stop the conflict (crisis) before the dangerous stadium. Pre-war crises (till 1950, Korea, because nuclear weapons were not yet perceived as qualitatively different) contained all the elements - except the nuclear one. Therefore, in this understanding, the cross-historical comparison are historically limited to the superpowers' crisis after World War II.

And this also explains the *close relationship between the thought of classical realism (and a Realist version of Soviet approaches of peaceful coexistence) and the concept of crisis*, reflected especially in the basic ambiguity of crisis management. On the one hand, the common aim of all decision-makers involved is the *peaceful solution* of confrontation. The success of crisis management depends on the capacity to avoid a war. The war is the pathological state to terminate. The common interest in avoiding war prevails. The crisis is the common enemy. Yet, in the same time, crisis management is an exercise of winning, or, in other words, *Clausewitz reversed*: politics is war with other means. Here, crisis appears as zero-sum game, where the other is the enemy.

Again, we have this tense mix of bilateral competition and cooperation for the common and particular interest, that we met already in containment, peaceful coexistence, and détente. It is therefore not obvious and should be shortly discussed now, if Allison's models mean really a departure from Realism as he claims in his critique of the rational actor model. In a sense, Allison answers this question himself. He accepts a limited explanatory power to Realism (as a rational actor approach) and its usefulness, when data are not available and one has to argue and think in terms of a black box. The different models are not contradictory, but supplementary.

True, the 'scientific' turn whereby international anarchy, the rational calculation of ends and means in a system of self help (i.e. the National Interest) might be the minimum for a foreign policy *elaboration*, but certainly not for its analysis. Thus, the different models might not be supplementary. Supplementary models presuppose that the range set by the first cannot be broken by the following

and so on, i.e. that explanations *excluded* by the rational actor model would not turn out being still possible ones by looking to the other models. Yet, this is a possibility. Model 2 and 3, as much as Steinbrunner's cognitive approach open the possibility for *irrational* behaviour, i.e. that means and ends are not matching. The rational actor model can only include this by pointing to the dependent nature of this reasoning. It is by positing an ideal of rationality that unexpected (irrational) behaviour appears as puzzle to be analysed with supplementary means. Therefore, it could be argued, it is not contradictory.

This argument is partly right. Yet, as far as this rational foreign policy is concerned, it is not obvious that a deviation from the so-called National Interest will always be sanctioned by the international system. The assumption of a self-help system is that the not-following of the best track (rational policy) will result in being punished for it - in the extreme case by annihilation. Now, having posited the possible irrationality of more than one actor, new possibilities of a *rational*, i.e. for the survival best combination of policies arise. This is actually handled by Realism as we have seen in chapter 5, where differentiations of the international system have been introduced by writers like Aron, Kissinger, and Wolfers. Yet, this specific solution is to point to a different international system to which a different rationality applies. It is the opinion of this author, that one should actually take an approach like Kennan's more seriously: trying to establish specific national foreign policy traditions that are idiosyncratic enough to allow for *different rationalities* to be applied for the explanation of international behaviour.⁹⁹ In this context, rationality still holds¹⁰⁰ - but not towards different ahistorical international anarchical systems, but towards national policy traditions. It is thereby an interesting research programme to see

⁹⁹ For a modern research programme taking traditions more seriously, see e.g. foreign policy analysis as national discourse analysis by Ole Wæver, "Three Competing Europes: German, French, Russian." *International Affairs*, vol.66, no.3, July 1990, pp.477-494.

¹⁰⁰ In a sense there must be a rationality assumption somewhere in the behaviour, otherwise explanation as such becomes impossible.

how Realism has imbued these traditions to such an extent as to appear as a kind of universal rationality.¹⁰¹

Thus, foreign policy analysis in its integration of governmental and domestic politics, taken to his most historical roots is certainly a major criticism of whatever simple more scientific Realism. But it has also the seeds to make the even loose conception of Realism explode, where not the explanation of a specific outcome, but just its range is given: the sole reference to the international structure might actually hide possible explanations. The systemic and the unit view are not always two phases of one and the same analysis, but two competing explanations.¹⁰²

¹⁰¹ This is part of the Ashley/Walker research programme. See especially Richard K. Ashley, "The Geopolitics of Geopolitical Space: Toward a Critical Social Theory of International Politics." *Alternatives*, vol.XII, no.4, pp.403-434.

¹⁰² Argued from a slightly different viewpoint, this is also one of the implications of J. David Singer's famous "The Level-of-Analysis Problem in International Relations." In Klaus Knorr and Sidney Verba, eds., *The International System: Theoretical Essays* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961), pp.77-92.

Interlude.

**Détente and the
Crisis of Realism**

The purpose of this interlude is twofold.

On the one hand, it wants to draw and to develop on those features we had already encountered before, that let arise anomalies for the Realist explanation. On this theoretical level, the big puzzles, i.e. the exact role and meaning of the balance of power or bureaucratic decision-making will be assessed in order to set the ground on which the theoretical discussion from 1970-1990 occurred. The very way of conceiving of international affairs, and also of defining accordingly the academic discipline had to be redone and *is still in a process of redoing*. Realism has lost its hegemonic grid, not all its appeal. It has certainly not been replaced by a new all-convincing world-view, or a new core of the discipline. Neo-Realism, International Political Economy, and Critical Theory are new challengers for this core and will be introduced in the third part of the lecture series.

On the other, this theoretical disarray coincided with a kind of East-West relations that are profoundly the most Realist, i.e. pragmatic and non-ideological, American policy ever applied, Kissinger's *détente*. Moreover, it displays besides some traditional features of containment, also some new elements of world politics, as e.g. the integration of political and economic foreign policy. Hence, multipolarity and the rise of the South as an independent actor became features of the official doctrine.

This interlude can therefore be seen as a joint, a hinge between the old Cold War Realism and East-West politics and a new world rule even more encompassing. When the defenders of *peaceful coexistence* and *containment* appealed to the violence reducing impact of these policies, because they turned attention and action away from the strictly military field, they paid sometimes only lip-service to the real competition which is going on in future world politics that will be characterized by:

- intense economic competition between Japan, Europe, the U.S., and the MNC's (in changing alliances), from which other countries can only hope to profit indirectly (as in the military bipolar balance before)
- ideological, ecological and military competition by the central powers to defend their status *through exclusion* (e.g., a *mexicanisation* of the Southern Mediterranean rim) of the poor.

9

The Policy of Détente: Kissinger and the end of the focus on security



9.1. Kissinger's general approach

We have in chapter 5 already presented Kissinger's general approach with his distinction of a *legitimate and revolutionary* international system. The Soviet Union, as the U.S.' main contender is analysed as a potentially revolutionary power - but not necessarily so. The main point of Kissinger's détente policy is therefore close to Kennan's original project: containment where necessary *and* inducement to change and making the Soviet Union herself interested in becoming a legitimate power.

He opposes the extreme and traditional moralism of American foreign policy, that is either *isolationist* ("we do not dirt our hands in the marasma of foreign policy"), or *messianic* ("we save the world by teaching everyone else to be as we are"). He tries to establish a foreign policy *not* influenced by this wrong analogy of domestic morals and politics to the international ground.¹ Keeping to the Realist pragmatism, he attacks the Republicans, because they traditionally confound foreign policy with the working of a policeman; and the demo-

¹ See for example his introduction to *The White House Years*. Boston: Little Brown, 1979; and his collection of essays, *American Foreign Policy*. New York, 1977/3rd ed.

crats for confounding foreign policy with pedagogy. Not communism as an ideology, but superpower capabilities and the hostility of Soviet Union should be considered the reason for the present conflictual relations.

Therefore foreign policy has to start from a careful and sober analysis of the existing international system, of the U.S. power and possible aims. Kissinger analyses the international system as a *multi-dimensional* one, i.e. power is to be distinguished in its specific areas. This means especially the resurgence of the economic international system *and* of the possible *integrated* use of *economic power* in foreign policy. In this conception, power ceases to be a zero-sum concept, meaning that the loss of power in one field can be upset in another. Obviously such a conception had a certain attractiveness for a U.S. heavily embarking (and losing) in Vietnam.

This analysis links up with Kissinger's awareness of the limited resources for the U.S., the recognition of U.S. limited *means*. The general *aim* is the maintenance of a balance of power that is potentially multipolar.² If one splits up the world in a political/military and an economic balance of power, the U.S. thought playing on two triangles: a USSR-U.S.-China military triangle and a U.S.-Europe-Japan economic triangle. The U.S. would play the central role because it would link up both balances of power. Linking up or *linkage* becomes the central concept of Kissinger's foreign policy of *détente*.

9.2. The policy of *détente*

Kissinger wants to use a stabilised balance of power system to induce the Soviet Union to be come part in an *international legitimate order*

² Japan, but especially Europe as new poles are handled in a particular and recurrent scheme, i.e. they are welcome for a burden sharing, but unwelcome for power sharing. This is mirrored in Europe for the role of the U.S.: welcome as the provider of security and permitting diplomatically the Europeans to play the "progressive Western part"; unwelcome, because of the confusion of American with Western or even universal interests.

which has nothing to do (at least, in the first place) with *justice*, but with

international agreement about the nature of workable agreements and about the permissible aims and methods of foreign policy.³

For the *means employed*, Kissinger concentrates on one of the two triangles, the central military tripolar balance which is supposed to rule international order and is *therefore also the locus of change of exactly that order*. The alliance and the Third World remain subordinated to this central locus of international politics.

Central becomes the politics of *linkage*. It consists in a universalising approach to politics trying to intermingle different policy areas in order to get leavy for diplomatic advance on different fronts. In fact, it implies two slightly contradictory elements. First, it attempts to integrate the Soviet economy into that of the Western international system to such an extent that the USSR would have few motives for upsetting the international status quo (Kissinger's anti-Versailles trauma). Second, It tries to induce Soviet political cooperation by extending economic concessions only as a reward of good behavior.

For this rather complicated and flexible foreign policy to work, Kissinger tries to insulate (in the typical Realist manner of the primacy of foreign policy) foreign policy from two main 'negative influences'. First, he must try to *reduce external commitments* that overburden the U.S. capabilities. In this context can be seen the disengagement from Vietnam and especially the Guam (or Nixon-) Doctrine⁴, and also the shift to more "officious" aid, than military interventions (see Chile). Both turns are still acknowledged in present U.S. foreign policy. Second, Kissinger has definitely tried to insulate foreign policy from internal (bureaucratic) constraints. To a certain extent, therefore, his first position as National Security Adviser (with a 'weaker' Secretary of State for facade) was more congenial to his conception than being himself Secretary of State and exposed to domestic

³ Henry A. Kissinger, *A World Restored* (London: Gallancz, 1957), p.1.

⁴ See chapter 7.

criticisms and control. To be noted is also his system of *back-channel*, i.e. the running of parallel sets of negotiation on the same issue: one public by subordinates, one secret by Kissinger (see China).

In brief, Kissinger's *détente* can be seen as a *containment policy of negotiable linkage*. The USSR as a potential revolutionary power should be entangled in a complex relationship in order to let the U.S. pursue a moderate foreign policy: containment, but not only with the stick, but with the carrot. The economic and financial (and political) help was made dependent on the international behavior of the USSR. *Détente is a sequentialised flexible mix of linked confrontation and collaboration.*⁵

9.3. Problems of linkage

1. U.S. dependence on the Soviet Union for the maintenance of stability in the Third World

We had already noticed in chapter 6, that the Third World was the region where the principle of *peaceful coexistence* did not apply, Kissinger, aware of this tension, tried to link up economic and political bargains on the central balance between the United States and Soviet Union with Soviet behaviour in the Third World. Sometimes, it worked:

- Moscow agreed in 1970 not to build a submarine base in Cuba
- Syria withdrew from Jordan
- Pressure on Moscow helped to avoid India's invasion of West-Pakistan in 1971

Yet, generally it did not for the simple *overestimation of Soviet will and possibilities and of the central balance in general, to influence world politics*. The primary example being Vietnam where it was not

⁵ For convincing critiques of Kissinger's policy, see John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, chapter 10; and Stanley Hoffmann, *Primacy or World Order: American Foreign Policy since the Cold War* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1978), chapter 2.

sure at all if the Soviet Union could actually do very much to stop the Vietcong.

2. *U.S. dependence on domestic politics for the control of linkage instruments*

Let us start with the "economic carrots". The ongoing back-and-forth of the Soviet admission to the most-favored nation clause was finally lost as bargaining chip, because linked to Russian emigration policy (Jackson-amendment). Another example is the obviously strong bargaining chip of grain sales. Yet, in Kissinger's times they were not even negotiable, because of the strong reaction by farmers and Dept. of Commerce.⁶

Then take the flexibility of the "military sticks" or what is left after the *War Power Act* that requires the Congress' consent for any military involvement of more than 60 days.

The basic flaw lays in a may be unfortunate, but real *overestimation of the possibility to isolate foreign from domestic politics*. Kissinger has been extremely sarcastic about the Jackson amendment. It is one of his key examples for *bad* foreign policy.⁷ But it is also somewhat *unrealistic* to base a foreign policy on a utopian capacity to isolate foreign means from domestic interests and lobbies - especially in the U.S.

3. *Complete misconceiving of North-South relations*

Instead of coping Third World issues as not automatically part of a zero-sum calculation, Kissinger did not take multipolarity as meaning a more inert and independent Third World where short term strategic losses meant long-term gains for the USSR. Here, traditional bipolarity was uphold. In other words, Kissinger treated the Third World as an appanage of the central triangular balance and was by

⁶ Carter succeeded to decide a grain embargo against the USSR (after the invasion of Afghanistan). But it was sabotaged in its implementation.

⁷ Repeatedly In his *The Years of Upheaval* (Boston: Little Brown, 1983).

this logic forced back in the contradictions of traditional Cold War policies.⁸

The U.S. supported the White governments in *Southern Africa* at a time, when Angola and Mozambique decolonized, and South Africa and Rhodesia were under internal strain. It helped *Pakistan* in the crisis of 1971, even though it repressed violently the Bangla-Desh upheaval, in order to please China (against India). It allowed unlimited arms sale for *Iran*. Yet, not only did the shah not avoid oil price raising, but his modernisation policy put the Iran under a societal strain that Kissinger, at least in his writings⁹ was well aware of. American foreign policy followed the traditional modernizing approach and failed.

Take also the *Middle East crisis*, where the Yom Kippur war of 1973 caught U.S. unprepared.¹⁰ Then, the civil war during and after independence in *Angola* 1975, where the U.S supported two fractions which were, in turn, supported by Zaire and South Africa - not exactly popular in Angola or elsewhere in Africa at that time. Then finally the CIA engagement in *Chile* 1973!

4. *Mishandling of the relations within the alliance*

This is the result of linkage politics which ties every political change to the central balance and implicitly to the politics of the central actors. Flexibility abroad meant discipline within the alliance. But the carrots and sticks that might be useful for an opponent power are not easily used against allies. In the *Cyprus* crisis 1974, the U.S. did not succeed in stopping the Greek intervention (replacing Macarios) and had to accept the biggest strain on its military alliance since its

⁸ For a discussion, see the remarks on the implementation of containment in chapter 7.

⁹ See his *American Foreign Policy* for the discussion that economic development does not necessarily imply political development and stability. For a wider discussion of theories of political development, see chapter 15.

¹⁰ Yet, Mohammed Sid-Ahmed argues that Kissinger wanted the war to break out in order to use his leverage for a more stable Middle Eastern settlement. Ex post rationalization? A pattern of American foreign policy: see the Second Gulf War?

existence. Another and perhaps the most influential decision was undoubtedly to break up Bretton Woods. The allies were not consulted, the *ex-post* agreement was not held. Another example is that Japan was not even informed about the Chinese-American rapprochement (before Kissinger's first trip to China in 7/1971). The U.S. intervened also heavily in Mediterranean politics with its excessively strong reaction against Eurocommunism (especially after the Portuguese Revolution 1974) for Spain, Portugal and Italy. Finally, and last but not least, Kissinger's initiative that turned into a *joke* of 1973 as a *European Year* (making the nice distinction particularly appreciated by the Europeans that the U.S. as a superpower had world interests, whereas Europe had only particular ones.)

As the Soviet Union's approach of peaceful coexistence and the Cof does not give a clue how to handle intra-socialist relations, Realism seems unfortunately tied to a strong balance of power politics. It can explain why alliances arise, but more difficulty how they work.

9.4. Conclusion

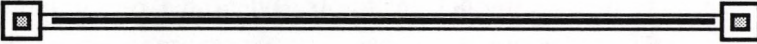
1. *Detente as a conclusion of containment policy*

Kissinger came very near in implementing the original outlook of containment policy, as envisaged by its architect George F. Kennan. The de-ideologicalisation of international affairs, the central concept of containment implemented through a mix of cooperative and conflictual postures, the attempt to integrate and thereby to moderate the Soviet Union, without giving in... are all features of the original enterprise - cleaned of their typically *exceptionalist* overtones they acquired during the Cold War area. Because Kennan and Kissinger tried to avoid the two typical poles of American foreign policy, the oscillation between moral integrity and isolationism and moral responsibility and intervention, they might indeed be called *Realist* similar to the *Realpolitik* of the European 19th Century.

2. *Détente as the breakdown of a traditional diplomacy in a new international order*

Kissinger tried to integrate the economic sphere into the *high politics* level. Yet, economic foreign policy making, the integration of transnational economic actors, even though not excluded by the strategic thought was rarely implemented. Although Kissinger alluded to the multipolarity and the increasing elusiveness of power, he still believed in the great power management capability for the international order. The state has, however, lost power and the aggregation of states does not constitute the international system anymore (if it ever did). A central balance cannot rule international relations and the military dependence of the allies does not automatically entail superpower's authority. External relations cannot be isolated from domestic politics as the primacy of foreign policy requires. International relations and politics have become more complicated than the Realist model assumed. *Linkage* is already there, and not to be introduced by conscious policy-making. *Détente* is simultaneously the perfection of superpower-diplomacy in the 20th Century and the symbol for its decline. It just matters less. We need a new paradigm for the understanding of international politics.

International Relations in a disarray: the Inter-Paradigm Debate



The general context of the research in the 60's and 70's was *Détente*. In a certain sense Allison's research was a rationalisation of the need for superpower partnership, strongly felt after the Cuban crisis. Keohane & Nye's "interdependence literature" reflects the new emphasis on economics of the U.S. administration. From 1969 the Nixon-Kissinger team embarked in international politics, with the consciousness of US military limitations in general (Vietnam) and relative to the USSR (SALT) hence deciding to link military issues to economic carrots as to "tame Soviet expansion". Kissinger's *détente* policy was intended as a mixture of co-operative and confrontative elements aiming at containment by different means. "Issue areas" and "linkages" were, at least declared elements of day-to-day U.S. foreign policy. In 1979, with the events of Afghanistan and Iran, the world entered the "second cold war" and Waltz published his "Theory of International Politics". Before embarking on these different reformulations and criticisms of Realism that started in the 70s, let us first summarize the state of the art at that time of Realism in crisis. The main aim is to show the increasing widening of the picture that that underlies international studies and the resulting fragmentation of research.

10.1. The widening of the field: a new conception of IR

The starting point of this approach is the idea of the realist paradigm in a crisis¹¹. During the long years of legitimated "puzzle-solving", realism was confronted with a number of problems:

- the different level of analysis (Singer),
- the fiction of a monolithic state (Marxist and pluralist critiques),
- the discussion of the concept of rationality and the question of perception (the works of e.g. Deutsch, Allison, Jervis in the USA, Grosser in France and Senghaas in Germany).

Yet only in the aftermath of the behaviouralist revolution, did these problems become anomalies. There has been a great deal written about the illusion of a "traditionalist- behaviouralist" debate, or the Bull-Kaplan debate. Since behaviouralism criticised the normative bias of the traditionalist, more historical ("heuristic") methodology, the dispute was not primarily about content, but about methods. One can be a Realist and a Behaviouralist at the same time, as John Vasquez cogently argues¹². Behaviouralism and its positivist assumptions came, in turn under severe attack by more radical scholars. This resulted in, for instance, the so-called "Positivismusstreit" in the German sociology between the Frankfurt school and Popper.

Nevertheless, behaviouralism planted the seed which eventually weakened the dominance of realism, because *it destroyed the distinctiveness of International Relations*. IR became part of "political" (thus social) "science", domestic and international politics being the same matter, but in different fields. The legitimated boundaries of IR-study were softened, the anomalies became legitimate research. The focus on the domestic system made it possible to analyse transnation-

¹¹ See e.g. Hayward R. Alker & Thomas J. Biersteker, "The Dialectics of World Order: Notes for a future archeologist of international savoir faire." *International Studies Quarterly*, vol.28, 1984; Michael Banks, "The Evolution of International Relations"; K.J. Holsti, *The Dividing Discipline. Hegemony and Diversity in International Theory* (Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1985).

¹² See John Vasquez, *The Power of Power Politics*.

al actors and bureaucratic decision-making, for instance. Interdependence became the new fashion. Economics, the market, attracted general attention. The "Political Economy of..." was a standard title of graduate papers in the 70's. Hence, even though most of the scholars were still realists, they tackled new puzzles, using concepts coming from other disciplines. *The just quoted concepts which usually are seen as part of the pluralist paradigm developed in conformity with routine. There was no "gestalt-switch".*

The *internal history*¹³ will now account for the description of the enlargement of the mainstream IR researcher's world-view and the general view that emerged in the late 1970's. Two contributions will be briefly discussed: Foreign policy analysis and linkage theories.

In *foreign policy analysis*, Allison's work can be seen as a violent critique of at least one assumption of realism: rationality. The traditional realist approach, Allison's first model, is however not entirely dismissed. It is the recognized first step of any analysis of foreign policy behaviour: under the structural constraints and the given objective aim of each state to survive, each state will attempt to find the optimal means-goals solution. The government is the unique actor and treated as a *black box*. If no more information is available the analysis must stop here. Otherwise it must include model 2 and 3. These three models are superposed according to the increasing complexity of the decision; from the easy rational one, to the bureaucratic and finally the crisis management.¹⁴

Kenneth Waltz is justified in asserting that Allison is as state-centred as the realists, without providing a more satisfactory view of the state/society than the classical thinkers do. Since IR for Waltz is on the structural level only the first model is within IR theory, the others are foreign policy analysis approaches. Realists generally, and also Allison, respond to the attack of the rationality assumption by using the concept of "bounded rationality" or by arguing the assump-

¹³ See chapter 3 for the concepts used in this chapter.

¹⁴ See chapter 8.

tion as being unnecessary.¹⁵ The critique of this move has already been carried out at the end of chapter 8.

But the other part of the literature, which had a boom in the 1960's and 1970's, requires some more consideration: *linkage approaches*, i.e. the interaction at different levels of the external and internal realms of world politics (most prominently defended by James Rosenau). By neither denying nor exaggerating the importance of national boundaries, this framework highlighted *transnationalism* and foreign policy through the societal context of other nations. Boundaries became the organizing point for a world of flows, passing by borders, by states, by actors. Actors are functionally defined as structures able to influence flows¹⁶. They operate in an international environment which includes the domestic realms of other states. Merle's view is rather typical. After a long discussion of the inappropriateness of a state-centric view, IR is defined by a systemic theory; IR is an international system ("closed", i.e. no longer allowing the export of conflicts) and without a central authority. This is the fundamental cause for the "dysfunctioning" of the notoriously conflictual system. This is also the Realists' fundamental assumption. Hence we are still within Waltz' logical priority (of the international structure), considering states as the organizing principle of IR theory.

Nevertheless the world view has become a kind of *global net* (see Figure 3), with new "puzzles". Insights concerning linking points were added by the increasing work on perceptions, which is simultaneously an outgrowth of cybernetics and of decision-making approaches on the micro-international level (domestic) as on the macro level (perceptions in bargaining processes, highlighted especially during crisis). The approximate world view of mainstream IR can be described by Figure 3.

¹⁵ See Robert O. Keohane, *After Hegemony. Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984) for the first and Kenneth Waltz, "Response to my critics", for the second position.

¹⁶ See the already quoted definition by Marcel Merle in his *Sociologie des Relations Internationales*, p.90.

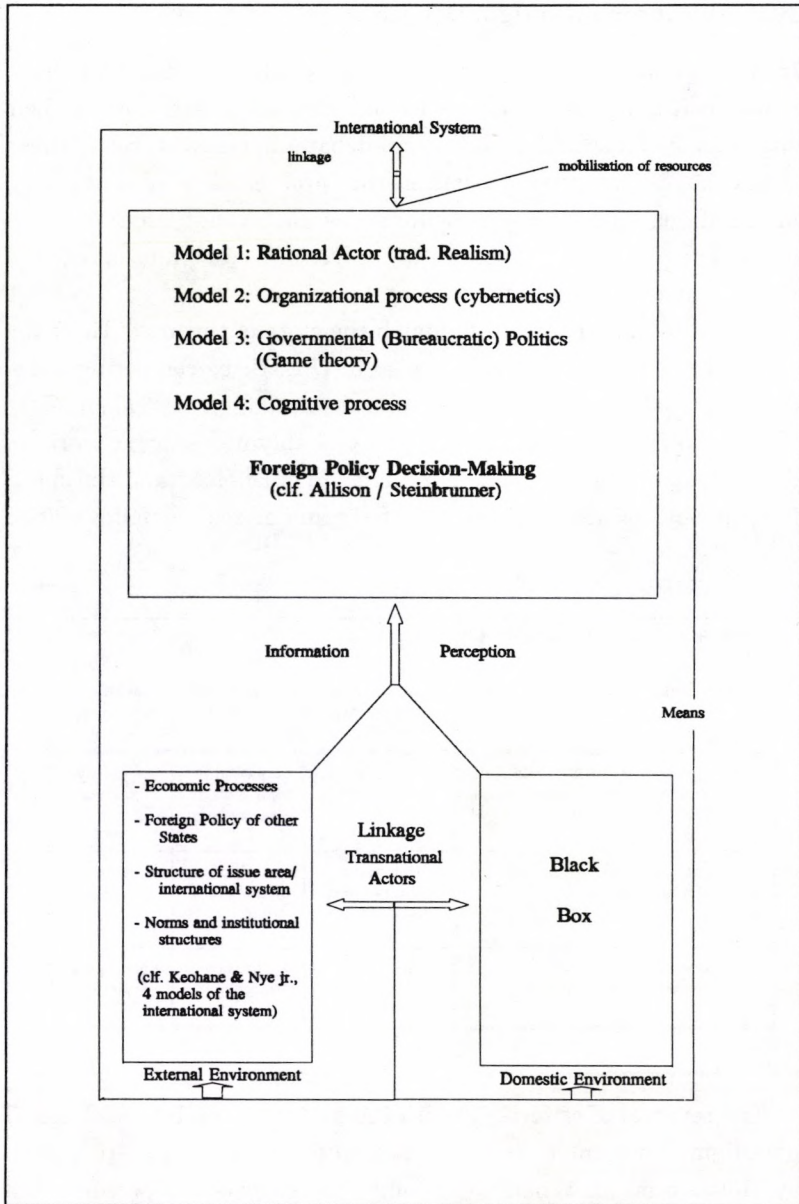


Figure 3 The global net. The choice of an input-output model à la Easton should stress the impact of the behavioural revolution on the mapping of the *international* in the 70's.

10.2. The Inter-Paradigm Debate

In this context, it is not too surprising that scholars thought to have found in Kuhn's history of science an adequate description of their situation. Kuhn speaks of "paradigm-debate" in times of crises. These crises have five characteristics: the proliferation of competing articulations (theories), the willingness to try out anything, the expression of explicit discontent, the recourse to philosophy, and finally the debate about fundamentals.

This description seemed to match the state of the art of IR at the beginning of the 70s. In IR and also in IPE, three competing paradigms are said to exist: Realism, pluralism, and structuralism.

For K.J.Holsti the "sufficient, and probably necessary, criteria to distinguish between genuine paradigms in our field"¹⁷ and the specific principle of the triptych can be summarized as follows (See Table 2).

Table 2. Holsti's *Divided Discipline*.

CRITERIA	PARADIGMS	CLASSICAL TRADITION	GLOBAL SOCIETY	NEOMARXISM
(1) causes of war and conditions of peace /society/order; "an essential subsidiary problem is the nature of power" (p.9)		= central problematique	conditions for global community	inequality/ exploitation
(2) the essential actors and/or units of analysis		diplomatic-military behavior of states	web of transborder interactions	class/ social groups
(3) images of the world/system/society of states		anarchy	world society in a global economy	core - periphery

The reversal of criteria (1) with the answer given by the classical paradigm is not due to an easier presentation as a figure. It is done by Holsti himself. When he presents the criteria, he presents the

¹⁷ *The Dividing Discipline*, p.11.

realist problematique which he must obviously repeat once he analyzes the "Classical tradition" (p.9/10). Holsti is, of course, a Realist.

This threefold view of IR/IPE is, however, not limited to traditional realists. Michael Banks, disciple of John Burton's "World Society" approach, establishes a similar triptych¹⁸ (See Table 3).

Table 3. Michael Banks' three paradigms.

PARADIGMS CRITERIA	REALISM	PLURALISM	STRUCTURALISM
Basic image	"Billiard-ball"	"cobweb"	"multi-headed octopus"
Actors	states	states & others	classes
Dynamics	force	complex social movements	economics
Dependent variables	explain what states do	explain all major world events	explain inequality and poverty
Scope of the study of IR	interstate relations	relations between all actors & market & nationalism	IR = surface phenom- ena of the totality of social relations and modes of production

He gives different names and includes regime analysis out of the "interdependence" tradition within the "Global Society" which he calls "pluralism".¹⁹

Out of this apparent irreducibility of values, Holsti and Banks derive far reaching conclusions about the possible evolution of IR. Since values are inherent in human sciences the quest for a paradigm can only remain elusive. The debate is not *between* but *within* schools of thought. Holsti spends the non-descriptive part of his book on the feeble chances to integrate them into one core-discipline. Interestingly

¹⁸ Michael Banks, "The Inter-Paradigm Debate", in *International Relations: A Handbook of Current Theory*, edited by M.Light & A.J.R.Groom (London: Frances Pinter, 1985).

¹⁹ Holsti (*The Dividing Discipline*, p.3) is probably right that Keohane & Nye "wanted basically to add the possible influence of non-state actors to more traditional conceptions of international politics."

this is nearly always a charge against attempts to synthesise marxism and Realism. Banks, on his side, tries to establish the impression that these schools are there for good, in order to avoid a kind of "hoover"-effect, where Realism would swallow everything valuable stemming from other paradigms.²⁰

Obviously, the Kuhnian concept of paradigm in its sense of *Weltanschauung* becomes very interesting here. Kuhn argues that paradigms have a logic of their own. One paradigm cannot "judge" the other (See herefore chapter 3). The logical outcome of this reasoning is that paradigms, so it were, are *incommensurable*. If this concept were right, it would provide an extraordinary "protective belt" for any school of thought. If in the beginning it was therefore useful for the challengers of Realism to avoid being swept away, over time it became a welcomed barrier against any critique and a good legitimation for scientific routine. "Don't criticise me, we speak different languages." Unfortunately, I think that scholars in IR had succumbed to this marvelous invitation and thereby hopelessly trivialised Kuhn's important insights.²¹

Take Holsti. He conceptualizes paradigms rightly with a criterion for "images of the world". Yet he is sincere enough to admit in a footnote that

There are numerous definitions of paradigms, but for our purpose the notion of their function is most important. They are basically selecting devices which imposes some sort of order and coherence on an infinite universe of facts and data which, by themselves, have no meaning...I realize that this use of the term paradigm is somewhat narrower than the meaning developed by Thomas Kuhn... To him, paradigms are rooted not just in rationally analyzable differences, but in trans-rational perceptions, or gestalts.²²

²⁰ He calls this in "The evolution of international relations", p.18, "Realism-plus-grafted-on-components."

²¹ See also Stephen Krasner, "Toward Understanding in International Relations." *International Studies Quarterly*, 1985, vol.29, pp.137-144, where Kuhn's theses are used (and not really discussed) against a more statistical oriented IR.

²² K.J.Holsti (1985): "The dividing discipline", p.14, fn.6

This use of paradigm is interchangeable with the traditional use of "theory" in International Relations. If Holsti makes a typology of *theories* the number is, however, rather limited.

I do not need, therefore, to show that the paradigms are indeed incommensurable. Holsti cannot claim it, since this concept is explicitly linked to a holistic theory of meaning inherent in Kuhn's concept of paradigm, which is exactly the one Holsti excludes.

Nevertheless, Holsti's analysis remains important because he leads us to the "real" reason why these three approaches are - and I prefer this word - incompatible. First, he presents us "factual reasons", the "rationally analyzable differences" for an impossible synthesis between Realism and marxism. He thereby returns to his criteria: not only are classical writers interested in war/peace/order and Neo-marxists in exploitation and inequality, but they also differ concerning the units of analysis and the key actors.

Recent research suggests that this is a distorting presentation, or better, a slightly outdated presentation of ideal-types. First, in a literature which is considered part of the structuralist/neo-marxist "paradigm", the state is reintroduced as an autonomous actor and as a unit of analysis.²³ As Halliday rightly points out, the fact that a common concept is used, does not imply that it is used in the same way.²⁴ On the other hand, many of these writers are acknowledged "Weberians" - as are many Realists. It seems that a more profound difference lies *within* the "classical tradition" between those who disaggregate the state and thereby often using sociological approaches

²³ See e.g. Peter Evans, *Dependent Development. The Alliance of Multinational, State and local capital in Brazil* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979); Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions. A comparative analysis of France, Russia and China* (Cambridge, Mass.: Cambridge University Press); James Caporaso & W.L.Hollist, "International Political Economy research: What is it and where do we turn for concepts ?" In W.Ladd Hollist & Lamond Tullis, eds., *The International Political Economy* (Boulder: Westview, 1985), pp.27-49.

²⁴ Fred Halliday, "State and Society in International Relations: A second agenda", p.219

(Aron, e.g.) and "systemic" or "structural" Realists à la Waltz for whom the state is a black box.²⁵

With regard to the core interests, Holsti himself admits that

Obviously the traditional paradigm has to be expanded to account for and measure the influence of new types of core objectives of states. Many have noted recently that traditional power-territorial issues have been supplemented by welfare goals.²⁶

Robert Gilpin has been one of those pointing to the relation between wealth and power and who Holsti so nicely includes in the "Classical paradigm". Gilpin does, however, define this relation between power and wealth following some Neo-Marxist writers. His synthesis is, as we will later see, sometimes as far from classical Realism (from Morgenthau, not from E.H.Carr) as from some Neo-Marxist writers (Cardoso, e.g.).

This is no plea for a perfect possible synthesis between these two frameworks of analysis. Recent research in IPE does only suggest that the points of encounter are more numerous than Realists and perhaps some marxists are likely to admit. Yet, Holsti shows in some parts of his book, why these frameworks might indeed be incompatible and why he has so much difficulties to include IPE. With regard to Gilpin, Holsti states in another footnote that he "serves as an important antidote to the field of International Political Economy which appears to have *no normative core*".²⁷ In another place he is even more explicit. He introduces *values* instead of *gestalts* to claim the synthesis of paradigms impossible:

The debates which have been summarised in this volume have a largely hidden dimension of value preferences...The real difficulty... is that the value premises of the paradigms are often incompatible.²⁸

²⁵ By the way, Holsti usually refers to Hedley Bull or Raymond Aron. Kenneth Waltz' exclusion of foreign policy analysis from IR earns him what is only slightly more than a note.

²⁶ Holsti op.cit., p.140

²⁷ Holsti op.cit., p.40, fn.12. Emphasis added

²⁸ *ibid.*, p.132

Finally he asks about the *desirability* "of a synthesis between world views which have diametrically opposed normative claims and ideals."²⁹ These are not exactly the "rationally analyzable differences" he started out to show us, but at last this point is more valid.

The cohesion of our triptychs reposes then on a rationalisation of the three main political ideologies: conservatism, liberalism (in its US American sense) and socialism. This also explains the puzzle, why Banks mixed Keohane & Nye with his own World Society Paradigm: the people are "liberals" not conservative realists.

In a world where these ideologies are shifting, are reinterpreted and reconstructed as today, it might be permitted, however, to investigate where the possible normative incompatibility starts to inhibit common approaches. Using three different ideologies as a point of departure is an important reminder of the possible existence of incompatibilities, but it requires to be explored. Contrary to Holsti, I find it *very desirable* to reflect on possible "rapprochements".

The basic problematique becomes then the question to what extent different variables are inherently and exclusively linked to one ideology and to what extent fruitful cross-fertilization is possible. The typology should not be understood as incommensurable paradigms, but as competing schools of thought *as they happen to influence the academic discourse from around 1970 onwards*. They represent different influences to which international thought has been exposed.

Therefore, it seems preferable to understand the three competing schools as an indication of the *fragmentation* of international studies in the specific period of the Seventies and Eighties. In other words, incommensurable paradigms are not the last word that guide now and ever our understanding, but their perception corresponds to a *historical stage* of the discussion in International Relations. As such it exemplifies a typical move of paradigms in a crisis: the discipline starts to argue about its foundations, its epistemology. It is the debate *about the boundaries of the discipline or the borders of the*

²⁹ *ibid.*, p.77

"international" *unknown* that will characterise the debate from 1970 onwards.

10.3. Conclusion

The turning point of the post-war history and theory of international relations is the climax and dismay of the traditional super-power policy that seemed so nicely to describe and encompass international diplomacy, *détente*.

With the decreased importance of nuclear power, with an economic sphere that more and more escapes from state control, and finally with the impossibility to insulate foreign from domestic policy, *containment* and the whole *East-West focus* of post-war international relations are *not obsolete*, but *reduced to a more modest dimension*. It corresponds to the acknowledgement that the rule of the international system is not entirely done by single *state-powers* (if it ever was). New actors, and indeed, processes (like markets) acquire the status of state-independent dynamics within the international system. Both *détente* as an updating of Cold War politics, and Realism have come into a crisis.

Part III.

Responses to the Crisis of Realism

The next period will be characterised by the different reaction to the crisis of Realism, with

- a resurrection of an even more limited Realism, called Neo-Realism (and also incidentally by Reaganite politics) that quickly integrates ideas from International Political Economy into Realist theory formulation;
- a more and more extended critique within the more structuralist inclined writers of International Political Economy and with the more theoretically working scholars out of the critical or post-structuralist tradition.

Both reactions are part of a theoretical struggle to redefine the *core* and the *boundaries* of the discipline, of how International Relations/International Political Economy could be defined.¹

¹ Already the juxtaposition of these two concepts veils a debate, if there are *two* different disciplines, respectively the *political* and *economic* analysis of international relations, or two competing approaches to analyse basically the same. My personal contention is the latter. In so far as IPE opts for a wider definition of the core and the extension of the discipline, it could even be argued that it *subsumes* IR.

The Neorealist research programme



Introduction

This chapter wants to show how scholars from *within the Realist paradigm* reacted to the crisis. Two main attempts (and three theoretical approaches) can be distinguished:

- *Neorealism* (sometimes called Structural Realism), which has its chief advocate in Kenneth Waltz and in *regime theory*
- Parts of what has come to be called in the 70's the discipline of *International Political Economy*, namely the so-called *Hegemonic Stability Theory*.

The distinction between the three categories consists in the strategy applied to save Realism.²

Neorealism is a version of the scientific Realism (Kaplan), based on a deductive approach, which, however, does *not claim* to be able to explain international outcomes anymore. It restricts the field of analysis to the systemic level and reduces the explanatory range to the *constraints* of possible actions and outcomes. In a sense, it is not very much more than a stringent reformulation of traditional Realism based on a systemic approach.

² This must not always be a conscious attempt, but the result of a revision of elder approaches which does not entirely break with them.

Regime theory and Hegemonic Stability Theory are part of International Political Economy (IPE), i.e. a new field that has been split out of International Relations departments. Its main aim is the *study of the global (unified) economy and its political (fragmented) organization*. Within IPE, different schools of thought have come up, that are often presented as if they were articulated in a comparable manner to the *Inter-Paradigm Debate*: neo-mercantilism, liberalism, structuralism.³

Since our approach is more historically and sociologically conceived, we will understand the different schools of thought in IPE more as a reaction to the impulses given by the theoretical debate and its historical/sociological environment. Therefore, the *global net* described at the end of the last lecture is our starting point. The sub-schools in IR/IPE that try to *save Realism* by expanding it, can be apprehended as *specific puzzles* of this global net. In this respect, *regime theory* which is an attempt to integrate idealist and realist thought in an overall approach where bureaucratic politics and transnational actors are taken into account.⁴ *Hegemonic Stability Theory*, on the other hand, tries to specify particular incidents of the distribution of power on the way *the international economic system* functions.

In the first case the expansion concerns the widening of the explanatory variables to be taken into account (with the price of reducing the range of explanation to specific subfields of international relations, namely regimes). In the second, a systemic analysis à la Waltz is retained, but enlarged to integrate the international economic system.

³ See in particular Robert Gilpin's chapter on the "Three ideologies" in *The Political Economy of International Relations* (Princeton University Press, 1987).

⁴ Actually, regime theory is so large an approach as to tackle both traditional IR as IPE topics. It can therefore be subsumed either under Neo-Realism or under a more liberal IPE school. For Susan Strange, regime and HST just represent not *International Political Economy*, but the *Politics of International Economic relations*.

11.1. Neorealism: Waltz

1. *The scientist third image*

Kenneth Waltz defined the defence-line of the old paradigm.⁵ Overwhelmed by the growing literature on different international and transnational actors and on the differentiation of the "black box" which the domestic policy of states for a long time remained, and through the introduction of a behavioural foreign-policy analysis into the international studies, Waltz reacts by redefining what the subject-matter of International "Politics" ought to be: the systemic approach to international relations, as opposed to the historicist variant of Realism and to the approaches based on state-behaviour (this is now "foreign-policy analysis) or on anthropological foundations.

"Structural" (or better systemic) Realism looks for objective laws based on the security dilemma and the Balance of Power. Since this looks very much like a kind of "systemic Morgenthau", the "systemic" part must account for the improvement of the, as we have seen, seriously insufficient Morgenthau.

Waltz resolves the Realists' puzzles (which Aron, Bull, Kissinger had try to resolve by refinement), by relegating all the difficulties with transnational actors, domestic policies and foreign-policy decision-making to *another* discipline (political science), hence reducing the possible claims of a discipline of International Relations from the analysis and prediction of systemic order and state behaviour towards the frame of constraints, that the system (the structure) imposes on any actor (especially states) in World politics.

Waltz' structure is defined by three parameters:

1. "according to the principle by which a system is ordered. Systems are transformed if one ordering principle replaces another. To move from an anarchic to a hierarchic realm is to move from one system to another."

2. "by the specification of functions of differentiated units. Hierarchic systems change if functions are differently defined and allotted.

⁵ Kenneth Waltz (1979) *Theory of International Politics*.

For anarchic systems, the criterium of systems change derived from the second part of the definition drops out since the system is composed of like-units."

3. "by the distribution of capabilities across units. Changes in this distribution are changes of the system whether the system be an anarchic or a hierarchic one."⁶

Since the anarchical character of principle one is historically enduring, and since parameter two is circularly defined with regard to anarchy (if the system is anarchical, there is no functional differentiation), the "distribution of capabilities across units" remains the only central defining parameter for the *actual* international system.⁷ Thus, in the reformulation of Realism into "Structural Realism", the concept of power recovers the central position it had in Morgenthau's writings, *the Balance of Power becoming the most important determinant of structural change*.

How is it possible, that power recovers that central place for a rational choice approach, Aron and other Realist writers had so fervently argued against? The answer is astonishingly easy: By two moves. First, by sticking to a *purely dispositional concept of power*, in the sense of a possession of a power wielder ("capabilities"), which exist logically prior to their "Balancing". Second, Kenneth Waltz is explicit in *assuming the fungibility of power* which Aron and Baldwin recognised necessary to elaborate a theory comparable to micro-economics.

A system theory requires one to define structures partly by the distribution of capabilities across units. States, because they are in a self-help system, have to use their combined capabilities in order to serve their interests. The economic, military, and other capabilities of nations *cannot be sectored and separately weighed*.⁸

Attacked on that ground, he is explicit:

⁶ Kenneth Waltz (1979/86) in Keohane, ed.: "Neorealism and its critics", p.96.

⁷ Kenneth Waltz remains extremely constant in this matter. Already in 1967, he refers to structures as the "pattern according to which power is distributed" ("International Structure, National Force...", p.312, fn.18).

⁸ Kenneth Waltz (1979) *Theory of International Politics*, p.131, italics added.

Obviously, power is not as fungible as money. Not much is. But power is much more fungible than Keohane allows. As ever, the distinction between strong and weak states is important. The stronger the state, the greater the variety of its capabilities. Power may be only slightly fungible for weak states, but it is highly so for strong ones.⁹

The first statement is necessary for the second. Only if one has a vision of "overall-power", it is possible to define the amount of power not only through quantities, but also by the *variety* of power sources (capabilities).

Yet, the argument is self-contradictory. *If* power is so highly fungible, that it can be assumed to be used in different scopes, then one does not need the *variety*-definition: Economic capabilities can be used for producing political, ethical etc. outcomes. If one assumes a great variety of capabilities, one implicitly assumes that the strong state is strong not because it has various sources of influence, but because it possesses many capabilities in various scopes. *Even though Waltz needs the high fungibility of capabilities to derive his systemic theory, his argumentation is based on high capabilities in different scopes.*

To conclude on Waltz' Neorealism. It is an attempt of a utilitarian "purified" Morgenthau that restates the central place of the concept of power. *Thus, our first champion in the struggle for the boundaries of the discipline pleads for a very "reduced" subject-matter, based on a central concept with flaws already known.*

⁹ Kenneth Waltz, "A response to my critics." in Robert O. Keohane, ed., *Neorealism and its critics*, p.333, as a rebuttal of Robert O. Keohane's (1983), "Theory of World Politics: Structural Realism and Beyond", *ibid.*, p.184. Keohane draws on an older debate, especially by Aron in his critique of the National Interest and the rational choice approach to IR (chapter 5) and explicitly by David A. Baldwin (1979), "Power Analysis and World Politics: New Trends versus Old Tendencies." In his *Paradoxes of Power* (New York, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), pp.129-168. Keohane and Nye's distinction between an *overall structural model* from a *issue area structural* approach is linked to the lacking fungibility of power. See also chapter 11.2 and 12.2.

11.2. Regime theory

Keohane & Nye's *Power and Interdependence*, published in 1977¹⁰, but conceived since 1971, would have become the textbook on international relations, had not the "Second Cold War" made Waltz' *International Politics* somewhat grimmer outlook apparently more convincing. Yet, Keohane & Nye lay the grounds of what today is perhaps the booming field in (USAmerican) international relations, *regime theory*.

Their original purpose was to establish a new *World Politics Paradigm*, overcome the leading paradigm that was considered too state-centric.¹¹ If Waltz chooses to restrict *International Relations* to *International Politics*, Keohane and Nye choose the other direction: confronted with what has been described the *global net* (see preceding lecture), they try to synthesise

traditional international politics, the bureaucratic politics approach and transnational actors.¹²

They do that by introducing three basic dichotomies:

- power and interdependence,
- realism and complex interdependence,
- the structural and the International Organization Model.

1. *The nature of the international system: Realism and Complex Interdependence*

The first couple is located at the level of understanding the nature of the international system: *Realism* and *Complex Interdependence*.

Realism is characterised by three assumptions: states are the most important (and unified, or coherent) actors; force is a legitimate and usable means of foreign policy; and there is a hierarchy among issues

¹⁰ Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, *Power and Interdependence. World Politics in Transition* (Boston et al.: Little Brown, 1977).

¹¹ See their edited *Transnational Relations and World Politics* (Cambridge University Press, 1972), p.XXIV.

¹² *ibid.*, p.380.

("high"-politics vs. "low"-politics). Keohane & Nye do acknowledge this being an ideal-type. They confront with another ideal-type of the nature of the international system: complex interdependence. This type is characterised by the very opposite to Realist conditions:

1. There exist multiple channels connecting societies: interstate relations, transgovernmental, and transnational relations (we find here the three approaches they already wanted to synthesise in 1972: Realism, bureaucratic politics and transnationalism).

2. Military force acquires a minor role. In conditions of Complex Interdependence, the usability of force varies between the issue-areas.

3. There is no hierarchy among issues.

Under these conditions International Relations display distinct features. *Linkage strategies* between the different issue-areas which try to exploit concessions in other issues (e.g. in "high" politics) become possible. The lack of clear hierarchy among multiple issues "leads us to expect that the politics of *agenda formulation and control* will become more important."¹³ Finally, transnational and transgovernmental relations will further blur the distinction between domestic and international politics, in which International Organizations play a role distinct from the balance of power which underlay them.

2. *Explaining change: Structural model vs. International Organization Model (IOM)*

Keohane & Nye develop out of this different characterization of the international realm their third dichotomy which is located at the level of explaining change: *structural versus International Organization Model*.

They develop four models to explain change: an "economic process explanation" (based on some kind of technological determinism), an "overall structural explanation" (Realism à la Waltz), an "issue structure explanation" (Realism à la Bull, Kissinger, Aron) and finally the International Organization Model.

¹³ Keohane & Nye, *Power and Interdependence*, p.32.

Since the economic process explanation is considered as being always insufficient, the remaining models are restated in two categories: the Structural Model (Realism) and the International Organization Model (IOM). Whereas the first explains through shifts in the (overall or issue-specific) balance of power, the latter also tries to explain linkages from below, as well as transgovernmental and transnational relations. The IOM assumes:

that a set of networks, norms, and institutions, once established will be difficult either to eradicate or dramatically to rearrange."¹⁴

Since their definition of a *regime* is:

networks of rules, norms, and procedures that regularize behaviour and control its effects
governing arrangements that affect relationships of interdependence.¹⁵ or also

we can assume that the IOM applies in a "regime-situation".

The structural model, on the other hand, is supposed to reign, at least, in "non-regime situations":

where there are no agreed norms and procedures or when the exceptions to the rules are more important than the instances of adherence."¹⁶

The argument pursued here is that Keohane & Nye are supplementing and not replacing Realism - as the discussion of power has already shown. To make them the leading figures of a new paradigm is conceptually and theoretically unsustainable.

The first to reject this new paradigm, are Keohane & Nye themselves (in 1977!) in their repeated caution about the use of the IOM. It might be allowed to compare the Realism-Complex Interdependence distinction with Aron's and Kissinger's distinction between homogeneous (legitimate) and heterogeneous (revolutionary) international system.

Homogeneous systems develop following characteristics¹⁷:

¹⁴ *ibid.*, p.55.

¹⁵ *ibid.*, p.19.

¹⁶ *ibid.*, p.20.

¹⁷ Raymond Aron, *Paix et guerre entre les nations*, p.108/09.

1. *a greater stability*: the governments do not ignore the interests that unite them in spite of some national interests which might oppose them.

2. *a moderation of violence*: the complete victory over, or the humiliation of another nation could enhance a revolutionary spirit to overcome the international code of conduct on which the homogeneous is build: "La crainte de la révolution incite les chefs de guerre soit à se résigner à la défaite soit à limiter leurs prétentions."

3. *a greater predictability*

4. *a distinction between political adversary and national enemy*: interstate hostility does not exclude reconciliation and later treaties. As Kissinger notes, only in legitimate systems, can diplomacy fulfil its traditional role. Only where a "regime" exists, can negotiation overcome simple power politics.

In a homogenous system, the international code of conduct disciplines the actors till the moment, where the disruption of the system would cause them less harm then the prolongation of the regime (order). This system comes to an end if one of the actors feels oppressed, and/or translates different domestic value systems to the international level and/or develops so much power that she wants to change the regime.

After this short recall of Classical Realist writing, I think it possible to argue that the *relation* between homogeneous and heterogeneous systems corresponds to the one between "Realism" and "Complex Interdependence" (CI) and that the traditional writers seem even richer in their description. On the other hand, "Complex Interdependence" tries to adapt and elaborate the "homogeneous" system to present "interdependent" World Politics, by integrating transnational and transgovernmental relations to a much greater extent, yet without leaving the logical priority of Realism over CI. Their establishment of issue-structures *within* which conventional Realist might apply, stresses the lack of *fungibility across* issue-structures, rather than within it. This is an attempt to rescue the central explanatory value of the concept of power - by limiting (and defining a priori) the scope in issue-structures.

The *relation* between Realism and CI is dominantly Realist. CI applies only where the actors stick to the rules and do not try to change the regime. Incremental regime change characterised by moderation, the non-usability of military forces in all issues and the developing of a agenda-setting- and linkage-diplomacy requires consensus on the usefulness of a predictable, stable international order (which might be morally repulsive) as at least a second best solution. *Regimes are at the mercy of its most uncompromising actors.*¹⁸

If we consider, that foreign policy making often entails a worst case thinking (especially if the amount or the quality of information is low), then foreign policy makers will generally stick to the "Realist" prescription, and only exceptionally to the CI one.¹⁹

As much as Raymond Aron acknowledged that the Concert of Europe was a "*compromis entre l'état de nature et le règne de la loi*"²⁰, Keohane and Nye consider their approach not a rebuttal of Realism, but a supplement to it, which brings the traditional liberal (idealist) concern with normed behaviour into the analysis:

We regard the two as necessary complements to one another. This approach was analytically justified, in our view, because realism and liberalism both have their roots in a utilitarian view of the world... Broadly speaking, both realism and liberalism are consistent with the assumption that most state behaviour can be interpreted as rational, or at least intelligent activity. Realism and liberalism are therefore *not two incom-*

¹⁸ Since this seems to have been largely overlooked (more by non-Realists, probably), take especially p. 24 and 57/58, where they explicitly warn *against* a general application of the Complex Interdependence approach. They argue that Realism is not always able to analyse accurately international affairs. But neither is Complex interdependence. Everything depends on the conditions of the specific case under scrutiny.

¹⁹ When Robert Keohane applies this twofold approach to what has come to be called "Hegemonic Stability Theory", he comes to the result that in some issue-areas Realist explanations prevail, and in others Complex Interdependence explanations. Realists might attack this particular argument, but generally they agree that power politics does not always apply. Yet, Keohane can prove the dominance of the CI model only *a posteriori* in a historical analysis. See Robert O. Keohane, "The Theory of Hegemonic Stability and changes in international economic regimes, 1967-1977", in George/Holsti/Siverson, eds., *Change in the International System* (Boulder, 1980), pp.131-162.

²⁰ Raymond Aron (1962/84⁸): op.cit., p.148.

*measurable paradigms with different conceptions of the nature of political action.*²¹

3. Regime analysis today

Stephen Krasner has given and elaborated the reference-definition of international regimes today

International regimes are defined as principles, norms, rules, and decision-making procedures around which actor expectations converge in a given issue-area.²²

He describes the "*modified Realist*" view as a realist view of "tectonic plates", where the plate of power and the plate of regime acquire both an explanatory status, much like realism and complex interdependence.

Now within this framework, *regimes are still ultimately a function of the distribution of power between states*. In this respect, Krasner follows Oppenheim's and Bull's line of a positive international law: contract/agreement or consensus is the origin of law, thus the balance of (military, intellectual, etc.) power of the contracting parties is central to its elaboration.²³ This is the central tenet that distinguishes these writers from a real Grotian position. Yet, as in positive law, common law introduces a (conservative) element: there is a time-lag of adjustment which establishes a certain autonomy of the realm of law and an interactive process between (power) base and law. Krasner notes that there need not always be congruity between power distribution, regimes and related behaviour or outcomes, especially because power distributions change much quicker than regimes once set up.

This line of argument suggests the importance of periodization and uneven rates of change. Causal relationships may vary across periods of regime creation, persistence and dissipation...In general the basic principles and norms of regimes are very durable and, once a regime is created, ad-

²¹ Keohane & Nye (1987): "Power and Interdependence Revisited", p.728/29, emphasis added

²² Stephen D. Krasner, "Structural Causes and Regime Consequences: Regimes as intervening variables." *International Organization*, vol.36, 1982, p.185.

²³ See chapter 5.

justment is likely to involve altering rules and decision-making procedures. But power distributions are more dynamic - they are constantly changing. Thus, regimes and power distributions are not likely to change at the same rate.²⁴

Therefore, *lags and feedbacks between power base and regime* (the two tectonic plates) are the basic puzzles of this research programme; are regimes only intervening or even autonomous variables?

Regime analysis is today's most fashionable approach in US American IR and IPE. Yet, ultimately, it boils down to a framework of analysis where transnational relations and actors, bureaucratic politics and the distribution of power are all taken into account without giving to any of these variables a primary explanatory power. In this sense, it restates and but does not really resolve the puzzles of the *global net*.

²⁴ Stephen D. Krasner, "Regimes and the limits of Realism: Regimes as autonomous variables." *International Organization*, vol.36, 1982, p.499.

IPE as an attempt to update Realism: Hegemonic Stability Theory (HST)



12.1. Assumptions, theses and schools of HST

1. *The definition*

The standard definition has been given by Robert O. Keohane

Hegemonic structures of power, dominated by a single country, are most conducive to the development of strong international regimes whose rules are relatively precise and well obeyed... The decline of hegemonic structures of power can be expected to presage a decline in the strength of corresponding international economic regimes.²⁵

This definition underscores, however, what can be considered the originality of the approach, namely the *concept of public good* and its provision by the hegemon.

Therefore, we follow Duncan Snidal

Keohane argues that this is *not* a central proposition in the theory - however to deny it is to deprive the theory of its originality and to ignore its logical basis. What is novel in the theory is not the claim that strong actors can impose regimes in international politics (which goes back at least as far as Thucydides) but the use of the collective action formulation and the implication that hegemony is more widely beneficial. Moreover,

²⁵ Robert O. Keohane, "The Theory of Hegemonic Stability and changes in international economic regimes, 1967-1977." In Holsti, Siverson & George, eds., *Change in the international system* (Boulder: 1980), p.132.

once the public goods formulation is invoked to explain the emergence of regimes under hegemony, the distributional argument follows as a logical conclusion. Indeed, the proposition ... seems central to Keohane's *After Hegemony*, which poses as a fundamental question how the benefits of hegemonic cooperation (which are generalized beyond the hegemonic actor) can be maintained after the decline of hegemony.²⁶

The starting point of the analysis are the possible solutions to the problem of *suboptimal provisions of specific (public) goods in the international realm due to anarchy*. The basic thesis is that one needs hegemony. But even the collective good argument is not exactly very new. Take this quote, published first in 1946:

We have seen that the international anarchy is restrained and to some extent systematized in practice by two opposing kinds of common interest, pulling alternatively to and fro. The first is the common interest of all powers in their freedom, of which they are faintly conscious in peace, and assert at the eleventh hour in war by an armed coalition against a common danger. The second is the kind of common interest represented by successive dominant powers. *For their predominance has generally safeguarded real values, and offered real benefits for other nations*, and sometimes they have wielded an international ideology as their most potent weapon - as the Habsburg powers were the protagonists of the Counter-Reformation, as Napoleonic France was the carrier of the French Revolution throughout feudal Europe, as Britain in the 19th century was the champion of liberalism.²⁷

2. Three theses

1. The emergence of a hegemon is necessary for the provision of an international public good. (Hegemony thesis)
2. The necessary existence of free riders (and thus the unequal distribution of costs for the provision) and/or a loss of legitimacy will undermine the relative power position of the hegemon. (Entropy thesis)²⁸
3. A declining hegemonic power presages a declining provision of the international public good. (Decline thesis)

²⁶ Duncan Snidal, "The limits of Hegemonic Stability Theory", in *International Organization*, 1985, vol.39, n.4, p.581.

²⁷ Martin Wight, *Power Politics*, edited by Hedley Bull and Carsten Holbraad (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books), p.289, italics added.

²⁸ The concept of entropy is extensively used by Kindleberger in "Systems of International Economic Organization." In David Calleo, ed., *Money and the coming World Order* (New York: New York University Press for the Lehrmann Institute, 1976), pp.18, 24 and passim.

3. Three schools

The different approaches within HST can be distinguished after the particular public good they choose.

1. *International liberal economy*.²⁹ This is Kindleberger's original approach. Analysing the inter-war economic crisis, he sees the reasons of depression in the lacking leadership in the international economic order. Gilpin who follows now more this line of thought, disentangles the following functions that a hegemon has to provide for an international economic order to work.³⁰

1. stabilization of monetary and trading relations through
 - rediscount mechanism for providing liquidity when international crisis
 - lender of last resort
 - management of international monetary system (here one could subsume the two further functions added by Kindleberger to his initial list, namely the maintenance of a structure of exchange rates and the coordination of macroeconomic policies)
 - openness of markets for distressed goods
 - a steady, if not countercyclical flow of capital
2. redistribution of income through foreign aid
3. regulation of abuses (sanctions)

2. *International order/security*.³¹ This is exactly to which Snidal alluded before: it is the restatement of the traditional realist assumption that power differentials are conducive to more stability, than the equality of power. If one recalls, this argument has been used by Bull for describing the international realm as different from a Hobbesian state of nature and to derive its *anarchical society*. It is

²⁹ See for this especially the english edition of Charles P. Kindleberger's *The World in Depression, 1929-1939* (Berkeley: University of California Press: 1973/1986. First published in German), and his "Dominance and Leadership in the International Economy", in *International Studies Quarterly*, 1981, vol.25, pp.242-254.

³⁰ See his *The Political Economy of International Relations*, op.cit., p.368.

³¹ See esp. Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

most concisely put by Waltz: "Extreme equality is associated with extreme instability."³²

This approach also applies to the *security version* of hegemonic stability theory that Webb and Krasner claim for their own and Gilpin's approach. Even though they accept the *collective good* argument, they put greater weight on the implication of international economic interactions for state power and national security. They distinguish themselves from Kindleberger and Keohane, by pointing to the fact that *no generally beneficial effect* is to be expected from the hegemon's provision of the public good. In other words, it denies the existence of a *common interest* in international economic liberalization and stability.³³

But then, indeed, this version is nothing new compared to traditional Realism. And Snidal's critique is nicely echoed by Gilpin

the nature of international relations has not changed over the millennia...One must suspect that if somehow Thukydides were placed in our midst, he would ... have little trouble in understanding the power struggle in our age.³⁴

3. *International regimes*.³⁵ Keohane refuses to be put into this school of thought. This is to a certain extent right. He does not subscribe to thesis 3: he argues that a declining hegemonic power puts strains on the provision of an international public good, but that cooperation is able to upset the decline.

In Krasner's and Keohane's framework, *regimes* are in the last resort still a function of the distribution of power and relation between states. Thus, both opt for regimes as intervening variables.³⁶

³² Kenneth Waltz, "International Structure, National Force and the Balance of World Power", reprinted in *International Politics and Foreign Policy: A Reader in Research and Theory*, edited by James Rosenau (New York, Free Press: 1967/1969), p.312.

³³ For this argument, see Michael Webb and Stephen Krasner, "Hegemonic Stability Theory. An empirical assessment", in *Review of International Studies*, 1989, vol.15, n.2.

³⁴ Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981), p.184.

³⁵ See in particular Robert O. Keohane, *After Hegemony* (Princeton UP: 1984).

³⁶ Robert O. Keohane, *After Hegemony*, p.64.

Applied to HST, Keohane therefore argues that for

the *creation* of international regime, hegemony often plays an important role, even a crucial one (49)

but that

[t]he importance of transaction costs and uncertainty means that regimes are easier to maintain than they are to create. (100)

His work is trying out under what conditions, Realist (what he subsumes under a crude version of HST) and Liberal/Institutionalist accounts on cooperation are more convincing and pleads theoretically for a synthesis of realism and liberalism and politically for the *possibility* of multilateral regime management.³⁷

12.2. Theoretical Critique

The theoretical critique will proceed in accordance to the above characterisation of Hegemonic Stability Theory, i.e. first the central concept of a public good and the different possible and necessary qualifications to the three theses.

1. *The concept of public good*

In economic theory of collective action, a public good is defined by two characteristics: jointness and non-exclusion.

³⁷ In his "Hierarchy versus inertial cooperation", *International Organization*, vol.40, no.4, 1986, pp.141-147, Kindleberger points, in a highly pretentious review of Keohane's *After Hegemony*, to this *conditionals* - as a critique of Keohane. He fails to recognise that Keohane is making a different argument: whereas Kindleberger makes a policy-related argument that in the face of a declining hegemon, nobody will be likely to fulfil his functions and that therefore our world is doomed to instability for an excess of *powerlessness*, Keohane wants to argue that *cooperation* (and not the provision of an international liberal order) is possible without a hegemon. His approach clearly acknowledges that he cannot make predictions (which is what Kindleberger is asking him for), but only post hoc arguments. That Keohane perceives his approach as a critique of Realism is another debate.

By *jointness* is meant that *different actors consume simultaneously the same unit as a good*. As long as the provision of the international public good is seen in the antinomy of anarchy and order, then, indeed, order is a good that can be jointly consumed.

Yet, when questions of the type of order, i.e. distributional questions, are concerned, then it is less sure that *the good is actually the same*.

Not all situations of joint benefit involve jointness and not all instances of cooperation involve the provision of public goods.³⁸

Non-exclusion is defined by *the inability of states to prevent non-contributors from benefiting from the public good (so-called free riders)*. Now obviously, *complete* exclusion is not possible. Very often *discriminations* can be made and/or sometimes contributions can be *enforced*. The free-rider problem is real, but a relative one. For the stability of the system, it is just necessary that the relative power advantage of the hegemon be not undermined, i.e. that the relative gains of free riders are inferior to those of the hegemon. Free-riding does not *necessarily* mean decline.

Finally, I would like to stress the *ideological overtones* of the concept of public goods. Kindleberger is explicit in his ideologically informed use of the argument. He therefore refrains from using the word *hegemon*, because this would imply imposed rule, and prefers "to think of leadership and responsibility."³⁹ He is explicit that this approach and the implied argument about *free riders* puts first the *responsibility* for the non-provision of the public good away from the *leader*, and/or can argue for a more equal repartition of the *burden* and its provision, the never ending argument about *burden-sharing*.⁴⁰

³⁸ Duncan Snidal, "The limits of...", op.cit., p.591.

³⁹ Charles P. Kindleberger, International Public Goods without International Government. *The American Economic Review*, vol.76, no.1, March 1986, p.10.

⁴⁰ See also Susan Strange who explicitly links the emergence of the regime literature to the USAmerican debate of *burden-sharing* in her "Cave! Hic Dragones: A Critique of Regime Analysis. *International Organization* vol.36, pp.479-496.

The question is how to distinguish domination and exploitation from responsibility in the provision of cosmopolitan goods in the world economy, and whether there are not occasions when the world suffers from the underproduction of the public good of stability, not because of greedy vested interests and domination or exploitation but because of the principle of the free rider (...) it is of some interest that on two occasions - in 1931 and again in 1971 - it was the small countries, more or less simultaneously and in pursuit of their private interests, that pushed Britain first, and then the United States, off the gold standard.⁴¹

This claim of a universal interest provided with an international order that is beneficial to all (even in different degrees), is exactly the point on which Gilpin and Krasner stay apart. They are, as good Realists, too much reminded about the classical *harmony of interests* argument that was so forcefully attacked by E.H.Carr. Since ideas, for a Realist, derive from politics and power and not vice versa, the claim to a harmony of interests is nothing more than the result of a specific configuration of power and the successful implementation of a particular interest so as to let it appear a universal one.⁴²

This rounds up with a strong critique from Dependency scholars or the first school of HST (Gilpin, Krasner). Hegemony is there considered as *dominance*, in order to extract revenue, or value surplus. This implies that a *public* good is always and foremost a *private* one of the hegemon and that free riders and the decline of power just means a lower benefit to the hegemon and therefore the end of the regime. Being less able to impose the extraction of benefits, the hegemon will come to a point where it becomes to his disadvantage to provide the so-called public good. To make the free rider responsible is to blur the causalities.

The implication of the argument is to fault the weaker free-riders that the hegemon is not able or legitimately not interested any more in providing the common or public good. But this means actually only that in an even less regulated environment, the weaker have even

⁴¹ Charles P. Kindleberger, "Dominance and Leadership in the International Economy. Exploitation, Public Goods, and Free Rides." *International Studies Quarterly*, vol.25, no.2, June 1981, pp.247,249.

⁴² See E.H.Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis*, pp.44, 46, 53, already quoted in chapter 4.

less possibilities to benefit from the international *anarchy*. Because actually the international regimes did adapt; it did provide the stability necessary for *the stronger* to still reap the benefits. It is not a question of the U.S. (government? firms?) paying for its communal burden, but a shift in the way privileges are tried to be kept.

2. Theoretical critique of the three theses

Different qualifications have been added to the *hegemony thesis*.

First, it is admitted that the existence of a hegemon is no *sufficient* condition for the provision of the public good. With regard of it being a *necessary* condition, different ideas appear and the core of the initial debate can be located. Strictly speaking, the theory of collective goods does not rule out the provision of a public good by more than one leader. Keohane's thesis that an international public good (as e.g. a regime) can be managed through cooperation is *theoretically* possible. Yet, the initial Realist argument consisted in claiming that the provision through *one* leader is the most *likely* to occur. Kindleberger, e.g., makes an extensive analysis of the different possibilities for the provision of the public good and discards all of them except what he calls *leadership*. Altruism is excluded, because it will be generally overruled by self-interest. Enlightened self-interest does not guarantee that an aggregation of enlightened self-interested actors will necessarily be of a beneficial outcome (also the free-rider problem). The management by rule is equated with the management of institutions and therefore structurally dependent on governments and their interests. Finally, regional blocs are excluded because they cannot function in an integrated economy. Only leadership or *benevolent despotism* is a likely solution.⁴³

Keohane's answer consists in pointing out that this is not *necessarily* so. And the dialogue of the deaf continues between a pragmatic (Kindleberger) and a theoretical (Keohane) statement. (See also discussion of Keohane, HST and Realism)

⁴³ See Charles P. Kindleberger, "Systems of International Economic Organization", pp.26ff.,38.

Second, there has been an argument that power must be linked to issue areas, i.e. that the falling provision of a specific public good should be explainable by the falling power *within a specific issue area*. This, Keohane's argument, is already developed in his and Nye's *Power and Interdependence*.⁴⁴

Third, there is the argument that possible *regional hegemons* could arise. Gilpin's argument of a tri-partition of the world into a US American hegemony, a Western European and a Japanese hegemony, as well as Krasner's argument of different systems of *collective self-reliance* actually plead for a regionalisation of politics, big enough to allow the level of interdependence to subsist, but protected enough to fetter the negative impacts of it.⁴⁵

The *entropy thesis* has already been criticised with regard to the principle of relative gain in free-riding. Only if the benefits of free-riders that are converted into power entail a relative and significant power decline of the hegemon, can one speak of entropy. Barry Buzan has synthesised some of the main reason for *entropy*.⁴⁶

1. the character of the hegemonic state and mainly internal reasons of loosing power:⁴⁷ e.g. home-made inflationary policies.
2. the impact of the hegemonic role on the hegemonic state:

long-term economic self-weakening through the export of inflation, and the outflow of capital and technology; the growth of structural rigidities in the economy as a result of sociopolitical demands arising from the sustained

⁴⁴ (Boston: Little Brown, 1977). See for the underlying fungibility issue, chapter 11.1., fn. 9.

⁴⁵ See Robert Gilpin, *The Political Economy of International Relations*, chapter 10 for a plea for a regional mercantilism; and Stephen D. Krasner, *Structural Conflict. The Third World Against Global Liberalism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), e.g. pp.13,30 for the de-linking of North and South in *collective self-reliance*.

⁴⁶ See Barry Buzan, "Economic structure and international security: the limits of the liberal case." *International Organization*, vol.38, no.4, p.621/22. For a general discussion, see Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics*, chapters 4 and 5.

⁴⁷ See David Calleo and Susan Strange, "Money and World Politics." See especially p.108.

experience of power and success; and the disproportionate costs, particularly military, that burden the hegemon's economy in relations to its rivals.⁴⁸

3. the problem of system management, because of mounting resistance in the weaker states (for alleged or real abuse) and/or dissemination of industrial centers through the export of capital and technology from the hegemon.
4. the production of surplus capacity, and the necessary strengthening of domestic mercantilist pressures

With regard to the *decline thesis*, one can see a direct link of American foreign power projection and the emergence of the theory. HST was formulated after the economic Vietnam-Syndrome: the end of Bretton-Woods. Deriving the theory from a destroyed regime that provided the international monetary stability considered necessary to the international economic system, *the authors implied from the declining provision of the public good a declining power of the hegemon*. Yet, *this reversal of thesis 3 is fallacious*.⁴⁹ The declining provision is the deliberate *choice* of the hegemon.

For the U.S., increased discord was a precondition for cooperation on American terms.⁵⁰

The U.S. have come under increased criticism for their way of handling International Relations.

Thus the deeper question is whether there really has been a decrease in order as opposed to a decrease in American control over order.

Here is the strongest theoretical critique which refers to the way to assess a declining American power. If one takes just the trade figures (and gold reserves), then, indeed, the U.S. have a less dominant position today than 40 years ago.

⁴⁸ Barry Buzan, "Economic structure and international security...", p.621.

⁴⁹ See esp. Susan Strange, "The Persistent Myth of Lost Hegemony", in *International Organization*, 1987, vol.41, n.4. But also Robert O. Keohane, *After Hegemony*, p.196, for a methodological distinction between the appraisal of a regime in decline and the *causal link* to a declining hegemonic power.

⁵⁰ Robert O. Keohane, *After Hegemony*, p.208.

Susan Strange argues, however, that one should integrate into the analysis:

- a common appraisal of the four structures from which power in the international system derives (security, financial, production, knowledge), then the U.S. might overall not have lost its hegemonic position.⁵¹

- a distinction between *relational* and *structural* power, i.e. the distinction between those powers that can, also through non-intentional action, influence international politics and that require the adaptation of other powers and those who have just bargaining power. Structural power refers to those who can control the settings within which power relations take place.⁵²

12.3. HST as an alleged critique of Realism

Leaving aside the *order- or security-version* of HST that is anyway only a replay of traditional Realism, Kindleberger's and Keohane's version should be analysed to what extent they belong to or actually depart from Realist thought.

Kindleberger's version seems the strong Realist in case - also because Keohane wants to criticise it as such. He derives *outcomes from the distribution of power*, and is thereby rather skeptical about the consensual working of the international system: it remains after all anarchical, because even though there are different states with different capabilities, there is no overarching (and sanctioning) government (see title of article: "international public goods without international government"). His argument remains basically *state-based*. Not that other actors (as MNCs e.g.) *could* not be taken into account. Sometimes, they are. But the overall argument runs about *national (American) power* and derives its explanatory value from it. The state-

⁵¹ See also Bruce Russett's conclusion in his "The mysterious case of vanishing hegemony: or is Mark Twain really dead?", in *International Organization*, 1985, vol.39, n.2.

⁵² For a more thoroughly discussion of structural power, see chapter 13.

centering is also necessary to make historical comparisons. The argument is largely *zero-sum*. What the hegemon loses, the others gain. Since one needs hegemony to provide public goods, all the non-hegemons are potentially mean free-riders, all the others potentially gain. Yet, there is a strange idealist element creeping into his discussion

I am a realist when it comes to regimes. It seems to me that the momentum set in motion by a hegemonic power...runs down pretty quickly unless it is sustained by powerful commitment...There needs to be positive leadership, backed by resources and a readiness to make some sacrifice in the international interest.⁵³

It is curious to claim a Realist lineage, if the argument is based on *sacrifices done in the "cosmopolitan interest"* (See above mentioned ideological critique). It makes only sense if these sacrifices have a bigger pay-off for the hegemon, now or later. *The cost-benefit analysis must be positive* - following the rational actor assumption of Realism.

In this respect, *Keohane* seems at first hand more promising. He starts from the rational actor assumption of Realism and tries to show that from within Realism, one can account for cooperation and institutional rule, i.e. for regimes.

His basic research programme is to look for

the effects of changes in hegemony on cooperation among the advanced industrialized countries (41)

Like Kindleberger, he starts from the idea of market failures, or more generally the suboptimal provision of specific goods in the international realm due to anarchy. The Kindleberger - Keohane debate represents one of those dialogues of the deaf to the extent that Kindleberger talks about the public good of *an international liberal economic order* which asks for the provision of public goods to work, whereas Keohane sees *cooperation as such* already as an indicator for the provision of public goods, because it allows a more optimal management of international relations. Yet, *cooperation* is a much weaker indicator than Kindleberger's

⁵³ Charles P. Kindleberger, "International Public Goods ...", p.10.

...not all instances of cooperation involve the provision of public goods.⁵⁴

Keohane is therefore right in arguing that

logically, hegemony should not be a necessary condition for the emergence of cooperation in an oligopolistic system. (38)

Just that nobody had claimed that.

On top of it, he then strips off everything which would make this approach a departure from Realism. He argues for a definition of cooperation, not as the absence of conflict, but "as a process that involves the use of discord to stimulate mutual adjustment" (46). This is very much a traditional argument for the Balance of Power. Then, he maintain a Realist, that is, *instrumental* view of the role both of norms

On the contrary, the norms and rules of regimes can exert an effect on behavior even if they do not embody common ideals but are used by self-interested states and corporations engaging in a process of mutual adjustment. (64)

and of cooperation

Rational choice analysis is used in this book not to reinforce the conventional wisdom that cooperation must be rare in world politics, but to show that it can be pursued even by purely rational, narrowly self-interested governments, unmoved by idealistic concern for the common good or by ideological commitment to a certain pattern of international relations.(78)

His argument is one of the typical exercise in building up strawmen, here: Realism.

For him, Realism limits "mutual interests in world politics.... to interests in combining forces against adversaries" (p.62) and thereby "fail to take the role of institutions into account." (p.63) His instrumental role of institutions is certainly taken into account. Nearly all the classical realist writers were after all international lawyers.

Then he presents Realism as implying the crude dichotomy "...of the inevitability of either hegemony or conflict." (p.84) This is just not the case. As already seen in chapter four and especially five, there are

⁵⁴ Duncan Snidal, "The limits of hegemonic stability theory", p.591.

many Realist writers developing these points. Yet, in Keohane, there is no reference after these quotes -and no references in the whole book about Realist writers that have developed the idea of a *concert*: Aron, Bull, Kissinger. He refers once to *Stanley Hoffmann* as an exception "not representative of Realism" (p.8, fn.1) and gives the impression that *Wolfers'* more subtle account of the concept of egoistic self-interest is exceptional. It is not exceptional at all in the Realist literature that Keohane does not even quote: it is the research programme of Realism from the end of the 50's onwards, at least outside the U.S.

We arrive therefore at the rather puzzling conclusion that one of the different schools that wanted to update or supplement Realism is overtly Realist, but nothing new (international order/security). One claims to be new, but relies on a heavy idealist assumption (international liberal economic order); and one wants to criticise Realism, but is actually within the typical Realist research programme (international regime).

12.4. Conclusion: HST as an insufficient update of Realism

Structural Realism à la Waltz has been rightly criticised for its inability to explain change. In a much discussed critique of Waltz, John Ruggie had pointed to the fact that Waltz' theory is unable to analyse the change from the Medieval to the modern state system - except with the simple remark that nothing significant can have happened since we are still in world of anarchy.⁵⁵

Hegemonic Stability Theory at least in Gilpin's version is an attempt to overcome this shortcoming by leaving systemic Realism. Gilpin's *War and Change* is explicitly microeconomic in his approach. The starting point is *equilibrium*. Change is ever then expected when the marginal cost of change is smaller then the marginal benefit for

⁵⁵ John Gerard Ruggie, "Continuity and Transformation in the World Polity: Toward a Neorealist Synthesis" In Robert O. Keohane, ed., *Neorealism and its Critics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983/86), pp.131-157.

any actor. Applying the model of the homo economics and its rationality assumptions to the state, Gilpin recovers traditional Morgenthau-type Realism. This solution has apparently left the *systemic* approach of Waltz (the market analogy) for a *individualist* cost-benefit calculator and utility maximiser. Thereby he is able to account for the dynamic international system by moving to the individual motivations that, although being stable (utility maximisation), might entail actual policy change.

Now, Waltz and Gilpin's approach are not as different as Gilpin claims.⁵⁶ True, Waltz is a systemic and Gilpin a rational choice approach. Yet, insofar as they follow economic (utilitarian) theory both are mutually dependent. Gilpin needs a more systemic approach (in the utilitarian Waltzian sense⁵⁷) to account for different power configurations to make actors cost-benefit analysis and the resulting behaviour changing. Microeconomic theory without a theory of a market would be insufficient. Waltz needs for the account of the dynamics of his static system a recourse to the actor level in order to explain why power configurations can change. On top of it, also Gilpin remains unable to counter Ruggie's critique: he has introduced a *dynamic* element, sure, but only *within* endlessly recurrent cycles of power from the ancient times till today. The *change* from one anarchical system to another cannot be accounted for by Neo-Realism, at least in this version. Hegemonic Stability Theory in this sense is nothing new under the Realist sky. It just tries to apply once more economic theory to International Relations - in a way similar to Kaplan's systems and process already criticised and largely refuted by Raymond Aron in his first section on International Relations Theory.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ "The Richness of the Realist Tradition." In Robert O. Keohane, ed., *Neorealism and its Critics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984/86), p.302.

⁵⁷ For a good criticism of the utilitarian understandings that underpin Neo-Realist thought, see Richard Ashley, "The Poverty of Neorealism." In Robert O. Keohane, ed., *Neorealism and its Critics* (New York: Columbia University Press), pp.273-279.

⁵⁸ See for the original version: Morton A. Kaplan, "Variants on six models of the international system" In James A. Rosenau, ed., *International Politics and Foreign Policy: A Reader in Research and Theory* (New York: Free Press, 1966/69), pp.291-

(continued...)

The new elements are then not to be found in the *economics* of international political relations, but in what one can call, also following Susan Strange⁵⁹, the *politics* of international economic relations. Now, as already alluded to in the prior chapter on international *regimes*, this approach is less utilitarian and more open to actual historical differences (reducing its consciously) predictive capacities. It might, in some respects, also open up to more interpretativist positions, as e.g. also in Ruggie. Yet, a basic tension remains that has been very succinctly worked out by Kratochwil and Ruggie: Regime theory posits an *intersubjective* ontology, but provides only an *individualist* methodology.⁶⁰ In other words: how is it possible to analyse satisfactorily the communicative or other community that is supposed to be larger than and prior to the explanation of unit-levels, if the analytical methodology starts from exactly those units. Regime analysis is by now so hegemonical in specific circles that it can conceal in its variety this contradiction. But the contradiction points to a still necessary attempt to reform or overcome Realism.⁶¹

⁵⁸(...continued)

303. For the critique: Raymond Aron, *Paix et guerre entre les nations* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1962/8.ed.1984), pp.33-183.

⁵⁹ See e.g. her *States and Markets. An Introduction to International Political Economy* (London et al.: Basil Blackwell, 1988), p.12.

⁶⁰ Friedrich Kratochwil & John Gerard Ruggie, "International organization: a state of the art on an art of the state." *International Organization* vol.40, no.4, 1986, pp.753-775.

⁶¹ See also Beate Kohler-Koch, "Zur Empirie und Theorie internationaler Regime", in Beate Kohler-Koch, ed., *Regime in den internationalen Beziehungen* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 1989), pp.17-88, for an explicit critique of the individualist rational regime model and an attempt to base it on a heuristic-interactionist sociology.

13

IPE at the convergence of Realism and Structuralism



This chapter is more heterogeneous than most of the preceding ones. However, the taking into account of non-state actors and non-inter-state structures (like markets or the international division of labour) is common to all approaches. It is also very often voiced as an explicit critique of U.S. policies - domestic and foreign.

We will start by taking up where we left chapter 6 on imperialism and make a more elaborated presentation of (Western) marxist approaches to International Relations, that we will call, as a shorthand, *dependency theories*. Then more idiosyncratic approaches will round up to present, besides Neo-Realism, the *second major contender in the present theoretical debate: IPE as an overcoming of Realism*.

13.1. Intellectual roots of dependency theories

Two important *intellectual roots* can be discerned in the development of dependency theories, first (Western) Marxist theories of imperialism and structuralist critiques of (free trade) theories of international trade.

1. (Western) Marxist theories of imperialism

Were the classical theories of imperialism mainly interested in the intra-"bourgeois" struggle of industrialised countries, so do post-WWII approaches attack the North-South issue. A first new school, that one could call *theories of surplus absorption* tries to understand how capitalist classes in the core through state and MNC action actually "underdevelop" the South through means of (economic) exploitation (See Figure 4).

Three new phenomena are discussed by these schools as compared to classical imperialism:

- the new kind of monopoly which explains underconsumption, thus expansion (linked to militarism and integrating the new socialist challenge)
- the relation between state and MNC as actors of international capitalism
- the means of exploitation.

Baran and Sweezy argue that one cannot more adopt the Marxian analysis of capitalism because it rests on the assumption of a competitive economy (even in Lenin's monopoly competitive form). In a situation of monopoly capitalism, price competition is eliminated, thus prices are downwardly rigid. Non-price competition (product differentiation, advertising, cost-reducing innovations) is heightened and generates a tendency of falling costs. Rigid prices and falling costs combine to the new absolute law of monopoly capitalism, i.e. the *tendency of the absolute surplus to rise*, which replaces Marx' tendency of the profit to fall, which seems to be empirically falsified by the recurrent ability of capitalism to avoid the falling through technological innovation.

This is a considerable break. In the same time, they assess that the capitalist society fails in sustaining a demand able to cope with the rising profits. Incentives to invest are low. The normal state of monopoly capitalism is stagnation. They consider remedies against stagnation (price reductions, means of subsidisation through the fiscal mechanism, direct civilian expenditure by the government) and admit

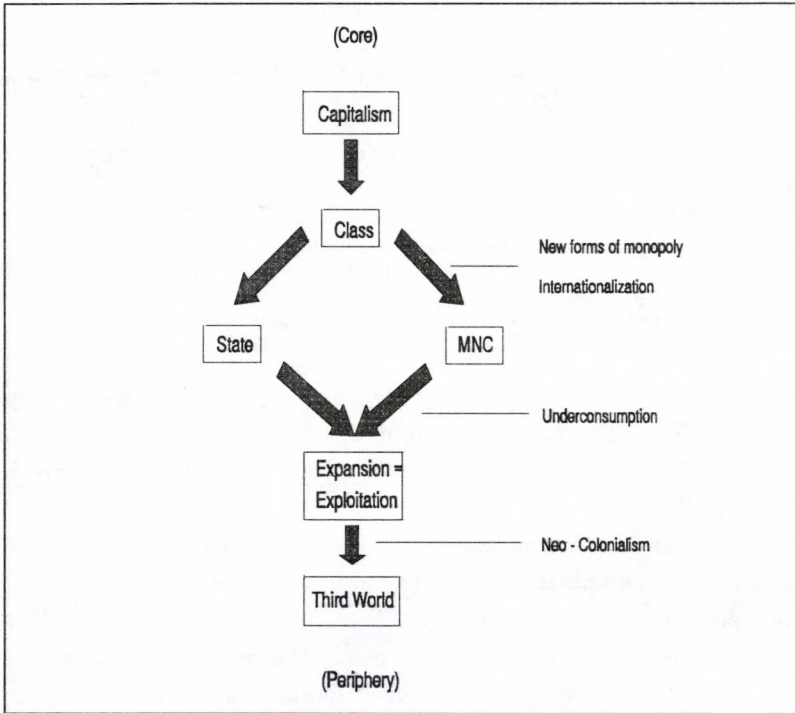


Figure 4 Theories of surplus absorption (Baran & Sweezy)

that military spending can smooth, but not eventually overcome it.

In this context, the discussion of military spending is revealing for the way IR is indirectly integrated into the analysis. Baran/Sweezy accept their importance, because not only surplus is absorbed, but foreign markets controlled and the socialist threat checked. The bipolarity of the central balance is part of the debate. The specific way of surplus absorption must take into account the socialist threat and expansionism (closing off markets) and the Third World socialist (nationalizing) threat.

The *relation between MNC's and states* is not analysed in equal terms. Baran and Sweezy argue that their interests differ and that therefore, one cannot analyse it in the classical (monolithic) manner. Magdoff identifies imperialism as a struggle of competing monopoly

enterprises for "survival and growth", where the state must adapt to the wishes of the finance capital. In a similar vein, O'Connor tries to link the internationalization of finance capital with the decline of national rivalries in the core especially since a socialist camp constitutes a threat to the capitalist world order. The main actor remains the MNC and the

global foreign policy corresponds to the interests and perspective of the multinational corporation... The multinational corporation has become the instrument for the creation and consolidation of an international ruling class, the only hope for reconciling the antagonisms between national and international interests.⁶²

This is a view of *ultra-imperialism*, an extremely aggregated approach of the international system with a dominating First World (read MNC) exploiting the Third World and challenged by a rising Second World.

The roots for a World System analysis are already here. It is only one step from an abstract unified actor (international finance capital) to a structural argumentation.

With regard to the third new point, the *means of exploitation*, O'Connor analyses the control over foreign exchange assets, the means of private direct investment, the control of local savings (either via IMF and BIRD or via the MNC's in LDC's), and finally the control of mineral, agricultural, manufacturing and other real assets and the organisation and management of trade by foreign corporations.

2. *The Structuralist Critique of the liberal theory of international trade*

The critique of the liberal theory of international trade (specialisation according to comparative advantage (Ricardo) or resource-endowment (Heckscher-Ohlin-Samuelson) is most commonly linked to the thesis of Raúl Prebisch. The general argument is that the international division of labour favours the centre and not so much the periphery, be-

⁶² James O'Connor, "The Meaning of Economic Imperialism." In R. Rhodes, ed., *Imperialism and Underdevelopment* (London, 1970), p.150.

cause their *structures* of production differ substantially. The centre has a homogeneous and diversified economy, whereas the periphery becomes, through the integration in the international economic system, specified and *heterogeneous*.⁶³

Prebisch sustained that primary goods exporting countries would continue to experience a deterioration in the Terms of Trade due to changing patterns of demand in the principal export markets, to increasing competition amongst primary producers (given the inelastic demand for primary goods), and due to mechanisms inhibiting productivity gains resulting from technological innovation in the centre from being passed on to Third World consumers in the form of lower prices. The declining Terms of Trade will obviously affect the capacity of Third World countries to acquire necessary capital goods without recurring to foreign debt. Without foreign capital, however, the technological innovation, and thus their development is impossible. The recurrent resort to foreign capital, on the other hand, dooms the countries (since their export gains diminish) to insolvency.

The solution of the problem is largely inspired by the German 19th century economist (and prominent liberal constitutionalist thinker) Friedrich List, who argued for protective measures in to protect the German "infant industries" against the more competitive British production, until they became competitive. The solution adopted by the ECLA was called "Import-Substituting Industrialization" (ISI). Unfortunately, ISI proved insufficient to allow the development of LDC's and Prebisch's *dualism* was the target of the first dependency formulations.

⁶³The concept of heterogeneity has been extended by Dieter Senghaas later. Here it refers more particularly to the "dualist" economies in the periphery with a capitalist and industrialised export sector which has no spill-over effect to a generally backward national economy. See Dieter Senghaas, "Autozentrierte Entwicklung." In Dieter Nohlen & Franz Nuscheler, eds., *Handbuch der Dritten Welt 1. Unterentwicklung und Entwicklung: Theorien - Strategien - Indikatoren* (Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe), pp.359-379.

13.2. The content of dependency theories

Two different approaches can be distinguished, the "development of underdevelopment" school and the "dependent development school".

1. *"The development of underdevelopment" (Frank/Dos Santos, Wallerstein)*

The most often quoted definition of dependence has been given by Dos Santos

By dependence we mean a situation in which the economy of certain countries is conditioned by the development and expansion of another economy to which the former is subjugated. The relation of interdependence between two or more economies, and between these and world trade, assumes the form of dependence when some countries (the dominant one) can expand and can be self-sustaining, while other countries (the dependent ones) can do this only as a reflection of that expansion, which can have either a positive or negative effect on their immediate development. The concept of dependence permits us to see the internal situation of these countries as part of the world economy.⁶⁴

Thereby, he follows A.G. Frank's research on Latin American countries and his view of the international capitalist system. The traditional dichotomy of the owner and non-owners of the means of production is transposed to the international level - but not just since 1945, but since the very beginning of world capitalism. Four main theses can be extracted from Frank:

1. The periphery has been incorporated into the world economy since mercantilism (and especially through conquest): "the expansion of the capitalist system over the past centuries effectively and entirely penetrated even the apparently most isolated sectors of the underdeveloped world."⁶⁵

2. Such incorporation has transformed peripheral societies in capitalist societies.

⁶⁴ T. Dos Santos, "The Structure of Dependence." *American Economic Review*, 1970.

⁶⁵ André Gunter Frank, "The Development of Underdevelopment." *Monthly Review*, 1966, p.6.

3. The world capitalist society becomes a "whole chain of constellations of metropolis and satellites for surplus extraction" (7), in which the surplus generated at each stage is successively drawn off towards the center.

4. Peripheral societies are *not dualist*. The underdeveloped sector is integral and necessary part of the developed one. Not "because sectors remain underdeveloped that the country does not overcome its dependence", but "since some sectors are developed, other must remain underdeveloped.

The most elaborate version is perhaps the one by *Immanuel Wallerstein* (Figure 5). He shares with Frank the general outlook and historical explanation.⁶⁶ Moreover, he introduces some conceptual refinements.⁶⁷ There is most prominently the category of *semi-periphery* which is constituted both by rising peripheral countries and core countries in decline. They function as a transmission-belt, fettering the demands of the periphery and replacing *direct* control of the core. This dynamic element is compounded by a cyclical view of the world political economy. Following Kondratieff's cycles, Wallerstein establishes the recurrences of wars for the replacement of the hegemon (necessary in a World Capitalist system). Thus, two 30 years wars, 1618-1648 and 1914-1945, can be understood as the violent rearrangement for the new international leadership. In these *hegemonic wars*, Great Britain replaced the Dutch, before being in turn superseded by the U.S. Today's situation is, for Wallerstein, characterised by a declining hegemon and rising contestation by *anti-systemic movements* from within (e.g. pacifism) and outside the system (the socialist bloc).

⁶⁶ He stresses thereby the formation of the modern capitalist state as a specific European feature due to the balanced power position on the European continent.

⁶⁷ See for his general framework: "The Rise and Future Demise of the World-Capitalist System: Concepts for Comparative Analysis." In his collection *The Capitalist World Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, Paris: Editions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 1979/ repr. from 1974), pp.387-415. For an application to IPE, including his treatment of hegemony wars that is the base of the figure, see his collection *The Politics of the World-Economy. The States, the Movements and the Civilizations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press and Paris: Editions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 1984), pp.1-96.

2. The school of "associated-dependent development" (Cardoso, Evans)

Whereas the World Systems approach treats mainly the international level and has to a certain extent rightly been criticised for its outside-in determinism, this second school wants to analyse the non-mechanical and non-determinist interplay of external and internal forces in the political and economic development of LDC's.⁶⁸ A central concept in this approach is the phenomenon of "crippled" economies in the Third World.⁶⁹

capitalist accumulation in dependent economies does not complete its cycle. Lacking 'autonomous technology' - as vulgar parlance has it - and compelled therefore to utilize imported technology, dependent capitalism is crippled...It is crippled because it lacks a fully developed capital-goods sector. The accumulation, expansion, and self-realization of local capital requires and depends on a dynamic complement outside itself: it must insert itself into the circuit of international capitalism.⁷⁰

The stress is laid on the domestic political and economic structure for the explanation how actually policies are made, applied, and which chances there are for a country to overcome its backwardness.

In general, the recommendations are of a neo-mercantilist type, where one tries to selectively use the necessary foreign input without becoming in the same time overexposed to its competitive influences.⁷¹ Closer to the structuralist/dualist school than the World System, it acknowledges the exploitation done through the core control of international product and financial markets, and technology, but is less optimistic and tries to develop strategies of industrialisation and democratisation.

⁶⁸ See for this defense of dependency: Fernando Henrique Cardoso, "The consumption of dependency theory in the United States." *Latin American Research Review*, vol.12, 1977, p.22.

⁶⁹ Dieter Senghaas reminds in "Autozentrierte Entwicklung" that the expression "crippled" ("verkrüppelt") has its origin in Friedrich List's writings.

⁷⁰ Fernando Henrique Cardoso, "Associated-dependent development: Theoretical and Practical Implications." In Alfred Stepan, ed., *Authoritarian Brazil. Origins, Policies, and Future* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press), p.163.

⁷¹ This is Dieter Senghaas' formulation in his *Konfliktformationen im internationalen System* (Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp, 1988), p.142.

Therefore, this approach does not come up with a clear-cut theory of the way underdevelopment is produced or how, for any country, one can change this fact. It is closer to a historical-sociological method trying to *understand* the ways semi- and peripheral countries work in a global economy, i.e. to understand the specific inside-outside articulation of domestic systems and the world political economy.⁷²

13.3. The "Politicisation" of dependency

1. *The political critique of dependency*

André Gunter Frank has become a kind of a *bête noire* (and also a strawman) for different marxist writers some of whom are sympathetic with his thesis ("the development of underdevelopment"), but not with his argumentation, and some of whom refuse both.

The starting point of this inner-Marxist critique is Frank's concept of capitalism. *Ernesto Laclau* retraces Frank's definition in three steps. Capitalism is:

- a system of production for the market, in which
- profit constitutes the motive of production and
- this profit is realised for the benefit of someone other than the direct producer, who is thereby dispossessed of it.

Thereby, we can conclude that from the neolithic revolution onwards, there has never been anything, but capitalism.⁷³

Laclau agrees with Frank in the rejection of dualist theories (stating no link between backward and progressive sectors in LDCs economies), but sustains that this does not imply one single mode of production, i.e. capitalism. He argues for a concept of "economic systems", which can encompass different modes of production.

⁷² See also the presentation by Gabriel Palma, "Dependency and Development: A Critical Overview. In Dudley Seers, ed., *Dependency Theory: A Critical Reassessment* (London, 1980), pp.20-73.

⁷³ Ernesto Laclau, *Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory: Capitalism, Fascism, Populism* (London: Verso Ed.), p.23. The article to which the discussion refers was originally written in 1971 and expanded for the edition of the book.

In a similar vein is Robert Brenner's critique of Frank.⁷⁴ The label "Neo-Smithian" is attached at Frank, and also Wallerstein, because their approach is rooted in the sphere of exchange (market relations). He rigorously opposes the simple outside-in vision that Frank's writings sometimes display, because of its implication that the (peripheral) class system might be determined -i.e. might be a dependent variable of- by the international system is obviously a claim turning marxism upside-down. For Brenner the causes for the remaining pre-capitalist modes of production (and for the underdevelopment) are to be found in the "internal barriers to capital accumulation imposed by the forced labour systems, i.e. class structures, in the backward countries."

Thus, neither Laclau, nor Brenner tackle the more historicist (and much less determinist) approach of Cardoso, nor the empirical content (underdevelopment) of Frank's thesis.⁷⁵ Underdevelopment or the necessary persistence of pre-capitalist modes of production has become the explanandum of the analysis. This is far from the Leninist theory of imperialism.

It is undeniable that the reconceptualisations of these critiques are able to cope with the different historical formations in a more convincing way, than a strawman-version of Frank's "all-capitalism" which "bulldozes" everything into one concept. Yet, they are not without problems. Let us reconsider Laclau's approach. In the passage, where he makes a comparison between the mercantilistic and the present epochs, he asserts that the development of the dominant economic structures could generate underdevelopment by:

⁷⁴ Robert Brenner, "The origins of capitalist development: A critique of Neo-Smithian Marxists." *New Left Review*, vol.104, pp.25-92.

⁷⁵ For a comprehensive critique of Wallerstein where the writers extend behind the rather simple sphere of exchange - sphere of production controversy, see Aidan Foster-Carter, "The modes of production controversy. *New Left Review* vol.107, 1978; Theda Skocpol, "Wallerstein's world capitalist system: A theoretical and historical critique", *American Journal of Sociology*, vol.82, 1977, pp.1075-1090; and also Anthony Brewer, *Marxist Theories of Imperialism* (London: Routledge and Kegan, 1980). For a recent assessment, see Robert A. Denemark & Kenneth P. Thomas, "The Brenner-Wallerstein Debate. *International Studies Quarterly*, vol.32, no.1, 1988, pp.47-65.

reducing the economic surplus of the peripheral countries and fixing their relations of production in an archaic mould of *extra-economic coercion*, which retarded any process of social differentiation and diminished the size of their internal markets...Through its *monopoly positions*, metropolitan Europe fixed the price of commodities...while by means of *extra-economic coercion* it exploited labour-power in the mines and plantation-systems.⁷⁶

Laclau is hence describing power relations within the sphere of exchange (monopoly) and within the political system (extra-economic coercion). Thus, we are back to the traditional view of imperialism. The core expands in the periphery for economic reasons (related to the process of accumulation in the centre) but through political means. Yet, Laclau never discusses this link between economic sources and political means. Therefore, we remain left with the political means, which, interestingly enough indeed, would anyway suffice to explain economic dependence as defined by Laclau himself: economic dependence means "the constant absorption by one region of the economic surplus of another region."⁷⁷ This purely descriptive definition would hardly embarrass a mercantilist. It is perfectly possible to explain within this frame dependence by the better power position of the greater advantage, taken by the advanced capitalist states from the structure of the world political economy.⁷⁸

Similarly, other critiques of dependency argue for a distinction between the *political* impact of the international system and the *economic* working of capitalism. *Bill Warren's*⁷⁹ critique is thereby not only directed against the implications of dependency at the national level, but also against its view of the international system.

⁷⁶ Ernesto Laclau, *Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory*, p.37 (italics added).

⁷⁷ *ibid.*, p.36.

⁷⁸ This is the stand taken by Benjamin J. Cohen, *The Question of Imperialism: The Political Economy of Dominance and Dependence* (London et al.: Macmillan). He describes the international system as characterised by an "asymmetry of interdependence" (sic!) that reflects the considerable greater bargaining strength of the dominant capitalist nations and argues that underdevelopment is not a necessary feature of capitalism, but of the logic of power politics. A more radical (and, in my view, a more stringent) IPE approach would start questioning exactly this distinction by pointing to the links between power politics and the working of the international capitalist system.

⁷⁹ Bill Warren, *Imperialism: Pioneer of Capitalism* (London: New Left Books, 1980).

Warren is reestablishing a part of the autonomy of politics, rejecting the economic determinism that looms in certain dependency writings (Frank). He tries to save a more political concept of imperialism, and the progressive character of capitalism for pre-capitalist societies, both closer to Marxist traditional orthodoxy. For him, the (Leninist) confusion of *imperialism* and the *extension of the world market* made it impossible to distinguish between the negative effects of the growth of capital (economic) and the impact of advanced capitalist countries (political) and to distinguish between the anticapitalist struggle (socialism) and the anti-imperialist struggle (bourgeois nationalism in the Third World). Warren is part of the first, not of the second.

In a slightly different vein, *Sanjaya Lall* dismisses dependency. He does neither deny "the existence...of growing inequality and mass unemployment in several LDCs", nor "any factual statements about external influence and conditioning", but "that there is something peculiar in their occurrence in LDCs, which can be said to constitute dependence." These characteristics are not exclusive to LDCs, but - and here Lall's position resembles Warren's - to capitalist development in general ("features of capitalist growth"). Lall proposes instead a *political* conceptualization of different levels of dependence:

a pyramidal structure of *socio-political dominance* ...in the capitalist world with the top (hegemonic) position held by the most *powerful* capitalist country and the bottom by the smallest and poorest ones.⁸⁰

Now, to replace dependence by dominance or power is not a considerable advance in explanatory value, if one cannot specify the content of the new concept. Yet, what appears from this critique is therefore not so much the confusion between capitalism and imperialism, as an interrogation concerning *if the concept of power can be separated from the "motion" of the international economic system.*

⁸⁰ Sanjaya Lall, "Is 'Dependence' a useful concept in analysing underdevelopment?" *World Development* vol.3, 1975, pp.806, 803, 808 and 803 (italics added) for the respective quotes.

2. Power relations and international capitalism

Is the new focus on "bargaining power in asymmetrical interdependence" sufficient to apprehend power relations in the global world economy?

IPE as an attempt to overcome Realism has as research programme the link between power relations and the logic of international capitalism.

Frank had suggested a link between market position - economic resources - power - market position. It is the circular concept of "market power" which can possibly link structure (economic base) and superstructure (politics), through the actor, the class, which is replaced by countries and MNCs⁸¹. *Cardoso* would suggest that the expansion of international capitalism (market relations) and the organisation of the domestic economic and political system, undertaken in order to cope with the constraints of the global political economy, reflect power relations in which LDCs are dominated.⁸² *James Caporaso* tries to integrate the "second face of power" in order to counterattack the challengers of dependence theory by saving an approach that he calls dependency. Caporaso admits Lall's critique and acknowledges that *dependence* is, on the bargaining level, no demarcation criterion for LDCs. Yet, and here Caporaso departs from Lall, Cohen and Warren

to focus exclusively on the concrete bargaining among actors and the various ways in which actors effectively exert their wills over others is to ignore the fact that the social structuring of agendas might systematically favour certain parties.⁸³

It is supposed to rescue a concept of *dependency*, very close to *Cardoso*,

⁸¹ If this is a possible extension of the Marxist approach is, of course, another debate.

⁸² For a political analysis partly inspired by *Cardoso*, see for instance the different writings of Guillermo O'Donnell and Peter Evans in chapter 15.

⁸³ James Caporaso, "Dependence, dependency, and power in the global system: a structural and behavioral analysis." *International Organization* vol.32, 1978, p.33.

Dependency focuses on the absence of actor autonomy...Actor autonomy is limited by *internal* fragmentation and the reliance on *external* agencies for the completion of basic economic activities.⁸⁴

The definition of structural power runs as follows:

This kind of power is a higher-order power because it involves the ability to manipulate the choices, capabilities, alliance opportunities, and pay-offs that actors may utilize...We say this is a higher order form of power because it is a power to govern the rules which shape bargaining power. It is this type of power, structural power, which is crucial to the understanding of dependency.⁸⁵

Out of this approach stem also those attempts in IPE that try to integrate concepts of *hegemony* into the analysis. This is an ongoing research programme. They all display a certain *eclecticism* in their attempt to integrate Realist and Marxist thought. So is Robert W. Cox integrating the anarchical political system in his triad of analysis⁸⁶, and Stephen Gill and David Law explicitly understand their analysis as a specific form of (structural) power analysis.⁸⁷

13.4. The "Structuralisation" of Realist syntheses in IPE

1. Gilpin's three dialogues

Robert Gilpin started in 1975 to argue for what eventually became a conventional typology in International Political Economy. In an

⁸⁴ Ibid., p.18,23. In a similar vein, Philip O'Brien tries to describe the point where the quantitative asymmetry of interdependence becomes a qualitative difference: "Whereas developed countries face rules of competition, underdeveloped countries face and have always faced, rules of domination. Dependency, therefore, is introduced to emphasize the difference between a developed capitalist nation and an underdeveloped one, and hence, presumably, the way in which internal relations of dominance express themselves in each case." ("Dependency revisited." In C. Abel & C. Lewis, eds., *Latin America, Imperialism, and the State* (London, 1986), p.58/59).

⁸⁵ James A. Caporaso, "Introduction to the special issue on dependence and dependency in the global system." *International Organization* vol.32, 1978, p.4.

⁸⁶ See Robert W. Cox "Social Forces..." op.cit., and for his first attempt to analyse *hegemony*: "Gramsci, Hegemony and International Relations: An Essay in Method." *Millennium* vol.12, 1983, pp.162-175.

⁸⁷ See especially their "Global Hegemony and the Structural Power of Capital." *International Studies Quarterly* vol.33, 1989, pp.475-499.

article he set out "three models of the future"⁸⁸ which he analysed as different frameworks of analysis for the study of multinational corporations (MNCs). The typology has had a considerable impact on the literature in IPE⁸⁹, because it proposes the trilogy we have already met in the Inter-Paradigm Debate. His definition of IPE

the reciprocal and dynamic interaction in international relations of the pursuit of wealth and the pursuit of power⁹⁰

became a standard reference.⁹¹ It claimed to be broad enough to integrate the three "models of the future" into one discipline. And since it is now conventionally wisdom, he elaborated the triptych to a forceful statement of "three ideologies" in his, indeed very impressive, textbook on IPE.⁹²

Yet, he has some difficulties to handle the "liberal model". There is, at least, a tension in the solution, he provides us. In his thesis on Multinational Corporations, the liberal model was subsumed to be the interdependence model whose essential claim was that increasing economic interdependence and technological advances in communication and transportation are making the nation state an anachronism and shifting the control of World affairs to transnational actors and structures (e.g. Eurodollar market). Out of this framework grows a world view of voluntary and cooperative relations among interdependent economies, the goal of which is to accelerate the economic growth and welfare of everyone through the MNC as transmission belt of capital, ideas, and growth.

⁸⁸ Robert Gilpin, "Three Models of the Future." *International Organization* vol.29, no.1, 1975, pp.37-60. The article is excerpted out of a book which studies US American Multinationals: *U.S. Power and the Multinational Corporation*.

⁸⁹ See for similar triads (with only slightly different labelling), see Nazli Choucri (1980) "International Political Economy: A Theoretical Perspective." In *Change in the International System*, edited by George/Holsti/Siverson, pp.103-129; R.J. Barry Jones *International Political Economy: Problems and Issues*. Part I. *Review of International Studies* vol.7, 1981, pp.245-260; and finally Stephen Gill & David Law, David, *The Global Political Economy* (New York et al.: Harvester, 1988).

⁹⁰ Robert Gilpin, "Three Models of the Future..." , p.40.

⁹¹ See an example, already ten years later: Martin Staniland, *What is Political Economy?* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press).

⁹² Robert Gilpin, *The Political Economy of International Relations*.

This second idea, indeed the international liberal economists' credo, does not sit easily on the interdependence idea. This latter analyses the shift of control, i.e. power from the national to the transnational actors and structures. Political or power-analysis is an endogenous variable of the explanation. Liberal international economics, however, treat power as *exogenous*. By the force of his definition (where power and wealth are integrated), he would be pushed to exclude liberal international economics from the body of theory. This does not sound very useful. Therefore, he accommodates the definition in the 1987 textbook to what seems to be the present orthodoxy for the definition of IPE, the "state-market nexus". This definition allows to integrate liberal economic theory as the model for the study of markets - even if power is treated as exogenous variable. Nevertheless, he cannot but admit later that therefore "liberalism lacks a true political economy."⁹³ This squaring of the circle (how to integrate the liberals even if there are of no use) leaves one rather perplex.

The renewed stress on *political economy* (as in his first definition) was a reaction against the 'compartmentalisation' of the subject matter in two different disciplines which often treat the other as exogenous to the subject. Economics was considered insufficient, because it did not integrate power analysis in its explanatory models and in its turn, political science often treated economics as exogenous or sometimes only dependent on the political setting: the autonomy of market *forces* was missed. To alter the definition which stresses the "organization" of the pursuit of power and wealth, rather than the "objectives" of this activity⁹⁴ is to fall back on a conceptual and disciplinary split, political economy was supposed to overcome.

Quite in coherence with his earlier view, Gilpin *actually* tries to overcome this split by elaborating an approach which is a mix of the two "real" theories of political economy: mercantilism and marxism. He is often at pains to disentangle the two approaches - as he sees them.

⁹³ Robert Gilpin, *The Political Economy of International Relations*, p.45.

⁹⁴ This are Gilpin's terms, *ibid.*, p.11.

Trying to analyse *change* in world politics, Gilpin states that "every theory of International Relations requires a theory of the state."⁹⁵ Gilpin uses a historic approach which he borrows from a neo-marxist writer, Samir Amin. He emphasizes the special importance of the latter's concept of "social formation" (be it now originally Amin's or not), because it determines how the economic surplus is generated within and among societies.⁹⁶

Finally, Hegelian-Marxist approaches in general, and Lenin's law of uneven development" in particular are judged of "heuristic value", but too deterministic and ahistorical.⁹⁷ Yet, neo-Marxist writers in the dependency-tradition of Cardoso or stemming from a critical theory like Cox, see themselves as part of a "historicist Marxism that rejects the notion of objective laws of history."⁹⁸

Gilpin does sometimes acknowledge the similarities of Realism and Marxism in their perspectives on the nature and dynamics of International Relations. They differ essentially, according to him, with respect to the "underlying dynamic: Realism stresses the power struggle between states, and marxism stresses the profit motive of capitalist societies."⁹⁹ But for himself (and also for marxists) "the struggle for power and the desire for economic gains are ultimately and inextricably joined."¹⁰⁰

In his later work, he again discusses the difference between these two ideologies as being essentially the respective concept of human nature: Marxism believes in the malleability of man and in the "withering away" of imperialism, war and the state after a communist revolution.¹⁰¹ Here, he touches, I think, a profound point. Realism is based on philosophical skepticism of the human nature to an *extent*

⁹⁵ Robert Gilpin, *War & Change in World Politics*, p.15.

⁹⁶ *ibid.*, p.108.

⁹⁷ *ibid.*, p.48/49.

⁹⁸ Robert W. Cox (1981), "Social Forces, States and World Orders: Beyond International Relations Theory (+ Postscript 1985)" In Robert O. Keohane, ed., *Neorealism and its Critics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), p.248.

⁹⁹ *War & Change in World Politics*, p.94.

¹⁰⁰ *ibid.*, p.46.

¹⁰¹ *The Political Economy of International Relations*, p.43.

to which marxism might be not. It points, like the values in Holsti's case, to a philosophical or ethical level where indeed incompatibility exists.

In order to summarize Gilpin's approach, his eclectic mix could be presented as the spelling-out of three "dialogues". The first is explicit in his *War & Change* where he describes the function of the state (towards the internal as well as the external realm) being the protection of property rights and the personal security of the state's members. Raymond Aron calls this the dialogue between *Clausewitz* and *Lenin*:

je n'ai jamais méconnu le dialogue entre Clausewitz et Lénine. Le premier ne mettait pas en doute la notion du bien de la communauté (ou de l'intérêt national, dans le vocabulaire d'aujourd'hui)...Lénine répliquait à Clausewitz qu'il admirait, que dans un Etat de classes, il ne pouvait y avoir de bien commun. L'action extérieure des États exprimerait la volonté d'une classe ou d'une autre. Les événements, depuis la révolution de 1917 réfutent simultanément, me semble-t-il, les théories extrêmes.¹⁰²

The second dialogue is between *Marx* and *Keynes*:

The logic of the market economy as an inherently expanding global system collides with the logic of the modern welfare state...The welfare state has only transferred the fundamental problem of the market economy and its survivability to the international level.¹⁰³

And finally there is the dialogue between *Lenin* and *Kautsky*, i.e. between imperialism and ultra-imperialism which is repeatedly acknowledged and somewhat relabelled in neo-mercantilist terms (cooperation or new protectionism after the hegemonic decline of the US).

2. *Strange's Realist Structuralism*

The second writer attempting a marxist-realist rapprochement is Susan Strange. But above all she pursues an ideological and empirical critique of American mainstream IPE as represented by regime theory and Hegemonic Stability Theory (see also chapter 12). She argues for a structural approach that, on the one hand wants to integrate the marxist concern with production and the Realist concern

¹⁰² Raymond Aron, *Les derniers années du siècle* (Paris: Julliard, 1984), p.30.

¹⁰³ *The Political Economy of International Relations*, p.63.

with security into a wider analysis of the world political economy around a concept of *structural power*.

[IR scholars'] focus on the territorial state has directed attention to the political consequences for only two out of the four major factors of production - land and labour - and has left in the shadows the power derived from the other factors of production, notably knowledge (or technology) and capital, the two that have most easily escaped the control of the state and that can most easily slip across territorial frontiers... [structural power is] the ability - most unevenly distributed throughout the system - to shape the basic structures of production, security, credit and knowledge.¹⁰⁴

...This means more than the power to set the agenda of discussion or to design (in American phraseology) the international "regime" of rules and customs.¹⁰⁵

In a rather complex move, she links this structural level of four basic structures (production, security, knowledge, and finance) to the "unit level". This is done through two assumptions. First, although she does not develop a full-fledged theory of the state, she starts from a model of societies around values. Since she had criticised the conservative bias of the "Politics of International Economic Relations" approaches, she bases her model of society on four social (not individual) values: security (order), wealth, justice and freedom to choose. The priorities given to some values and not to others, determine the central relationship between "authorities" (state and non state actors) and "market". Second, this "sea-saw" between market and authorities is de facto moved by the authority¹⁰⁶. Authorities decide (those who have the power and the interests) the environment, the extension and the form of market relations. MNCs, as authorities, can impose order on markets (oligopolies) on market relations.

The articulation of the structural and the unit levels is the following: changes in the (transnationally conceived) structures will affect

¹⁰⁴ "International Political Economy: The Story So Far and the Way Ahead." In W. Ladd Hollist & Lamond Tullis, eds., *The International Political Economy* (Boulder: Westview), p.15.

¹⁰⁵ "The Persistent Myth of Lost Hegemony," *International Organization* 41 (4/1987), p.565.

¹⁰⁶ *States and Markets*, p.23.

the power of authorities. This in turn will affect the relations of authorities and markets in one society and thereby the particular mix of the four social values and hence the particular group(s) which benefits from a certain mix. This line of argumentation is recommended for "sectorial analysis" which has the advantage to focus on particular bargaining situations in their structural context and which allows easier debates across ideological barriers.

In this approach, IPE supersedes IR. Waltz's systemic realism is still there, but only in one out of her four structures (the security structure). In a framework wider than Gilpin's and Cox', she meets some characteristics of the "cob web" approach¹⁰⁷.

Central for this conceptualisation is once more a *structural concept of power*. As in recent dependency or world system writings, Susan Strange opposes the traditional Realist focus on overt conflict and stresses those power relations which are *prior* to the actual conflict (the *active shaping of structures*), or *non-intentional influences of decisions and non-decisions*.¹⁰⁸

This, of course, is the paradox: that US strategies for global financial integration have pulled other states and their economies further into involvement with the world market economy and in doing so have enlarged opportunities for American providers of financial and other services. But at the same time, this deliberate creation of an open world economy in the image of the USA has inadvertently restricted opportunities for blue-collar workers in the United States. But *the fact that strategies, as in war, sometimes have consequences unforeseen by their creators does not mean that the latter are powerless, only that they cannot always see into the future, or forecast the full costs as well as the benefits of their actions*.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ As one scholar of John Burton has put it, the cobweb view implies "a world made up of networks of transactions that could be conceptually organised as 'systems' which interconnected, overlapped and interacted." See C.R. Mitchell, "World Society as a Cobweb: States, Actors and Systemic Processes." In Michael Banks, ed., *Conflict in World Society. A new perspective on international relations* (Brighton: Harvester Press/Wheatshaf Books, 1984), pp.59-77. Strange sees four such systems.

¹⁰⁸ For a stringent account of the effects of *non-decisions*, see her *Casino Capitalism* (London et al.: Basil Blackwell, 1986).

¹⁰⁹ "Finance, Information, and Power", *Review of International Studies*, vol.16, 1990, p.267.

I think there are two different points in the analysis of American power to which she alludes and which depart from actual (may be not potential) regime analysis.

The first is her critique of the distorted impression that the sheer existence of constraints implies an erosion of American power. Growing interdependence has also *opened the door* for more U.S. foreign influence possibilities. The analysis must weigh both factors.

The second is that even if the US do not *intend* to challenge foreign countries on their policies, i.e. to put constraints on their options, this does not mean that their actual decisions cannot do it. The U.S. have certainly a lot of non-intentional/non-conscious power which does not guarantee that they can control every outcome, but according to which all the other participants of the international game must adapt their behaviour. It is the unintended consequence ("influence") of conscious or unintended abilities, which they must take into account (typically in "worst-case" - scenarios).

She thereby comes very close to dependency approaches and uses a concept of power recalling Perroux's *dominance*. Yet departing from the Mainstream Realist IPE account à la Klaus Knorr

...dominance exists when economic events and domestic economic policies in A persistently affect economic events and policies in B more than the other way round.

...such effects are incidental...economic dominance may reflect superior economic innovation that is not cultivated, at least primarily, to cause adjustments in other economies.¹¹⁰

she sees this as important power relations. Or to use an image of Pierre Hassner's for the description of a condominium: It does not make any difference to the trampled grass if the elephants above it make love or war (the origin is said to be chinese).

¹¹⁰ Klaus Knorr, *Power and Wealth. The Political Economy of International Power* (London et al.: Macmillan, 1973), p.77/78.

13.5. IPE as a critique of Realism

As the recent reformulations of Neo-Realism, the main item of attack in the Realist research programme becomes the double and circularly defined concepts of *sovereignty and anarchy*. Circularly defined because sovereignty means the recognition that there exists no higher authority than the state, and anarchy means a system without overarching authority, i.e. made out of sovereign states. This has always been the basic ground of Realism, even though it became more sophisticated in the writings of the British School, of Aron, Kissinger, and Wolfers.¹¹¹

The Neo-Realist move had consisted in the redefinition of Waltz' second level, the level of differentiation. Since anarchy at least in its formal sense can be said to persist, the second level (of what Buzan calls the deep structure) must be qualifiable and not circularly defined to the level of anarchy as Waltz does. Concepts like Buzan's *interaction capacity* and Ruggie's *density* are built for this purpose.¹¹²

This Marxist-Realist IPE research programme starts from the presupposition that this is not a departure radical enough. It is not enough just to add the MNC's to the list of actors and the market to the list of processes or structures, as Neo-Mercantilist IPE does, to have solved the problems. Certainly not the *economics* of international politics, but neither the *politics* of international economics will do. This IPE research programme looks indeed for a *political economy*, i.e. the interplay between capitalism and the modern state system *in its evolution*. Quite contrary to the idea of an *end of history*, this IPE schools is heading for a new conceptualisation of the *international*. Anarchy (Realism), international society (British school), world society or cobweb (Burton), world system (Wallerstein) are in fact all insufficient to account for what should actually be the main core of the analysis of IR or IPE. It is therefore not fortuitous that at this speci-

¹¹¹ See chapter 5.

¹¹² See chapter 16 for a more detailed discussion.

fic point in time the theoretical thought has turned to power: in Realism power configurations explained the way the *international* looked like. One way to expand and improve the analysis is to improve the concept of power and the link from it to the *international*, whci one could call e.g. *rule*.

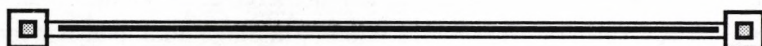
Has this research programme already yielded some results? The answer is yes, but may be not enough. On the *ideological level*, as we have already seen in the critique of HST (chapter 12), it has highlighted the aim of de-responsibilisation that can lay in such concepts like *system of self-help* (Waltz) linked to the *weak state-strong state distinction* (Krasner), *tectonic plates* (Krasner), and *public goods* (Kindleberger) we already discussed above. Self-help connotates the idea that morals do not apply to the international realm and that weak states lose or get exploited *because they are weak*. There is very few about the way how states can be systematically *weakened* in the international system. Power arguments are very much arguments about *stocks* and not *flows* in this view. Krasner's tectonic plates tell the Third World countries they should not overdo their use of regimes, because if those are too much against the interest of the strong, the regime with its limited advantages for the weaker will erupt (think about the UNESCO debate that arose around that time). There is not very much about the power configuration of an international system where the threat "take it (the regime) or leave it" seems natural at least to Krasner. Finally, we get to the core: *anarchy/sovereignty*. The Neo-Realist solution is partly contradicting the Waltzian model. In a systemic approach the two first must be linked. If there exists a *functional* differentiation, there is indeed a non-anarchical system. Anarchy can accept a differentiation based on capacities (big powers versus small powers: hierarchy of a pick-order without a leader) - not a *structured system of subsystems that are not the same*. There is allowed to be a quantitative difference of being, but not a qualitative difference of task and function. This is one the main reasons why the transposition of ideas from the *domestic realm* to the *international realm* (the so-called *domestic analogy*) is only partly allowed in Realism.

Expanding on Susan Strange's structures, however, I would conceive the world as functionally differentiated - without being hierarchical in the sense of the domestic system. The financial functions are certainly not distributed more or less to the sovereign state. There is a specific *regime*, if one wants to call it like that, made up of different state (government and central banks) and private actors, specific mechanisms (stock and exchange markets) that interplay in a specialised way: there exists an international division of finance. The same applies for the international ruling of conflict or the international organisation of production. It is a *transnational* functional differentiation where it makes more sense to think about transnational configuration of actors where governments are subsumed to be part of it. At first hand, those systems are neither anarchical, nor hierarchical in the *domestic sense*, where authority seemed mostly concentrated at the state level. Yet, with the modern concentration *and diffusion* of power also at the domestic level, traditional stratification and pluralist theories get into trouble: the way how the state can be conceptualised is *far less obvious than the IR anarchy/hierarchy dichotomy would let us to believe*. In other words, the refusal to give up the *anarchy* concept is based in a *poor domestic political theory*. The interplay of Western democracy and the Western capitalist organisation of the state reproduces at the domestic and the international level at the same time an expansion of capacities *and* an unequal diffusion of them. This IPE research programme is also about the problem if the last two items are linked systematically.

Thus the underlying IR/IPE puzzle about how to conceptualise the '*international*' reflects the domestic debate about a *theory of the state*. This makes it even more difficult to come to grips with one of the burning research questions today: the integration of a theory of the state into IR/IPE or the exact articulation of the internal/external divide. Anarchy, hierarchy and sovereignty are thereby just useful as formal concepts or in the important legal context. Sure, the security dilemma still exists. But all this is just able to provide an increasingly partial picture of how the *international is actually structured and*

ruled. The International system is moving and the historical process of internationalisation (and societalisation, democratisation, individualisation?) above and below the state should not be concealed in making the traditional anarchy concept just more complicated. By making *power structural*, IPE points to the move to replace *anarchy* by *rule* - that may not need the incidence of a world government.

Managing the International Monetary System: The Political Economy of Bretton Woods¹¹³



As in the second part, theoretical chapters are followed by empirical ones. The two more applied topics chosen stem from IPE. The first on Bretton-Woods, is one of the major topics in mainstream IPE, especially for HST. It is a more historical account of foreign economic policy (analogous to the containment chapter in part 2). The second on Bureaucratic-Authoritarianism (BA) is a specific approach for the understanding of the internal/external articulation for semi-peripheral countries in today's stage of capitalism. As the chapter on crisis decision-making, it focuses on policy elaboration - yet, in a different way. Whereas foreign policy analysis focuses on processes internal to the government, BA focuses on state-society relations. It analyses the external **and** domestic constraints put on a country that is historically situated: It is not an approach applicable to all countries, but to some of them that find themselves at a specific stage of nation-building and economic development. Both chapters have been chosen to show the shift of analysis that happened in IR, or now, more precisely, IPE.

¹¹³ This section relies heavily on Susan Strange's analysis as worked out in her *International Monetary Relations*, vol.2 of Andrew Shonfield, ed., *International Economic Relations in the Western World, 1959-1971* (Oxford University Press, 1976); and her *Casino Capitalism*.

14.1. The objectives of Bretton-Woods: "Embedded Liberalism"

The Bretton-Woods agreement of 1944 reflected the twofold objective of an international monetary system stable enough to allow some national autonomy in macroeconomic policy (demand management) and based on convertibility and fixed rates. The solution was an Anglo-American compromise, whereby the U.S. power position prevailed.

1. "Embedded Liberalism" as a lesson of the past

First, Bretton-Woods was conceived to preserve some achievements of the 20's and 30's international monetary management. Neither the free flowing at the beginning of the 20's, nor the collapse of the international monetary system during the depression should be repeated. The Bretton Woods system draws on a *managed (limited) gold standard* as it is expressed in the conference of Genoa 1922 and the Tripartite agreement 1936.

The Genoa conference of 1922 institutionalised - in the context of gold supply shortages - a system where some (later so-called) "key currencies" could be used as reserve assets. Whereas the key-currencies (first Sterling, later more Dollar) would keep a gold standard, the others could have a Gold-Exchange standard. As during the traditional Gold Standard, Gold was convertible and freely circulating.

The Tripartite agreement in 1936 was a reaction to the increasing short-term ("hot") money flows, due partly to the multiplication of financial centers after London's (relative) decline. Great Britain, France, and the U.S. agreed that during "hot"-money attacks, the central banks will cooperate to check the exchange rate pressure (because of short-term balance of payments disequilibria). As under the Gold Standard the exchange rates were aimed to be fixed.

Thus, Bretton Woods established a system based on a Gold Exchange standard, whereby only one currency was convertible in gold and all currencies were supposed to be convertible among them along fixed exchange rates - after a transition which took finally much longer than originally envisaged: the major European currencies joined in 1958, the rest in 1961.

Second, BW wanted to release some of the international constraints that the Gold Standard put on domestic economic policy.

To recall: the *automatic* adjustment in a fixed exchange rate system with a fixed gold standard was to be done domestically. In a country with a balance of payments deficit, the export of gold contracts the monetary base (at least in monetarist theory). The deflationary effect makes export cheaper and imports dearer. Hence, by compressing domestic demand the balance of payment will be re-equilibrated.

It is true that this deflationary policy was rarely applied. Monetary authorities - even under the Gold Standard, as Triffin and Arthur I. Bloomfield argue, tended to "accommodate" the deflationary pressure in order to avoid domestic contraction. Finally, the exchange rates were adjusted. Only Great Britain followed this rule, especially through interest-rate adjustments. The "leader" took the responsibility - "delegating" the adjustment to the Empire, esp. India.

In order to avoid these painful domestic adjustments, BW accepted a certain domestic autonomy in the balance of payments regimes of the different countries. If intervention it was, it was *post hoc*. This was especially important for the leading country, the U.S., which was persuaded not to repeat Britain's policy. Another reason was the Keynesian revolution of the 30's, the *New Deal*. The U.S. did even at that time already make clear that there are certain domestic priorities that could not be challenged.

Bretton-Woods can be summarized as a IMS based on exchange-rate stability (even though limited and flexible over time) and gold convertibility guarantee (even though only for one currency), i.e. a system of loose pre-established rules for multilateral intervention. Yet, the fact that this very idea of a national autonomy, which could effectively only apply to the key currency in the system, became so prominent, is already an indication that BW's objectives were quite obviously the objectives of the leader, the U.S.

2. "Embedded liberalism" as reflection of U.S. interests

Following in a straightforward fashion a Realist approach, the BW regime is a surface phenomenon of the underlying power distribution in the World Political Economy. The strongest actor by its reserve position (more than 60% of total world gold reserves), its credit control, production competitiveness, and military force prevailed in the bargain for the decision of *how to mix the objective of international stability and national autonomy*.

The French proposal was much in the line of the Tripartite agreement, with a sole link to gold. The common gold-pool should be relative to the currency held abroad. The British proposal was the most ambitious. Under the supervision of Keynes, the UK proposed an international currency (BANCOR) as future reserve asset, which was fixed to gold. The Gold rate, in turn, could change. This currency would be controlled (and supplied) by an international organisation which could create credit - and implicitly control every country, the U.S. included. Countries in Balance of Payments disequilibria would pay interests to this *central bank of central banks*. The final draft was, however, close to the "White Plan". The size of this central bank's central bank was much smaller (8.8 Bio.\$) and credit facilities were based on the votes relative to the quota within the *International Monetary Fund*. The *adjustment* was not to be undertaken by all countries, but by *all minus one*, the one being the U.S. The U.S. veto power made of the *scarce currency clause* a piece of paper. In addition, BW did not consider questions of distribution from North to South as a priority.

Thus, Bretton Woods became a system which made of the Dollar *the* key currency without imposing any form of international control for the national management of this after all *international currency*. This corresponded closely to Western interests. Only later, when the U.S. did try to avoid any of the domestic adjustments necessary to run an international currency, when *burden sharing* and *exorbitant privilege* started to be incompatible, U.S. interest ostensibly prevailed and Bretton Woods broke down. We are still in a *Dollar Standard*.

14.2. Insufficient instruments

The instruments of BW were, however, rudimentary and failed to recognize:

- crucial links between the gold market and the exchange market and between both and the reserve currencies
- problems of liquidity
- rules for IMF intervention

1. The market links

The system was based on the Dollar-Gold-convertibility at a fixed price of 35 \$/ounce. Exchange rate fluctuations were limited at $\pm 1\%$ to the par value of the currency. The adjustment was to be done by "all minus one" (i.e. the Dollar). In order to link international stability and national autonomy, an international organisation was put up to check the weak link in the whole system, the balance of payments: the IMF/IBRD. Especially, the IMF can be seen as an institutionalised "Tripartite agreement" providing short-term credits for balance of payments difficulties. The amount of the credits was relative to the (fixed) quota the country had in the IMF and was submitted to rising conditionality.

Yet, this system failed to recognise the potential tension between, on the one hand, a stable gold price fixed by a U.S government decree of 1934 and supported now by an international agreement of 1944, and on the other hand, a *private market for gold*. Indeed, the history of BW can be partly seen as the history of various attempts to defend the discretionary fixed gold price.

Only when the other major currencies became convertible and once London had two markets, one for gold, one for the exchange-rates, the fluctuations and spill-over between both increased, so to make *the management of gold* necessary.

In 1961, it was no longer possible to fix the price at 35\$/ounce by decree. A multilateral buffer stock, the *Gold pool*, was constituted. 270 Mio.\$ (50% U.S.) provided a fund first for selling, then from

Feb. 1962 on, for buying gold on the market through the Bank of England. This worked well, mainly because the Soviet needed foreign currencies and sold massively gold on the market. When this stopped and the production of gold fell in 1967, the Gold Pool busted.

The Two-Tier agreement in 1968 prohibited the selling or buying of gold by central banks on the market. It could only be exchanged between central banks. A private and an official market was created, with no certain rules (a 35\$ floor for the private market, as well) and with the strong resistance of some gold producers as South Africa. Here, the principle of a stable gold price (for stable exchange rates) *abolished part of the convertibility of the key currency into gold*. BW's original principles were thus self-contradicting, if not accommodated by an *intergovernmental adjustment* for which there were no rules.

The Bretton Woods system failed consequently to recognise the effect these markets could have on the *stability of the reserve currencies*. First the Sterling, then the Dollar had to be "saved" by multilateral agreements.

Starting with the weaker link in the chain: the Sterling. Deeply instable because of an "overhang" of balances over reserves and susceptible to large-scale shifts of capital through market operation in London, Great Britain sought to reinforce its position through a series of short and medium-term credit lines, the reinforcement of reserves and if all that was not enough, through devaluation. In 1961, the first Basle agreement rescued the Sterling from a crisis. *Not an automatic support by the IMF, but a central bank management defended Sterling as a reserve currency through:*

- central banks accumulate Sterling for three to six months (with exchange rate guarantee)
- hot-money recycling.

In 1964, the IMF help was not enough for the renewed crisis: a massiff 3 Bio.\$ loan in 24 h by central banks saved the Sterling. In 1967, linked to a package of 3 Bio.\$ (IMF = 1.4, GAB = 0.5) credit, the UK had to devalue. In 1968, the second Basle agreement put even more condition on the UK with regard to its monetary associates, because

a fall of British reserves could be caused as much by Australia, then by Great Britain herself.¹¹⁴

The Dollar was backed by different arrangements to provide a buffer against its *structural overhang over reserves*. The short-term solutions (that helped also the Sterling) were:

- the \$6 Bio. of the GAB (General Agreement to Borrow) installed in 1961/62 which was *not* at the disposal of the IMF, but of the multilateral surveillance of the Group of Ten. The voting formula has been carefully devised in order to give the combined voting power of the EEC participants a veto on a borrowing by the two reserve countries. (French and Dutch pressure). No delegation to IMF. No inclusion of other countries.¹¹⁵

Specific American help mechanisms were:

- the increase of the quota (and therefore the amount of *cheap credit*) in 1959,
- the introduction of SDR's (67: in Rio, 68: Stockholm), and finally
- the breakdown of the Dollar's convertibility: 68 in Two-Tier agreement and then in 1971 through the suspension of Gold-Dollar link.

2. The liquidity debate

The defence of the Dollar was, in a certain way, disguised as a liquidity debate. In BW, no mechanism was established for the creation of liquidity. In a world of rising trade and increasing "hot"-money movements through the integration of financial markets, the part of currency reserves as compared to gold was logically rising (Gold supply being restricted). Liquidity becomes linked to the Dollar supply, which, in turn, is at the discretion of a national authority whose balance of payment can go unchecked.

¹¹⁴ Britain's liability was transformed from an obligation to provide foreign exchange for Sterling held in London into an obligation to write up the values of guaranteed balances in case Sterling should be devalued or \$ revalued (= \$ guarantee. Generally a monetary guarantee for mutual protection against exchange rate volatility).

¹¹⁵ This provoked high resentment for its explicit *North-South divide*.

The erratic growth of liquidity was therefore *at the mercy of U.S. interests*. U.S. strategic policies (Vietnam) and its private foreign direct investment provided the liquidity - but without an international check and eventually without the monetary base (reserves). The Gold-Dollar Exchange Standard became a *Dollar-Paper Standard*. Meanwhile, this served well American interests abroad in the international production and security sphere.

3. *The rules for IMF intervention*

No rules for the permission of credits were developed beforehand. They evolved during the late 50's as e.g. the letter of intent (with the stand-by agreement for Peru in 1958) and the later attenuated "prior notice" clause (the IMF right to suspend credit) applied 1958 for Bolivia.

The logic of the tasks the IMF had to perform ("to adjust the international monetary system") contributed to an increase of its responsibilities:

- through "multilateral surveillance" delegated by the Group of Ten
- through the later created SDR's and
- through the stand-by agreements (from 1952 on).

Yet, its institutional bias fixed at BW, still reflects an intergovernmental bargain, where the Western World, and in particular the U.S., can let their interests prevail.

14.3. The internal contradiction of the regime of Bretton Woods

BW was based on an internal contradiction between, on the one hand, its aim, i.e. the mix of an intergovernmental regime and national autonomy, and, on the other hand, its main principle, the "one currency" standard. To be put in a nutshell: the only country for which autonomy can mean anything in a one-currency system, the currency provider, is exactly the country where no need to adjust is fixed. In other words, the mix is resolved by *an autonomy for one, and*

intergovernmentality for the others. (As the Balance of power policy of Great Britain in the 19th century: power for Britain, and balancing the rest.)

On the one hand, BW has an *intergovernmental logic*; therefore, the IMF (even though the voting power makes some more equal than others). Yet, for the stand-by agreements and for the eventual devaluations, no set of rules was established that could automatically be applied to situations, especially of chronic international debt and requiring the imposition of multilateral surveillance on the debtor country. In addition to that, creditors could always opt out, as the French did with regard to Britain in 1965 and in 1967. The international form of the surveillance had to be developed as the Working Party III of the OECD and the BIS during the 60's.

Yet, this intergovernmental logic was strongly attenuated by the possible veto of its strongest parts and most prominently by its *reliance on one country*, for which no check was provided, no self-restraint pursued. A system cannot be automatically adjusted, if some of the *basic functions are reserved to the discretionary politics of one country*.

If there is one coherence in the behavior of the United States within BW, then that the international constraint was never allowed to interfere too much into domestic policies - a goal other countries could not even pursue. The U.S. handled the international currency, the Dollar, as if it were a strictly domestic one.¹¹⁶ It did *not adjust domestically*, as did the UK (with the "burden sharing" help of e.g. India). The new asset, the SDR, potentially an improvement into the direction of a real intergovernmental system, was in fact *not* introduced to help the U.S. mitigate the external constraints.

In a system which expresses the underlying balance of bargaining power (or maybe better: the correlation of forces?) where the leader was neither confronted with a fixed set of rules for crucial adjustment processes, nor constrained by the existing principles, to act in self-en-

¹¹⁶ Raymond Aron, *Les dernières années du siècle* (Paris: Julliard, 1984), p.44.

lightened manner, *the tension between the national and international logic* might not always be resolved in favour of the former.

When the leader does not adjust to the system, the system adjusts to the interests of the leader.

14.4. Bretton Woods: A case of Hegemonic Stability Theory?

The very way the Bretton Woods system has been presented here, followed a rather typical IPE approach that integrates *from the outset* the main actor's capabilities, interests and policies into an analysis of international economic relations. This is important to note. The study of political mechanisms and bargains is *not* introduced post hoc to explain why suboptimal economic choices have been made. This is the typical move in an economic policy analysis. It starts by presenting blueprints for policy action that are based on strictly economic criteria of efficiency. It compares actual choices with the blueprints and accounts for the variance with the popular argument that the politicians 'messed it up.' Politics corresponds here to a residual category, the dummy variable of a statistical equation. Political Economy refuses such an approach. If the blueprint does not work it should integrate the variables that are political.

Now, having followed the evolution of Bretton-Woods, the relevance of Hegemonic Stability Theory can be assessed with regard to international monetary relations: Do we need a (one) hegemon? Were the U.S. and GB comparably strong to play such a role? Is the decline of U.S. power responsible for the breaking up of Bretton Woods?

With regard to the first question, it is of some interest that Kindleberger's initial study was primarily on monetary (and not trade) relations. One should expect therefore that Hegemonic Stability Theory fits rather well the case. And indeed, there seems to be a difference also in the *domestic* management of money and commerce.

The management of money is something which cannot just be left to the market or economic agents. Nowhere it is. It seems that it presupposes not only rules (as private and especially contract law for

the development of stable labour relations and markets)¹¹⁷, but a centralized structure with a primordial currency as standard of value and measuring rod. Therefore, a functioning international capitalist system presupposes a centralized money management - yet *in a way that no other economic 'issue area' does*.

Now, centralized money management does not mean a monopoly position for one country and its currency: it could very much be a multilateral management with a basket currency, i.e. something like Keynes' initial plan or what is at stake at the European Central Bank and the ECU. Also SDR's could have been developed in that way. Yet, monetary management is so primordial for economic relations, that those countries with a relatively independent currency are rather jealous for any intrusion into their 'sovereignty'. In that respect, we might indeed need a hegemon - but *because the hegemon wants it like that*, not because of any economic or financial necessity.

A last remark on this first question of the necessary hegemon. There is this strange word of the hegemon's sacrifices for the international interest.¹¹⁸ Besides the idealist assumptions exceptional for Realism, this argument can only run, if one takes the hegemon as a kind of unified actor. Obviously, the amazing development of (initially almost exclusively USAmerican) MNCs have indirectly provided the U.S. with considerable windfalls. Their declining bases in the U.S. might indicate a loss of U.S. power (even though the argument is not straightforward). Yet, the export of production sites abroad (the haunting de-industrialisation) of the U.S. is *no effect of free-riding* (as the second thesis of HST has it). Foreigners cannot be blamed for it. **The responsibility**, if there is an individualised one, lays exactly in

¹¹⁷ This is one of the main initial insights of Institutional Economics. See e.g. S. Todd Lowry, "Bargain and Contract Theory in Law and Economics." In Samuels J. Warren, ed., *The Economy as a System of Power. Papers from the Journal of Economic Issues, Vol. I: Corporate Systems* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books, 1979), pp.261-282; among O.E. Williamson's writings, see e.g. *Economic Organization: Firms, Markets, and Policy Control* (Brighton: Wheatsheaf, 1985); and Geoffrey M. Hodgson, *Economics and Institutions. A Manifesto for a Modern Institutional Economics* (Cambridge et al.: Polity Press, 1988).

¹¹⁸ This is Kindleberger's wording. See in detail chapter 12.3.

the free trade dogmas the U.S. (and others) are most prominent to championing. In other words, the hegemonic position might entail some national costs, but even more *private* American benefits that derived from the open world economy where the U.S. could profit from its hegemonic position. During the decolonization the U.S. could disclose new markets and production sites, as well as cheap sources of raw material. The Third World wars have resulted in a type of *pacification* where a rather reliable legal framework for the working of the MNC's could be installed.

Decolonization meant acceleration of the introduction of advanced capitalism into the Third World, and the United States was the most efficient capitalist. The postwar regimes in international trade and finance brought worldwide prosperity, not least to the United States.¹¹⁹

Let us then turn to the second question: to what extent are GB and the U.S. comparable powers for the role of the hegemon? Bruce Russett has put together some of the main economic indicators through which hegemony could be assessed. The results shed some twilight on the possibility to empirically operationalise 'hegemony' as understood by HST. The U.S. is still more leading in GDP, manufacturing, than UK at *any* time of its so-called hegemony. The decline is a relative one, understandable in comparison with the *exceptional* post-worldwar II height.¹²⁰ The United Kingdom was never the dominant power as measured by either GNP or military expenditures. If they are comparable cases of hegemony, HST must provide more specific analysis of historical ways hegemony emerges. Otherwise, the concept is too vague to explain very much.

From this follows, that claims for 'burden-sharing' or for whatever other help to sustain the hegemon cannot be unambiguously substantiated. It might be true that the U.S. could no longer be reasonably expected to sustain the system. The opposite argument, however, could hold as well, namely that it just shifted unilaterally the burden

¹¹⁹ Bruce Russett, "The mysterious case of vanishing hegemony: or is Mark Twain really dead?", in *International Organization*, 1985, vol.39, n.2.

¹²⁰ *ibid.*

of adaptation and stabilization to the international system. One could call this the *hegemon's privilege to export adjustment*.

The core of the explanation, in turn, shifts from an insufficient structural power constellation to a rigid state-society relation in the U.S. Maybe there is even a more general point to be made. Welfare States might structurally be less able to manage such a system (especially if they go to a costly war). Then, HST either implies turning back to the 19th Century state or to a form of multilateral management where the hegemon must over time give up part of its privileges.¹²¹ Or there is just the incapacity of the U.S. state-society to handle its domestic and international development. Such topics are not yet part of HST.

Finally there remains the related question if it was indeed a loss of power that induced the U.S. to break off the system. The assessment of power is, however, not as easy as HST would wish. Even granted we could take economic indicators that are roughly measurable, a loss of U.S. power *position* appears only after the mid 70s. Only then got the U.S. sufficiently 'weak' to expect the demise of a 'regime.' Contrary to regime's expectations, though, it seems rather more reasonable to argue that the breakdown of the regime *preceded* a significant weak power position. Naturally this can be explained away by anticipation or another clever move. The main point is that the concept of power, as it is used here, does not provide a sufficient measure to sustain the argument. Its use feigns a solution to a problem that power itself conceals.

Take some other features of power. States might have lost generally of their capacity to control outcomes (to structures like markets or other actors like IOs or MNCs). If this is true, no intergovernmental collaboration might be enough - *if the rules of the game remain untouched* (through which markets, regimes, and actors

¹²¹ The same argument applies if a version of HST should appear in a German led European Union, or for the same European Union with regard to its peripheral East European and Mediterranean fringes.

might get constrained). Secondly, as long as a hegemon can avoid or veto any different international economic management, it is enough to preserve its interests: the other must adjust. The exact line where this might not hold any longer, seems rather impossible to assess. Finally, one should just refer to the extraordinary ideological monopoly that free-trade capitalism enjoys today. It is by now so encompassing that it appears hard to imagine any alternative. The American way of life has been seen very close to a cultural hegemonic position. All those items benefit the U.S. (exports, e.g.), without being measurable or reducible to a material base.

Conceptually and empirically, therefore, the assessment of the validity of theses 2 and 3 of Hegemonic Stability Theory are strenuous. Thesis 1 could be reasonably defended for the monetary regime. But it is also the only one which was part of the discourse in International Relations - before Hegemonic Stability Theory arrived on stage.

The Political Economy of Development. Bureaucratic-Authoritarianism in Brazil



Introduction

As in Part II, one of the two more empirical chapters covers a more systemic example, i.e. one of the macro-level of international relations, whereas the other concentrates on the micro-level, i.e. insertion and policy-making of an international actor in the international realm. Was the first on *crisis-management* focusing on a specific and typical feature of the Cold War and East-West relations, so is this example taken from the North-South divide which increasingly came onto the agenda during the 70s. This implies a shift in the approach. It is neither the question to see how the international system articulates the North-South conflict (as the chapter on Bretton-Woods mentions it by the very exclusion of the Third World as a principal actor), but how one country and its societal actors link up and are shaped by the integration into the world political economy. In other words, the question is about the internal and external determinants for economic *and* political development, as exemplified by a case of the South. The case could have been spuriously chosen. The reasons why Brazil and why at a specific moment in time need yet to be justified.

First, Brazil is a big country with a large internal market. It has known an economic and political development before and after World

War II that made one expect to find them following the track of the Northern rich democracies. In that respect, it is a better case to think about possibilities of development than countries that have not even started their industrialization. Brazil is in, what I. Wallerstein would call, the *semi-periphery*, i.e. economically and politically closer to the North, therefore for a longtime considered on a presumed way to it. In 1964, however, rid by an already uncontrolled external debt crisis and internal domestic inequalities, the military once more take over the government. The conventional 'modernisation thesis' which links up economic development with political democracy seemed not to hold: Brazil was getting more developed - and more authoritarian.

The second reason is the effective integration of Brazil into the world political economy. It is a country since long exposed to the international market and to the investments of foreign firms. The case is therefore an obvious example of the effects such integration can have on development. Theories of dependency have been using the Brazilian case extensively. Some of the outstanding scholars in the field are Brazilian.

Finally, the Brazilian case has been studied domestically and internationally with the use of frameworks that allow not only the traditional dependency approach, but to integrate it with the analysis of the domestic regime. This interplay of external constraints and domestic adaptation is the basis of O'Donnell's approach in comparative politics that has become known as *bureaucratic-authoritarianism*. To quote one of the leading scholars in *political development*, Samuel P. Huntington,

O'Donnell's theory of bureaucratic authoritarianism was a first approximation of such a model and is, in a sense, a prototype of the sort of region- and culture specific theoretical model that is desirable.¹²²

This case, as the Cuba chapter, will be analysed from a point of crisis, here the military coup of 1964. The stress on policy-making, however,

¹²² Samuel P. Huntington, *The Goals of Development*. In Myron Weiner and Samuel P. Huntington, eds., *Understanding Political Development* (Boston et al., 1985), p.26.

is here not only diplomatic and military, but also social and economic. The Cuba case linked up international relations with political science, in the sense of decision-making. This Brazil case will link up international political economy with comparative politics.

15.1. Chronology of a coup: Brazil 1964

1. *The origins of a dilemma*

Brazil was caught from the 50s on into a dilemma of external and internal disequilibria.

The balance of payments deficits added up already in the 50s to \$2.5 Bio. Driven by a trade deficit, this latter was financed essentially through borrowing on the financial markets, rather than through foreign direct investment (FDI) or bilateral and multilateral loans. Meanwhile the domestic policies never really controlled inflation. The instrumentarium of aggressive export promotion or import control was not particularly appreciated by the International Organisations it depended on. The haunting recession, in turn, led different governments refrain from attacking the structural trade deficit by deflation and recessionary import reduction. So, they fueled the domestic growth with expansionary policies. The socio-political reason was that the coffee planters, upper and normal middle class, as well as urban working class were *all* mobilized social actors. So, every president was elected by a populist coalition which discouraged strategies that could have put a member of the coalition at a disadvantage. Inflation and growth allowed not to make painful distributive choices.

In a certain way, therefore, the chronology leading to the coup can be read as the final stroke to a series of failed attempts to stabilise the worsening economic disequilibria.

2. *Chronology of failed stabilization policies*

Let us start with the populist government under President *Getulio Vargas* from 1953. His stabilisation measures included tight credit

controls (against inflation, especially unpopular with local business), exchange rate reforms (to liberalise trade) and the abolition of profit remittances (to attract foreign investment). Yet faced with rising discontent, Vargas decreed a 100% increase in the minimum wage. In 1954, Vargas, pushed by a "ultimatum" of the military, committed suicide leaving the famous letter that accused international cartels for his failure.

Under his successor *Café Filho*, and in close consultation with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), another stabilisation policy with even more drastic credit controls was installed. After the bust of many banks and firms, the policy was relaxed, the basic problem not resolved.

In 1958, his successor *Juscelino Kubitchek* needed to secure a \$300 Million loan from the United States in order to come to a (stand-by) agreement with the IMF on stabilisation measures. He cut back the coffee purchase programme (a measure obviously opposed by the agrarian elite) and re-tightened the credit control. Yet, after strong critiques from the agrarian elite, business that was backed by the President of the Bank of Brazil, and nationalist fractions in the military, and after only half-hearted implementations, Kubitchek broke off the negotiation. At the time, it was still not too difficult to find the necessary money on international markets. Yet, this money was generally short-term high-interest borrowing.

Hence, Kubitchek just handled over a bigger problem to his successor, *Jânio Quadros*. Faced with a foreign debt of \$2 Bio. to be repaid in his four years of office (600 Mio. in the first year 1961), Quadros imposed another stabilisation programme mainly based on a new and simplified dual and finally (July) single exchange-rate system and another credit control. He succeeded to negotiate new credits and to let reschedule old ones with the U.S. and European creditors. Yet, after eight months, Quadros resigned. This has fueled several conspiracy theories. True, Quadros mixed a domestically tight policy with a foreign more nationalist and more anti-U.S. standpoint, especially with regard to the question of Cuba. But this foreign move should rather be seen as an attempt to contain the working class, i.e.

to keep it as a loyal opposition.¹²³ Domestically, it seems that he resigned to be asked back in a stronger position.¹²⁴ He was not and got replaced by his Vice-President, *João Goulart* who had condemned Quadros' reforms.

It was up to Goulart to tackle an economic crisis. In 1963, GNP/capita fell by 1.5%. In March 1964, the projected inflation was 100%; the debt repayment burden ate up 45% of Brazilian exports. Goulart had to get a stand-by agreement with the IMF. The resulting stabilisation policy included a reduction of the budget deficit, of the money supply, of wages and a return to Quadros' simple exchange rate system. Yet, Goulart did not resist to the pressures: he raised the pay of government employees (including the military) by 70% and re-introduced a "Profit Remittance Law" in 1962. This prompted U.S. reactions of a specific kind. Following Cheryl Payer

The U.S. indicated its distaste for Goulart in numerous ways, but primarily through its aid policy. It did not merely cut off aid to the central government, refusing all budgetary and balance-of-payments support that would benefit Goulart directly. It continued giving aid to certain conservative state governors with whom it thought it could do business - the so-called 'islands of sanity' strategy. This ploy was aimed at keeping a foothold in Brazilian politics despite Goulart, and most probably also intended to encourage subversion of the Goulart government (Testimony of US officials to Congressional committees on this subject is laced with security deletions.)¹²⁵

Goulart shifted even more to the left announcing the expropriation and redistribution of land and the nationalisation of the oil refineries in Brazil.

The 1.4.1964, the military took over power in a coup. The new President *Castello Branco* found no foreign exchange reserves and had \$300 Mio. of current bills to pay mainly to U.S. companies.

¹²³ For this argument, see Robert R. Kaufman, "Democratic and authoritarian responses to the debt issue: Argentina, Brazil, Mexico. *International Organization*, vol.39, no.3, pp.492ff.

¹²⁴ This is Cheryl Payers' view, otherwise not very sympathetic to the U.S. See *The Debt Trap...*, p.150.

¹²⁵ *ibid.*, p.154.

3. Military against society: stabilisation 1964-67

The new economic programme, considered not a chock-treatment, but a *gradualist* policy, included a programme to diversify and promote exports, a reduction of the size of the public sector, full-cost pricing policies in public enterprises (utilities, transportation), an encouragement of the expansion of private enterprises, the reorganization of financial structure through creation of central bank and the creation of a market for government securities. This represents a policy improving the policy makers' control over the market *and* privileging private capital; yet not as drastic as post-73 Chile or post-76 Argentina.

As successes can be considered: the reduced rate of inflation (41% in 1966), a major foreign debt renegotiation, the surplus of balance of payments, a reduction of the federal deficit from 4.2% of the GDP in 1963 to 1.1% in 1966. Yet, the backdrops are important: high unemployment and bankruptcies, a balance of payments surplus that was not that much linked to improved exports but to recession-induced declining imports. Still, the two main architects of the programme, *Campos* and *Bulhões* continued to believe in excess demand.

Politically, economic policy-makers had the biggest room for manoeuvre since 1945 due to a strong repression: stripping congressmen of their legislative mandates, purging governors and mayors from their offices, prohibition of most student organizations and virtually all political parties of the left.¹²⁶ This allowed a redistribution within the society which was blocked before. Negatively affected were:

- wage earners (cut in real wages 20-25% from 1964-1967 and freeze of the federally decreed minimum wage);
- a part of domestic entrepreneurs (reduced protection, end of the frequent policy to provide subsidized credits from the Bank of Brazil in times of liquidity difficulties)
- coffee producers (less subsidies through fixed buying)

¹²⁶ Thomas E. Skidmore, "The political economy of policy-making in authoritarian Brazil, 1967-1970." In *Generals in Retreat*, edited by Philip O'Brien and Paul Cammack, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985), pp.116/117.

Positively affected were especially the state and its policy makers (through an expansion of state enterprises and a reformed central bank system), and foreign investors, because the profit remittance law was abolished and concessions granted to foreign capital engaged in export trade. Yet, Castello Branco's government did not manage to rescue its balance of payment position through FDI, but through public loans or credits. Between 1964 and 1968, the U.S. granted aid of about \$1.6 Bio. (!) and in 1965, the IMF accepted a stand-by agreement.

4. Military and 'dependent development', 1967-1970

With the new government of General *Costa e Silva*, a new equipe of economists around *Antonio Delfim Neto* took over the economic policy-making.¹²⁷ For them, inflation was cost-induced. They eased credits and in 1967, credit expanded by 57%, with an inflation of only 24% and a growth rate of 4.8%. The outlook of these policies was not at all the 'Chicago-boy-type', but strengthened further the state influence on the economy, while trying to develop a local entrepreneurial class able to cope with the international competition for the Brazilian and foreign markets.

This policy intervened in the agricultural sector to stabilize expectation through tax advantages and minimum prizes. It controlled price increases and manipulated the minimum wage for a long-term wage control. Finally, it introduces a more stable environment on the foreign exchange market: with a structural inflation rate gap to the U.S., Neto decided to use the reformed central bank for a more flexible exchange rate management with frequent, yet small devaluations, Brazil's so-called *crawling peg*.

So far, for the chronology. How does one analyse this crisis and the underlying dilemma between the need for modernization to face up with international economic competition and domestic political claims

¹²⁷ For the following, see Thomas E. Skidmore, "The political economy..."

vis-à-vis a political system on its way towards democracy? Is the military coup the expression of a typical reaction of a semi-peripheral country at a specific point of its industrialization? If modernity means democracy, does modernization *sometimes*, but necessarily entail authoritarianism? What is the articulation of the world political economy with a country in the struggle for economic and political development?

Those are the kind of questions that arise with approaches combining comparative politics in the South with dependency and related IPE approaches. Since the latter have been presented before, we will turn to comparative politics as applied to Latin America.

15.2. Comparative politics of military rule: Brazil's "Mass Praetorian Coup"

Since the 60s, the prevailing existence of military regimes had attracted not only research in the traditional *static* comparative manner, namely as an example of authoritarianism in a typology of political systems, but also as part of *dynamic* theories and typologies. The most influential have certainly been Samuel Finer's work that concentrates on the conditions and dynamics of military intervention with regard to the political system¹²⁸ and Samuel P. Huntington who expanded his research in order to link it up with theories of economic modernization, i.e. to a theory of political development.¹²⁹

It is this latter which is our starting point. Huntington's basic idea is that socio-economic modernization does not automatically entail political development, but should be analysed around the possible gap between aspirations raised by modernisation and actual performance. This is the classical demand-performance *gap theory* (see Figure 6).

In this analysis, the initial gap will then produce instability if the political system is not able either to fetter it either economically, or

¹²⁸ Samuel E. Finer, *The man on horseback* (London: 1962/69, 3rd ed.).

¹²⁹ Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968).

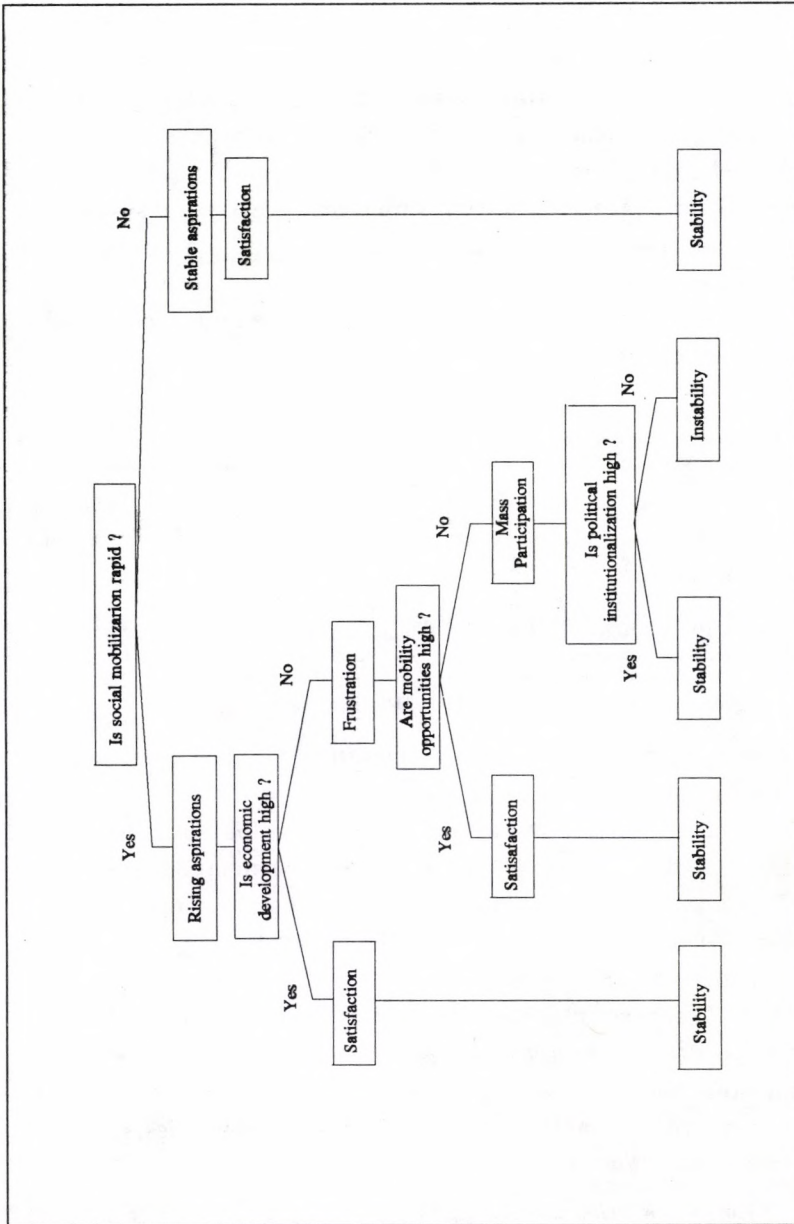


Figure 6 Huntington's gap theory (in Lee Sigelman, *Understanding Political Instability. An evaluation of the mobilization - institutionalization approach. Comparative Political Studies*, 1979, vol.12, no.2, p.212)

through social mobilization or finally through political participation. If we just for a moment apply this idea crudely to our Brazilian case, it seems that since neither the social, nor the political mobility was given (for the relatively inflexible class-structure), stability was achieved through economic wealth. Once this wealth cannot be upheld anymore (because not domestically financed), the political system dis-aggregates and the risk of a coup increases (if the military is a prominent actor in the political system).

Such a system, where the military can play a major role is called a *praetorian system*.

In a praetorian system, social forces confront each other nakedly; no political institutions, no corps of professional political leaders are recognized or accepted as the legitimate intermediaries to moderate group conflict.¹³⁰

The role the military plays, is dependent on the degree of societal development

As society changes, so does the role of the military. In the world of oligarchy the soldier is a radical; in the middle class world, he is a participant and arbiter; as the mass society looms on the horizon, he becomes the conservative guardian of the existing order.¹³¹

Following this general line, Brazil's military can indeed be analysed as having gone through three stages.

1. *Latent praetorianism*¹³² or the primacy of the professional soldier (1889-1920/30). Following the war against Paraguay, the military became a major actor in Brazil. As the government does not fulfil its claims, in a coalition with the coffee oligarchy it overturns the Empire in 1889.

2. *Radical praetorianism* or the military as participant and arbiter (1920/30-1945). The corporatist need to provide the military with ever expanding resources, pushed the more reformist part of the army to ally itself with the middle classes against the former allies, the coffee

¹³⁰ Huntington, *Political Order...*, p.196.

¹³¹ *ibid.*, p.221.

¹³² This expression is Amos Perlmutter's in *The Military and Politics in Modern Times* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1978).

elite. The "Revolution" of 1930 that brought to an end the "Old Republic" marked the definite entrance of the military as a participant on the political scene, it became a *military party*.¹³³ The rule under the *Estado Novo* of Vargas realised all the military wishes. Yet, bit by bit Vargas' nationalist and increasingly populist stand was criticised by the military, aware of the need of foreign capital for the industrialisation necessary to sustain the growth of military power. Finally, the externally oriented branch prevailed and Vargas was removed in 1945.

3. *Mass praetorianism* or the decline of the professional corps (1945-1964). The increased politicisation of the military made its role as an arbiter more and more strenuous. The possible military appeal directly to the labor forces alienated the middle classes traditionally in favour of its arbiter role. On the other hand, the exercise of power put strains on the internal coherence of the corps. Finally, the labor movements threatened the corporate interests of the military. In the end, the military became not an arbiter (*poder moderador*), but a *guardian* intervening by veto-coups.

This is a long story for explaining why in a society which has not developed and institutionalised in the same pace as the economy, the military as the major force intervenes to uphold the internal stability - in its interests. The coup in Brazil is thereby explained essentially from the inside, the logic of the corporatist behaviour of the major force, the military party. This domestic approach is considered insufficient by Guillermo O'Donnell who will try to integrate this domestic gap approach with international constraints given by *late late industrialisation*.

¹³³ See for this Manuel Domingos Neto, "L'influence étrangère et la formation des groupes et tendances au sein de l'armée brésilienne (1889-1930)." In Alain Rouquié, ed., *Les Partis Militaires au Brésil* (Paris: Presses de la Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques, 1980), p.62.

15.3. Bureaucratic Authoritarianism

1. Origins of Bureaucratic Authoritarianism (BA)

Late late industrialisation is A. Hirschman's extension of the economic historian Gerschenkron's analysis of the different dynamics and necessities of those countries that have a delayed industrialization. It stresses the competitive influence that the international market exerts on newcomers and develops the internal dynamics that have led to authoritarian turns in different countries (see Figure 7).¹³⁴

As shown by the figure, there are three primary variables, two of which produce the demand-performance gap, namely first, population mobilisation and second -this is where O'Donnell departs from Huntington- the necessities linked to the industrialization process of late industrialisers having come to the end of the initial phase of industrialization (and import substitution). This last point has been called the *deepening* process and needs some explanation.

O'Donnell has analysed especially the Argentinian and Brazilian case of industrialisation. In both countries, he has noticed a certain correlation between phases of industrialisation and political regimes. So, for instance, do the initial phases of industrialization appear to be linked to populism. Yet, what is an *initial phase*? In the Brazilian case this applies to the inter-war period till around 1950. The Great depression had a *stimulating* impact on Brazilian industrialisation. Through the fall of possible imports and the attempt to smooth the effects by pump-priming policies, especially the light industrial branches (e.g. consumer goods like textiles) played an important role in providing industrial input. This phase is therefore one of (more or less involuntary) *import substitution*. It was coupled with a political populist, i.e. broad, regime that could handle it without imposing a

¹³⁴ The figure is taken from David Collier, "Overview of the Bureaucratic Authoritarian Model." In David Collier, ed., *The New Authoritarianism in Latin America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), p.28.

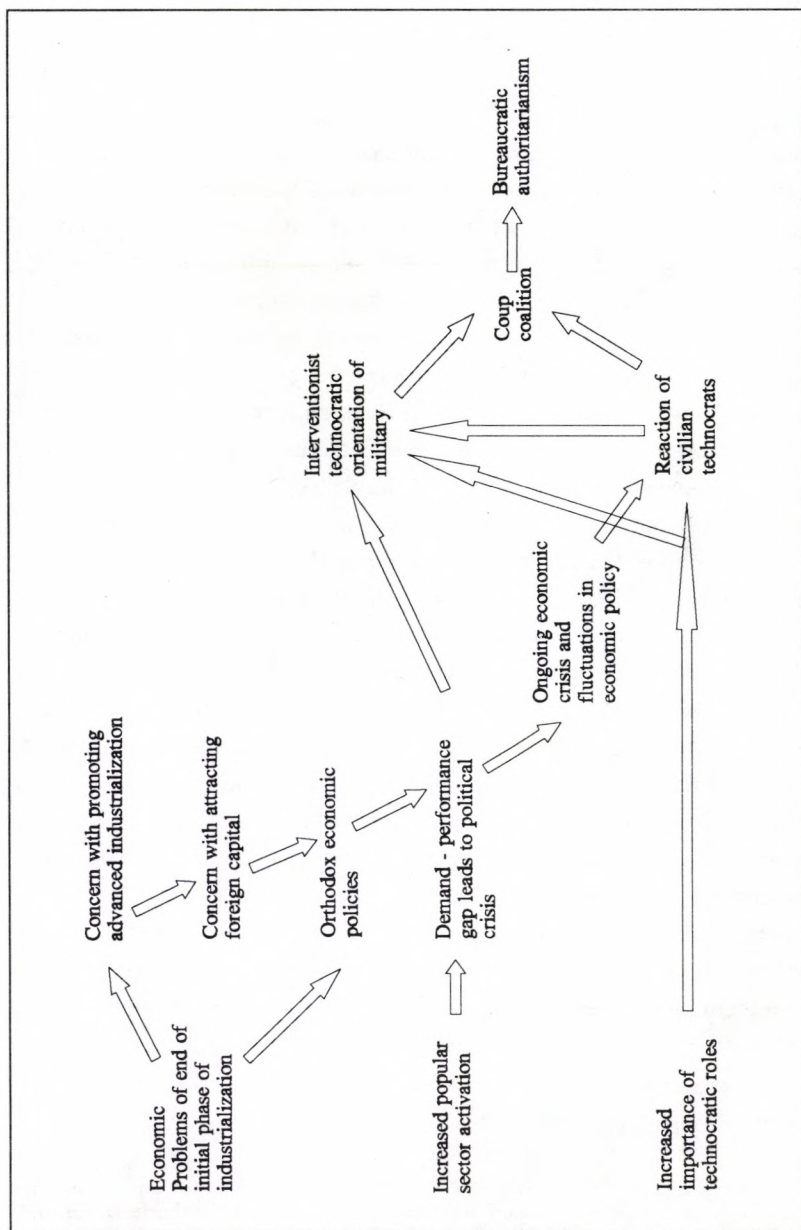


Figure 7 Selected elements of O'Donnell's argument concerning the emergence of bureaucratic authoritarianism.

hegemonic class structure.¹³⁵

O'Donnell argues that this phase came to an end and that industrial bottlenecks arise in the passage to the second phase. The second phase is reached when an economy passes from the import-substitution of light industries to the autonomous production of consumer durables and intermediary capital goods, i.e. *deepening*. Deepening is necessary to sustain a (relatively) self-reliant industrialisation. Unfortunately, developing countries face a dilemma. Either they avoid the dependence on foreign capital by opting for an autonomous development, but risk thereby to engage in a long-term and insecure project (the not particularly successful Eastern European socialist strategy) whose main result could be the protection of domestic elites. Or they take the shortcut by relying on imported technology and capital, but thereby put multiple strain on the traditional populist policies. First, foreign exchange is required to pay the industrial imports. Or, in order to avoid this problem, one must provide a positive 'investment climate' for foreign investment that provides the technology.¹³⁶ Finally, one should encourage exports.

Now, an efficient fiscal systems giving the government resources for intervention, export promotion, and exchange rate stability possibly with foreign exchange surplus, maybe linked to trade liberalisation (freer access to the markets for those that should come to invest) - all seems to presuppose a strong policy shift away from the more traditional populist strategy. It constrains the buying out of interest groups, where clear cut distribution choices remained improbable due to the insecure policy base of government coalitions in praetorian societies - and were diligently avoided. Since, on top of it, the initial industrialisation left

¹³⁵ For this argument, see Robert R. Kaufman, "Industrial change and authoritarian rule in Latin America: A concrete review of the bureaucratic authoritarian model. In David Collier, ed., *The New Authoritarianism in Latin America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), p.202f.

¹³⁶ Yet, foreign investment does not automatically provide the necessary spillovers that would allow the national economy to establish its own industrial base.

a high-cost industrial structure, unable to compete effectively in world markets, an undercapitalized or inefficient agro-export sector; and inadequate mechanisms for mobilizing public and private resources¹³⁷

only the state and international capital were able to provide the stability and carry out the policies necessary for the deepening.

Yet, Brazil is faced with an international system where first industrialisers (Great Britain) and late industrialisers (Southern Europe) have already accomplished these industrial phases.¹³⁸ Therefore, strong external constraints and internal socio-political stalemates of a praetorian society (with strong military parties) will produce the demand-performance gap which is supposed to trigger a violent solution. The double corporate reaction of the military and the technocratic elite able to link up with foreign actors and to supervise the new phase of industrialisation, will forge the coalition base of the new regime, *bureaucratic-authoritarianism*.

2. Dynamics of BA

O'Donnell has elaborated on this model (mainly applied to Brazil, Argentina and Mexico), as an ideal-type for comparison with other authoritarian regimes of different dynamic (Chile 1973 and Uruguay) and outside Latin America (Officer's Greece, Franchist Spain, Turkey).

Two main dynamic aspects, i.e. internal contradictions that spur change, have retained his attention: first, the nature of the intra-coalitional relations, and second, the relation of the regime to its political base in the civil society.

¹³⁷ *ibid.*, p.204. Just to give a figure for the efforts of the Neto equipe. It raised the number of individual tax payers from 470000 in 1967 to 4 Mio. in 1969.

¹³⁸ At least to a certain extent. See James K. Kurth, "Industrial Change and Political Change: A European Perspective." In David Collier, ed., *The New Authoritarianism in Latin America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), pp.319-362; and Dieter Senghaas, *Von Europa lernen. Entwicklungsgeschichtliche Betrachtungen* (Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp, 1982).

The BA coalition of state-international capital coalition is built on a mutual dependence of the BA state on international capital for *deepening* and vice versa for the stabilization policies necessary to create a favorable 'investment climate.' The BA state, even in all the critical literature, is characterised by the political and economic exclusion of the labor forces and the popular sector. The gap is bridged by diminishing the possibilities of raising demands or aspirations *from the weakest corporate actor or interest group* in the system, organized labor and lower classes. Decreasing real wages and the abolition of all political channels (outside the military or bureaucratic corporations) are just some indices. Yet

international capital alone would have created a political impossibility: namely, an increasingly internationalized national economy in which its most dynamic sectors would devour, in unfettered Darwinian fashion, what was left of national capital. Because of this, the BA neither floats above the social classes in sovereign fashion, carrying out its projects of "national grandeur", nor is it the puppet or representative of international capital, even during the first stage when it opens itself and society to it. Social reality is more complex and changeable.¹³⁹

Therefore the BA state will try in a second stage to strengthen the local bourgeoisie creating thereby a triangle on which it can gain leverage between both, local and international capital. The articulation of this triangle is, in Peter Evans' analysis, a way to understand *dependent development*.¹⁴⁰ The obvious corollary of this kind of analysis is a renewed and intensive research on the *concept and the theory of the state* which becomes the central point of articulation of the analysis¹⁴¹, and, indeed, for all those theories in IPE that attempt to overcome the limits of Neo-Realism. Without a conceptual-

¹³⁹ Guillermo O'Donnell (1978) Reflections on the patterns of change in the bureaucratic-authoritarian state. *Latin American Research Review* vol.13, no.1, p.15.

¹⁴⁰ Peter Evans, *Dependent Development. The alliance of multinational, state and local capital in Brazil* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), p.31.

¹⁴¹ See O'Donnell, "Tensions in the Bureaucratic-Authoritarian State and the Question of Democracy", p.287f., and Fernando Henrique Cardoso, "On the characterisation of authoritarian regimes in Latin America", p.53f. Both in David Collier, ed., *The New Authoritarianism...*; P. Evans, T. Skocpol and D. Rueschemeyer, eds., *Bringing the State Back in*. See also the conclusive chapter 16.

sation of the state (it does not need and cannot be a full-fledged general theory), this project of IPE will not advance.

The state-society relation is the second dynamic aspect, O'Donnell analyses. The basic puzzle is the recurring rhetoric of democracy delivered by a regime that has come to power exactly for the opposite goal. O'Donnell argues, and therefore this requires a specific conception of the state, that the BA state, by cutting the traditional mediations between the state and civil society deprives itself from the consensual mechanisms necessary to rule. It cannot appear any more as the external arbiter, but is participant in the system, here dominating and responsible for its naked exercise of power. The question of legitimacy becomes all the more pressing as national development projects or nationalism (which are the traditional links of military regimes) are clashing with the transnational perspective of the upper middle class, the social base of the regime, and the economic state-technocracy. Once in power, the military corporate actor rehearses the nationalist development - transnationalist dependency dilemma of its modern ideology that has provoked so many splits and retreats to the barracks.¹⁴² "Democracy" is the belated and weak attempt of a regime to open up its support to a wider base than fear and terror and that is striven from its traditional legitimation procedures. O'Donnell's analysis in 1979 is therefore already convinced of the "intrinsic weakness" of the BA regime, long before it collapsed in Brazil in 1985.¹⁴³

¹⁴² This requires a methodology of the analysis of military actors that stresses the interplay between corporate logic and external needs: the military is neither *instrument* for the fulfilling of the aims of whatever specific class, nor an independent unified actor. Both approaches suffer from a *black box* conception. See especially: Antonio Carlos Peixoto, "Armée et politique au Brésil. Une critique des modèles d'interprétation." In Alain Rouquié, *Les Partis Militaires au Brésil*, pp.25-40. For Alain Rouquié's approach, see the later Footnote No. 148.

¹⁴³ "Tensions...", p.316/317.

3. The critique of Bureaucratic Authoritarianism

Since the approach has been largely derived from Brazilian history, the model fits the Brazilian case rather well. The critique is therefore not levelled against the understanding of the Brazilian case, but against two theses and, more generally, against the methodology applied. The disputed theses are the *necessary* link between phases of industrialisation and specific political regimes, the *deepening* thesis and the potential for generalisation of the BA approach.

The interplay between phases of industrialisation and political regimes have been widely criticised. And indeed, following Kurth's studies on European industrialisation, it seems that whereas in Latin America two phases (consumer durables and capital goods) cluster, in Europe they didn't - and that they had no specific pattern of political regimes. Even though the shift to capital good industries has been accompanied generally by more authoritarian regimes, Kurth points to many other reasons, which made the industrialisation bottleneck a concomitant, but probably not necessary and certainly not a sufficient condition for a turn to authoritarianism

Together, these observations show that the political impact of industrial phases in Europe, for good or for ill, has been more configurative than determinative. And this suggests that in the future, as in the past, there will be ample space for the play of political actions.¹⁴⁴

It therefore appears wise to use industrialisation-bottlenecks as one of the possible variables and it has been an important finding by Gerschenkron that has been developed by Hirschman and O'Donnell.

By looking at the *deepening* thesis, *José Serra* has strongly attacked the BA-model. For him, deepening took place before the rise of BA; it was not necessary for capitalism to survive (because there is no direct link between delayed ISI of the second phase and economic crisis); it was neither aimed for by the BA coups, nor part of

¹⁴⁴ James K. Kurth, "Industrial Change and Political Change: A European Perspective." In David Collier, ed., *The New Authoritarianism in Latin America*, p.357.

their economic policies.¹⁴⁵ Even though the last point is theoretically no contradiction to O'Donnell (actors are not always fully conscious of what might have caused their action), it seems reasonable not to overemphasise a *necessity to deepen* for the economic system to sustain growth and to develop. Also Hirschman, more sympathetic to the approach, argues more for a *domestic* explanation stressing the required phase of more orthodox policies that follows the initial ISI (especially to stop inflationary pressures). The turn to authoritarianism should be seen as the outcome of a *political* conflict over redistribution, not an *economic* necessity. External economic constraints have to be analysed through the prism of the domestic political system and state-society relation.¹⁴⁶

In the same vein are the criticisms of Alain Rouquié & Ricardo Sidicaro, and Paul Cammack. Expanding on Rouquié and Sidicaro, it appears that the major common point of Brazil's and later, e.g. Chile's, authoritarian regimes, seems to be a 'revolution from above' that would allow a *national entrepreneurial class to develop*.¹⁴⁷ This project has failed because having pointed to economic success as the sole criterion for its political legitimation (here they rejoin O'Donnell), military corporate actors cannot endlessly sustain political fragmentation and polarisation in the society because it backfires on internal discipline and unity, i.e. on the very identity of the military.¹⁴⁸ In

¹⁴⁵ José Serra, "Three mistaken theses regarding the connection between industrialization and authoritarian regimes." In David Collier, ed., *The New Authoritarianism in Latin America*, pp.117, 120, 124.

¹⁴⁶ Alfred Hirschman, "The turn to authoritarian Latin America and the search for its economic determinants." In David Collier, ed., *The New Authoritarianism in Latin America*, pp.73, 81.

¹⁴⁷ Paul Cammack, "The political economy of contemporary military regimes in Latin America: from bureaucratic authoritarianism to restructuring." In Philip O' Brien and Paul Cammack, eds., *Generals in Retreat* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985), pp.1-36; and especially the short and very dense article by Alain Rouquié & Ricardo Sidicaro, "États autoritaires et libéralisme économique en Amérique Latine: une approche hétérodoxe." *Revue Tiers Monde*, vol.XXIV, no.93, 1983, 105-113.

¹⁴⁸ See in this respect Alain Rouquié's general approach which seems the one most able to integrate an internal analysis of the military actor (*parti militaire*) into domestic social relations. Alain Rouquié, "Les processus politiques au sein des partis (continued...)"

other words, one should take the *non-economic* determinants (and domestic class relations) of the model very seriously. The fact that Cardoso and the later O'Donnell have repeatedly stressed exactly this part in their analysis, indicates a consensus that International Political Economy without a domestic analysis is very limited.¹⁴⁹

This discussion has already largely answered the remaining criticism on the model's general heuristic value. There is a big problem with the later coups in Chile and Uruguay which have produced much more monetarist strategies than one should have expected from a military government and that conflict with the dynamics of the BA regime in Brazil and Argentina. The solution proposed by O'Donnell, namely to link the level of popular threat before the coup to higher repression and more monetarist policies, seems, indeed insufficient to account for the difference.¹⁵⁰

Yet, here we link up with the methodological question. The appraisal of the approach depends very much on whether one considers it a *model* that applies to similar states in the semi-periphery or more a *framework of analysis* that proposes a particular explanation of a militarist reaction to the political and economic modernization pressures in the semi-periphery - and which could produce others. The aims of the latter are less ambitious - and therefore easier generalisable. The analytical interest does not consist in finding out laws of the necessary change in the semi-periphery, but in the providing of a framework that integrates a theory of the state, the analysis of the domestic actors, the dynamics of the international capitalist and political system for the analysis of policy outcomes in a specific part

¹⁴⁸(...continued)

militaires, définitions et dynamiques", in his *La politique de Mars, les processus politiques dans les partis militaires* (Paris: Le Sycomore, 1981) or "Les processus politiques dans les partis militaire au Brésil. Stratégie de recherche et dynamique institutionnelle", in his edited *Les partis militaires au Brésil*; finally his *L'État militaire en Amérique Latine* (Paris: Le Seuil, 1982).

¹⁴⁹ This rejoins the Brenner-Wallerstein debate, we already alluded to in chapter 12. See especially footnote no.75.

¹⁵⁰ See for this argument: Karen L. Remmer & Gilbert W. Merckx, Bureaucratic Authoritarianism revisited. *Latin American Research Review*, vol.17, no.2, pp.3-40.

of the world at a specific time of its development. Is this a core framework for IPE?

15.4. IPE+Comparative Politics=Historical Sociology?

O'Donnell himself has opposed the possibility to read the BA approach as an ahistorical model. Quite the opposite. With this framework, he wants to investigate other cases in the semi-periphery, where no coup was needed, or why and where the *triangle* did not appear, and so on, using the BA model as one possible *ideal type* for a comparative analysis of semi-peripheral countries. The result is a form of historical sociology

... it is necessary to historicize the social sciences, or equivalently, to structure the history we write; that is, we must make of the historical *tempos* the sites on which structures are analyzed... As a consequence, the boundary between the historian and the social scientist, as well as the limits between the social science disciplines of economics, sociology, and political science is obscured.¹⁵¹

Historical sociology can be divided into two schools, one more positivist, one more interpretativist. The first is represented by Theda Skocpol. Here, a causal model is applied to different cases. The constructivist part of historical writing is here well exposed, yet with the obvious backlash that one needs to arrange the data a bit to let the model fit.¹⁵² To a certain extent, this corresponds to a *variable-oriented* approach.

The other approach is the one preferred by Cardoso, O'Donnell, Evans which consists of two interrelated parts. The analysis requires a conceptual clarification, that allows for the selection and ordering of the information and whose language unifies the comparative analysis. The case analysis will then try to take into account all the parti-

¹⁵¹ O'Donnell, *Reflections...*, p.4

¹⁵² See for this approach: Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions. A comparative analysis of France, Russia and China* (Cambridge, Mass.: Cambridge University Press, 1979).

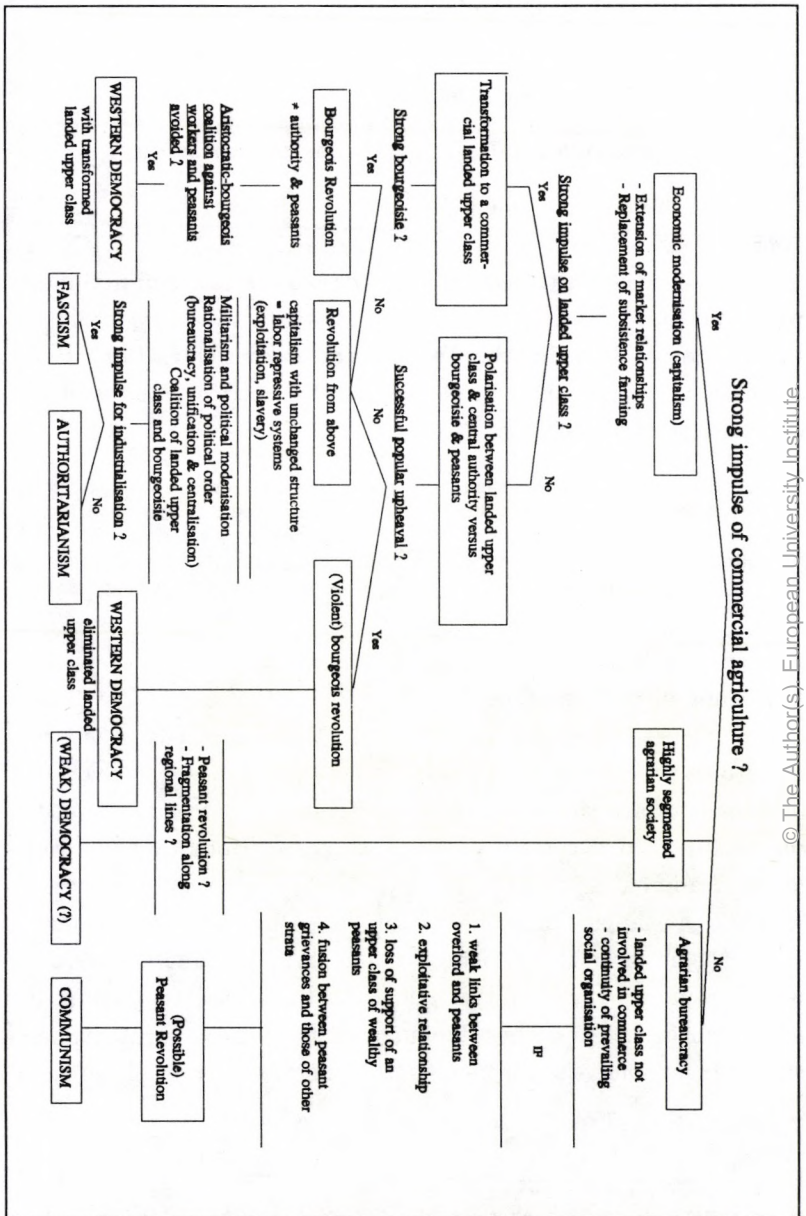


Figure 8 A synthesis of Barrington Moore's framework in his *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1966).

cularities of the subject. This analysis is considered *case-oriented*.¹⁵³ The scientific objective of the two approaches are different: whereas the first uses theoretical generalizations to allow for comparisons that will explain the specific case, the second uses ideal-type comparative analysis for the understanding of the particular case in order to allow for prudent abstractions:

Let it be noted that, although these works depend on general notions that are being enriched by analysis (what is capitalism and domination), their referents are historically situated. It is neither "any" nor "all" capitalism, but certain types of capitalism within which specific cases are recognized. It is from specific cases and types that these authors ask about patterns of socioeconomic change and contrapunctual relationships with systems of political domination.¹⁵⁴

Thus, IPE and comparative politics leads to historical sociology. Therefore, O'Donnell's initial approach, which started from a specific event and tried to generalise explanations from this specific event, was wrong. He should have started from the interplay of the variables that he sees clearly and that have neither necessary, nor purely contingent links. At the end he quotes Weber, Hintze, Anderson, Moore for the approach to be followed. Rightly so. As Moore's still fascinating study shows, the comparative analysis should not start from a common effect to look for common causes, but for the interplay of the major social actors, institutions and socio-economic forces to account for the *variance* of comparable cases (See Figure 8. The lineages are -from the left to the right- Great Britain, Germany/Japan, France, India, China). This framework of analysis does not try to explain the laws, but understand the differences. These points will be taken up in the conclusive chapter.

¹⁵³ For this distinction, see Charles C. Ragin, *The Comparative Method. Moving Beyond qualitative and quantitative strategies* (Berkeley et al.: University of California Press, 1987), chapters 3 and 4.

¹⁵⁴ O'Donnell, *Reflections...*, p.5.

Conclusion

16

Realism is dead. Long live Realism?



16.1. Introduction

This conclusion will not be another swan song on Realism. The latter's multiple resurrections seem rather to indicate that there is something in it that seems to capture either the nature of politics in general, or at least of international politics such as to elude any attempt to destroy it.

In the 70s and 80s, Realism's incredible resistance to major blows has given rise to the Inter-Paradigm Debate, that is, the idea that since different approaches start from incompatible values, they are to be considered like Kuhnian incommensurable paradigms. In other words, that neither Realism nor Marxism could be removed by critique was seen as an indication that in the social sciences falsification was not possible because of the impossible separation of the analyst from its object of analysis and the intruding values that render analysis mutually incompatible.

As already analysed in chapter 10, this derivation of incommensurability seems to be more taken-for-granted than analysed.¹ There is never any deep analysis, not *why* values affect the analysis in social sciences (which is not an issue), but *how* it determines the methodology used of the researcher, the world view implied by it and the outcomes of the analysis. That conservatism should be linked to traditional methodology, a world view that is states-based and should derive its explanatory thrust from the conceptualisation of anarchy as the international realm is never stringently explained. We are confronted with ideologies that arrive in packages that seem more tied together by the analysts' laziness than by internal coherence. The obsession with triads² can be explained by the simple application of the anglo-american ideological distinction of conservatism, liberalism, and radicalism to the social sciences. Yet, especially the middle category, be it called liberalism, interdependence, pluralism or Grotian school, conceals a variety of heterogeneous approaches that defy any use of such a category: world system à la Burton, linkage approaches, traditional British writers (Bull, Wight), regime theory, normative theories (Beitz), ..., brief everything which is not part of the two other strawmen: Marxism (generally presented as outside-in and economic determinism), or Realism (cynical conservative, and only state-centred anarchy determinism).

It was argued in Part III, that in front of the loosening grip of Realism, International Political Economy could be partly defined as an attempt to update the traditional Realist research programme, by

¹ See for this recently: Yale H. Ferguson & Richard W. Mansbach, *The Elusive Quest: Theory and International Politics* (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1988). They derive from the unavoidable value content of social sciences the impossibility of cumulation. That they attribute to Kuhn the view that sciences can cumulate and is *not* influenced by its environment is just another indication that international relations' epistemological turn not always implies an even cursory knowledge of the literature.

² See for an impressive list of the different triologies recently: Volker Rittberger & Hartwig Hummel, "Die Disziplin 'Internationale Beziehungen' im deutschsprachigen Raum auf der Suche nach ihrer Identität: Entwicklung und Perspektiven." In Volker Rittberger, ed., *Theorien der Internationalen Beziehungen. Bestandsaufnahme und Forschungsperspektiven* (Sonderheft 21/1990 der Politischen Vierteljahresschrift, Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1990), p.23.

slightly enlarging Neorealism (chapter 12), and partly as an attempt to provide a wider framework with a more encompassing comprehension of the *international* that more radically breaks with traditional security centred theorising (chapter 13). The debates, unlashd in IPE cannot be satisfactorily be accounted for by the Inter-Paradigm Debate. The conclusion will therefore try to synthesise first the epistemological turn of theorising in the 80s, then argue for a different way for the categorisation of present research that captures its dynamics better than the static IPD, and finally present some of the substantial issues that seem to be the focus of present research. As before, it will be done in a confrontation to the Realist and Neorealist research programme.

This new categorisation is not done because of some esthetical preferences or for analysts's play: to capture the possible interlinkages of ongoing research might provide IR/IPE with the outlines of a coherent framework *that can be established outside mainstream Neorealism/Neo-Institutionalism*. It wants to unravel methodological and theoretical spaces where fruitful research can be pursued, and that the IPD had buried under its taken-for-granted incommensurability between different canonised strawmen. This new categorisation is an explicit attempt to break up the epistemological scholastic of the 80s.

16.2. Neorealism and the epistemological turmoil of the 80s

Chapter 11 had interpreted the Waltzian research programme as a particular reaction of a scientific community that felt its self-definition challenged. The behavioural 'revolution', even though often within the Realist paradigm, had undermined one important paradigmatic function of Realism. By presupposing an equal methodology for domestic and foreign policy research, it contested the internal/external distinction the Realist paradigm reposes on.³ It delegiti-

³ R.B.J. Walker argues in *Political Theory and the Transformation of World Politics* (Princeton University. World Orders Study Program. Occasional Papers No.8,

(continued...)

mated the Realist paradigm's claim that the international realm is qualitatively different from all other social systems and requires therefore different research.

Waltz reaction was to reassert the specificity of the *international* that cannot be apprehended through domestic politics approaches (called misleadingly *reductionist*). This closing in terms of the field of IR has been coupled to a specific view of the right methodology and epistemology to follow. Waltz has reerected the *economical utilitarian* approach as the major line to follow. It is a double sided approach that posits stable individual state interests (survival) and two categories of an international structure (anarchy ruled by the distribution of power) to apply the *micro-economic* market competition logic to IR. Yet, here, the attacks have been substantially most damaging, even though this is easily swept aside with our favourite reply that the debate is about unresolvable value-assumptions and therefore vain footwork. This is all the more astonishing, because those interventions that were most widely held representative of the debate⁴ pointed extensively to a wider epistemological realm - and not to values. It is on this ground that Neorealism (including regime) has been challenged in a way to preclude any comfortable answer.

First, I might recall that the economic approach to IR had already been strongly criticised in the Second Great Debate. Aron had argued convincingly that there is no concept in IR that could provide a substitute for economic *utility*. The basic reason is the limited *power-money* analogy: economists can reduce the variability of individual utilities (National Interests) because of the standard of measure and fungibility of money (power). *The IR scholar cannot*. Power is a

³(...continued)

pp.14-15) that the two great debates happened when two challengers (universalist idealism and general behavioralism) challenged the specificity of IR.

⁴That is Hayward Alker & Thomas Biersteker, Notes for a Future Archaeologist of International Savoir Faire. *International Studies Quarterly*, 1984, vol.28, pp.121-142; and Friedrich Kratochwil & John Gerard Ruggie, International organization: a state of the art on an art of the state. *International Organization*, 1986, vol.40, pp.753-775.

too multi-faced concept. Neorealism just goes on by implying this specific concept of power - without anytime redefining it.⁵

Second, regimes and game-theoretical rational choice approaches that underlie new institutionalism have come under another well known attack, namely against its inherent *methodological individualism*, i.e. an approach that takes as an assumption that collective behaviour can be understood out of the analysis of individual actions and their aggregation. Kratochwil and Ruggie argued, that even accepting the possibility of such an approach, regime theory entails a clash between its individualist methodology and its intersubjective ontology. Less conceptually expressed, this means that regime literature poses the intersubjectively constituted existence of norms and rules *prior to* individual preferences and action, but analyses regimes out of the aggregation of individually given preferences and actions. Whereas this last critique has never been answered in the literature, some debate has developed out of the first. After all, Neorealism is also called Structural Realism: how can it be found guilty of a methodological individualist approach?

Richard Ashley has made the first major attack along these lines.⁶ He argues that Neorealist structuralism is tied up with statism, utilitarianism and positivism. This means that its particular form of structuralism is *not* independent of the elements that constitute it, it takes them for granted. If it were independent, it would not preclude thinking about a variety of factors and actors outside the international (political) state-system. Instead it reposes on the state and the concept of state-sovereignty to construct anarchy, from which, in turn, structural effects are derived. Ashley tries to show that whereas Neorealism argues from the latter, it logically requires, but hides the former.

⁵ See herefore chapter 5.

⁶ *The Poverty of Neo-Realism*, in Robert O. Keohane, ed., *Neorealism and its Critics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986).

In a similar vein, *Alexander Wendt* has criticised Neorealism.⁷ He noted again that Waltz is *not* a truly structuralist approach, because he works in analogy to economic theory for firms and markets: in a world of anarchy (market structure), states (firms)'s capabilities will define the particular system, as e.g. 1979's bipolarity (duopoly) that, in turn, determines the actor's *behaviour*, not the *constitution of the elements themselves*.⁸ Instead of explaining the "powers and interests of agents in terms of irreducible properties of social structure", they are given.

Hollis and Smith defend a reading of Neorealism (that they, however, reduce to Waltz) as a structuralist account of IR. They rely themselves on market theory and want to uphold the distinction of Neorealism to game-theoretical analysis, that would be qualitatively akin to Neorealism if Ashley's and Wendt's charge were accepted. Yet it seems that their reasons are not fully convincing.⁹

First, they show that the anarchical structure, as much as the market, might be derived from the units, but acquires then an independent and *causal* status in explanation. Market actors must live with and adapt to the constraints of the market - most succinctly expressed in market prices that the actors are obliged to *take*.¹⁰ But this argument, besides the fact that Ashley himself advances it, does not contradict Wendt's and Ashley's critique. They claim that units are prior to the structure - and this is reasserted here. They do not claim that the structure is something distinct from units and can have causal effects. They do not have to claim that structures are inexistent in an account that is ontologically individualist. The second argument is that Waltz requires a systemic notion of causation,

⁷ The Agent-Structure Problem in International Relations. *International Organization*, 1987, vol.41, pp.337-370.

⁸ See also for the following paragraph: Alexander Wendt, Bridging the theory/meta-theory gap in international relations. *Review of International Studies*, 1991, vol.17, p.389-90.

⁹ Martin Hollis and Steve Smith, Beware of gurus: structure and action in international relations. *Review of International Studies*, 1991, vol.17, pp.399-403.

¹⁰ This obviously only holds for the perfect conditions for competitive markets that underly textbook neo-classical market theory. Both recent economic theory and reality are often quite remote from this model.

because otherwise his whole enterprise is doomed. This, as well, has been noted by Ashley, but does not constitute a counter-argument: requirements and potential of a theory must not coincide. Waltz would not be the first writer to have an insufficient methodological apparatus for the proclaimed intention of the theory.

In order to resolve the question, I propose to look again at the market analogy. I think that Ashley and Wendt are right for the particularity of this so-called structuralist approach, and that Hollis and Smith are theoretically (but not practically) right about the difference with rational choice or game-theory.

Neo-classical economic theory allows, indeed, for a double causation at the individual and market level. Where Ashley and Wendt are right is the fact that the structural explanation presupposes *the existence and the constancy* of actor's preferences: only by presupposing *economic man* (Waltz' like-unit), who wants to survive in its environment (basic preference), and does so by rationally calculating the cost/benefit of alternative action, can market (anarchy) constraints be understood. Economic theory is very powerful because it conceals and inextricably links these two levels: at the level of the market, market *dynamics* are the result of individual utilitarian reasoning and behaviour; and at the individual level, the market *statics* are the permanent background on which strategic behaviour of individuals is articulated. Both, individual preferences (in the macro analysis) and the non-institutional or automatic working of the market (in the micro-analysis) must be theoretically taken-for-granted and analytically *held constant* to allow for the explanatory articulation of both levels of neo-classical theory. Without it no marginal economics could work.

This being said, Hollis and Smith are right to distinguish game-theory from a Waltzian analysis. But the difference is not qualitative between a holistic and an individualist approach. Both are merely the two different levels of the utilitarian analysis. Hollis and Smith's insistence captures the inherent and mutually irreducible double-logic of the market approach. Yet, and here the practical difference might be even less, the coining of the anarchy problematique in an

analogy to market theory, leaves a systemic level that is the 'least structural' possible: the 'invisible hand', or what Ashley calls the "atomist structure"¹¹; in the state-system, the environment of the actors (the states) are just the other states. By arguing for a market-anarchy analogy, ways to study the *emergence* of states and of their power, i.e. the *constitution* of the realm we take for granted as international are excluded. *Change* is the black box of such an approach. By limiting structural change to the first level (anarchy-hierarchy) and by defining anarchy as the lack of international government, Waltz nearly rules out change at the structural level. As long as Neorealism remains founded on the anarchy/sovereignty divide, all attempts to integrate dynamic factors at the second tier of Waltz's approach must remain limited.¹² By stating unified actors as given, rational choice approaches are weak to apprehend their historicity and their domestic dimension¹³ and actually undermine the transnational insights with which the regime programme started off. In this respect, the just mentioned epistemological critique joins in with recent studies in historical sociology that try to capture the interwoven logic of state-building and the very constitution of the international system.¹⁴

It should by now be clearer, why the theoretical debate has increasingly turned towards the epistemological foundations and consequences of Neorealism. Since Neorealism proposes an international system of eternal return and repetition to legitimate its approach, it is important to show that the approach is coined in a way to make *change*

¹¹ Richard Ashley, "The Poverty of Neorealism", p.286f.

¹² See especially John Gerard Ruggie, "Continuity and Transformation in the World Polity..." and Barry Buzan, Charles Jones & Richard Little, *The Logic of Anarchy: Neorealism to Structural Realism* (forthcoming, 1992).

¹³ See Hayward R. Alker jr. (1986) "The Presumption of Anarchy in World Politics." In *After Neorealism: Anarchy, Power and International Collaboration*, edited by Hayward R. Alker and Richard Ashley (quotable draft, still forthcoming), p.21.

¹⁴ See especially Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power*, vol.I (Cambridge et al.: Cambridge University Press, 1986); and Anthony Giddens, *The Nation-State and Violence* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1985). See also chapter 15.

very difficult to assess. This circularity will be analysed again when we tackle below the anarchy/sovereignty core of Neorealism.

It is therefore also not fortuitous that the meta-theoretical writers turn to what Lapid has called the *Post-Positivist* agenda.¹⁵

16.3. International Theory at the beginning of the 90s

All the foregoing section cannot be integrated in our neat triads of the IPD. There is an enormous exchange at the meta-theoretical, but also, as I will already allude to in this section, on the theoretical level. To use the IPD language one could say that out of three paradigms there are remaining two: the official Mainstream and its challengers.¹⁶ Even though this rightly stresses the nature of the debate about borders of the discipline, it obscures much of the dynamics of the ongoing debate.

By crossing the two major organising principles of today's meta-theoretical debate (naturalism versus interpretivism and agent versus structure), I have established a map of today's approaches that pitches the difference an appropriate level and clarifies those links at

¹⁵ Yosef Lapid, "The Third Debate: On the Prospects of International Theory in a Post-Positivist Era." *International Studies Quarterly*, 1989, vol.33, pp.235-254; and "Quo vadis International Relations? Further Reflections on the 'Next Stage' of International Theory." *Millennium*, 1989, vol.18, pp.77-88. For the radicalisation of the epistemological debate, see the arguments for a critical hermeneutical, realist or for a more radical constructivist epistemology that eventually has been taken to *deconstruction and intertextual analysis*. See for the first, e.g. Robert Cox, "Social Forces, States and World Orders..." and Fernando Henrique Cardoso, "The consumption of dependency..." For the discussion of epistemological realism in IR, see Alexander Wendt, *The Agent-Structure Problem...*, Roger Tooze, "The Unwritten Preface: 'International Political Economy' and Epistemology", *Millennium*, 1988, vol.17, pp.285-293; and David Dessler, "What's at stake in the agent-structure debate?" in *International Organization*, vol.43 (1989), pp.441-473. For constructivism, see now Nicholas G. Onuf, *World of our Making: Rules and Rule in Social Theory and International Relations* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1989) and for the post-structuralists, see James Der Derian & Michael Shapiro, *International/Intertextual Relations. Postmodern readings in World Politics* (Lexington: Lexington Books, 1989). Marc Hoffman, "Restructuring, Reconstruction, Reinscription, Rearticulation: Four voices in Critical International Theory", *Millennium* vol.20 (1991), pp.169-185, provides a succinct and interesting comparison.

¹⁶ Robert Keohane, "International Institutions: Two approaches," in his *International Institutions and State Power* (Boulder et al.: Westview Pree, 1989).

Table 4: A mapping of theories in IR/IPE at the beginning of the 90s.

		<i>Individu- alism</i>		<i>Holism</i>
<i>Natu- ralism</i>	Human Nature	Rational Game Theory Strategics	Choice	(Kaplan) Structural Realism (Waltz)
	1. World Society (Burton) 2. Morgenthau (2nd edition)	Economics of Foreign Policy Analysis 1. Bureaucratic Politics 2. <i>Operational Code</i> (George)	IR (Bruno Frey) Institutionalism	Hegemonic Stability Theory Regime (Krasner)
<i>Inter- pretivism</i>	3. Morgenthau (1st edition), Niebuhr	3. Ideal Types (Allison)	'Historical Sociology' (Aron, Hoffmann) British School of IR (Carr, Bull)	World System Analysis (Wallerstein) Dependency Critical Theory (Cox)
	(Linklater)	Normative theories (Beitz)	(Nardin)	(Hoffman) Post-Structuralism (Walker, Ashley)

which theories engage in contests (See Table Table 4). I will concentrate on those outside the (grey-shaded) mainstream IR/IPE where the more official theoretical debate happens and where a challenger to Neorealism is developing a wider research programme.

This programme emerges out of different rapprochements. The first vivid encounter takes place on the ground of the hermeneutical tradition, that starts from the idea that whereas in the natural sciences (to which positivism ideally aims), the subject of the science (i.e. the researcher) and its *external* object (nature) are independent, humanities have to deal with an *internal* intersubjective relation. Humanities always have to integrate *human mind*, in its *psychological* (individualist) and *semantic or communicational* (intersubjective or structural) component.¹⁷ For all of their differences, Weberian historical sociology as much as post-structural discourse-analysis are close to this tradition. This does *not* entail that there are no differences. Quite the contrary. But these differences are articulated in a way which falls completely outside the IPD. Take different examples. First, IR's 'historical sociologists' (Aron, Hoffmann, Rosecrance), i.e. traditional Weberians have been rediscovered by writers stemming originally from Marxist backgrounds. Their affinity to the British School is rather strong.¹⁸ These Realist writers have also attracted the defense of scholars from Critical Theory¹⁹ for their historical sensitivity. The new impact of comparative historical sociology opens

¹⁷ See chapter 1.

¹⁸ See respectively Fred Halliday, "The sixth great power: on the study of revolutions and international relations." *Review of International Studies* vol.16(3), 1990, pp.207-221; and e.g. Richard N. Rosecrance's, *Action and Reaction In World Politics. International Systems in Perspective* (Boston: Little Brown, 1963/77 2nd ed.); and Wight's *Systems of States*.

¹⁹ This is where one could put Ashley in his Habermasian phase. See for Ashley especially Ole Wæver, *Tradition and Transgression in International Relations: A Post-Ashleyan Position* (Copenhagen: Centre for Peace and Conflict Research, Working Paper 24/1989) and explicitly also R.B.J. Walker in "Realism, Change, and International Relations Theory." *International Studies Quarterly* vol.31, 1987, pp.71/72, with his re-apprehension of more historicist Realists and in "Ethics, Modernity and the Theory of International Relations" (Paper prepared at the Center of International Studies, Princeton University, 1988/89), p.44, for the closeness between 'Neo-Weberian Realists' and Critical Theory.

up a debate largely on Weberian grounds where Classical Realism can meet *dependency* approaches.²⁰ Central becomes here the conceptualisation of the state or the state-society relation.²¹ This is a battleground, where dependency and Classical Realism meet comparative historical sociology. It could be *one way of defining a framework of IPE*.

Second, there is a renewed interest of Radical and Post-Structuralist writers in Normative Theory and *vica versa*.²² There are multiple reasons for it. Both share a marginalised position in the theoretical debate. But there is more importantly a common conceptual sensibility, be it for the way ideas shape reality (as more idealist normative writers would have it), for the ideological use of concepts that are always also political tools (as critical theory conceives it), or for the concealment of power relations that only a deconstruction of texts can reveal. The two latter share an explicit interest in the power/knowledge relation. As a shorthand, these three schools can be represented by Rawls,²³ Habermas and Foucault as the main figures and link it thereby to recent political theory.²⁴

What seems to emerge out of this is an intricate agenda, that is complex and heterogeneous as Weber's research. Weber can actually be seen as a way to supply a focus, first, because the methodology underlying IPE becomes more and more Weberian, and second be

²⁰ See Neo-Weberians like Skoçpol, or Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power. Vol.I* (Cambridge et al.: Cambridge University Press, 1985). Slightly different Anthony Giddens, *The Nation State and Violence* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1985). I refer here especially to the *dependent development* school (See chapter 13).

²¹ See Evans, Rueschemeyer & Skoçpol, eds., *Bringing the State Back in* (Cambridge, Mass.: Cambridge University Press, 1985) and now Michael Banks & Martin Shaw, *State and Society in International Relations* (London: Harvester/Wheatsheaf Press, 1991).

²² See e.g. R.B.J. Walker, "Ethics, Modernity and the Theory of International Relations", and also Vincent's very positive reaction to Ashley's work on anarchy (in "Order in International Politics." In *Order and Violence. Hedley Bull and International Relations*, edited by J.D.B.Miller and R.J.Vincent, pp.38-64. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990).

²³ Charles A. Beitz, *Political Theory and International Relations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979).

²⁴ Ole Wæver, *Beyond the 'Beyond' of Critical International Theory* (Centre for Peace and Conflict Research, Copenhagen: Working Paper 1/1989).

cause Weber is at the cross-roads of Realism and the debates just mentioned, from Kant to Habermas, from Nietzsche to Foucault and from Marx to Gramsci, we find always: *via* Weber.

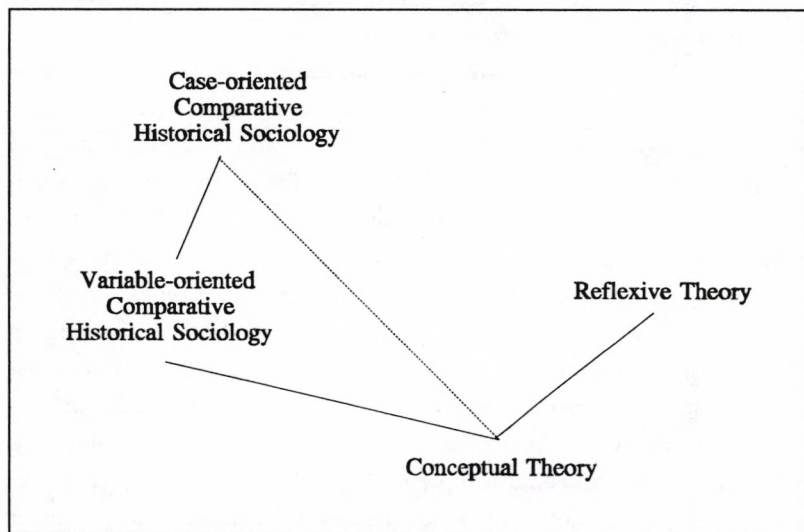


Figure 9 The *borders* of international theory.

Thus, to sum up the *borders* of the disciplinary debate (see also ?²⁵), one could say that there is an emerging fourfold division of labour between, on the one hand:

- 'conceptual theory' that rediscusses central and taken-for-granted concepts that are typically underlying empirical analyses in international studies

- 'reflexive theory' that develops the normative and knowledge-/power implications of such research; that both provide the open framework for, on the other hand, the historically and theoretically informed

²⁵ The border is open at the case-oriented and reflexive edge. Even though it might at first hand appear counter-intuitive for the highly abstract reflexive theory, I think that those are the most aware of historical contingencies, the one reflecting more localised change and the other the permanent ideological struggle of political discourse as it permeates 'reality' and its perception.

- 'case-oriented' analysis that allow for the richer understanding of specific state-society relations in the global political economy

- 'variable-oriented' analysis that in an explicitly comparative way tries to integrate theory and historical sociology.²⁶

Hence there is some convergence on methodology and epistemology, that has found expression in the term of *post-positivism*. There seems, however, also to be an appearing research agenda that I will approach in the final section. The boundaries of this agenda, much larger than Mainstream IR/IPE, have been 'retraced'. But there today's debate just starts: not the extension of the discipline, but its very core is re-apprehended; not the explosion and integration of different variables is at stake, but the meaning of those that made up International Theory. Basic concepts, such as the state, power, sovereignty, anarchy, are reanalysed. Whereas these reconceptualisations 'take ... seriously' and 'make sense of...', and 'go beyond ...', traditional writers, unable to keep a unique conceptual approach, tag now *elusive*. Most *elusive*, however, is not the quest for these concepts or for theories in IR/IPE, but the very core that appears more and more difficult to grasp, the *international*.

16.4. A new conceptual agenda for an 'international' unknown

The demise of the state-system as the main reference in international affairs has left international theory in a unbalanced position. A new conception of IR was needed. There are the Waltzians who just say that one cannot map IR comprehensively and that in the division of academic labour our job is a more humble one, e.g. to come back to good old inter-state politics. The regime research programme takes as a starting point the existence of institutionally concerted (in the loosest sense) behaviour within specific fields of action. Here the range of actors include all those that can and do mutually affect each

²⁶ See for the distinction: Charles C. Ragin, *The comparative method. Moving beyond qualitative and quantitative strategies* (Berkeley et al.: Universtiy of California Press, 1987).

other across border.²⁷ IPE (as defined above) reconceptualise international global structures and sometimes integrates the state-society relation. On top of it, there is undoubtedly an *individualisation* of international theory, most visibly in (liberal or radical) normative theories, but also in other agendas as the question of migration shows. The result is a picture where *international* means *global at both the individual and ecological level*.

The object of this section is to see how recent theory has and can deal with it.

1. Anarchy/sovereignty

Reconceptualisations take Realism seriously at least in the sense that they do not only try to plead for new concepts, but re-approach the most traditional ones. The dyad anarchy/sovereignty has been found the basic double concept of particularly the Neorealist research programme, its deconstruction one of the most challenging undertakings of the Eighties.

Several writers have become skeptical about the anarchy concept as it appeared in Waltz. It allowed only for *two* state of affairs, one being hierarchy (as in domestic societies), the other being anarchy. Even though Waltz is explicit that anarchy does not mean chaos, the internal/external distinction is paradigmatic. The first move consists in accepting the importance of the lacking international government, but want to qualify it by a term with less connotation to Hobbes, the state of war, and danger. Bull had argued for an *anarchical society*, Onuf and Klink want to replace by it by rule (Weberian *Herrschaft*).²⁸ The most articulate attempt to *reconceptualise* it comes via a critique of Neorealism by Ashley.

Richard Ashley argues that the *anarchy problematique* is the underlying research programme of today's Neorealism. Its two basic elements are the need for cooperation in an interdependent world,

²⁷ Marcel Merle, *Sociologie des Relations Internationales*, p.90.

²⁸ Anarchy, Authority, Rule. *International Studies Quarterly*, 1989, vol.33, pp.149-173.

and the competitive (anarchic) environment where this cooperation takes place: *Cooperation under Anarchy* is then only possible by the development "of lasting and reliably coordinated expectations of state performances", i.e. *regimes*.²⁹ Add positivism as epistemology and a rational choice approach as methodology and you get Neorealism. Ashley's deconstruction sets in by showing that the plausability of this research programme relies on a taken-for-granted distinction between domestic sovereign states and the international anarchical realm. Yet, anarchy and sovereignty are circularly defined: the international realm is so long anarchical as there are sovereign states; and there are so long sovereign states as there is no world sovereign state. To remove circularity the two concepts are put in a hierarchical order, where anarchy is only a residual category of sovereignty. The domestic sovereign state is an uncontested place of order beyond whose borders both the universe of reason ends and identity turns into difference.³⁰ This, what he calls *heroic practice*, enables the anarchy problematique to exclude the imagination of rule without a center, of cooperation that is not instrumental, but already set in a normative context,³¹ and of states that are *not* like-units. It enables to resort to the 'blackmail of the heroic practice': either "realistically to honour or idealistically to repudiate the anarchy problematique" (p.254), thereby constituting only one, the idealist alternative, that is by this move discredited and leaves Realism as the only possible way to stand the grim face of international power politics.

In a next step, the concept of *sovereignty* is analysed as a silencing practice that excludes from discourse any conceptualisation of identity outside the frame of the modern-state. In a complementary world where the international realm is the struggle-ground for irreducible pluralism and the modern-state the locus for potential universalism; where the potential common identity of mankind clashes with its par-

²⁹ Richard Ashley, "Untying the Sovereign State. A double reading of the Anarchy Problematique." *Millennium*, 1988, vol.17, p.237.

³⁰ See also R.B.J. Walker, "Realism, Change, and International Relations Theory", p.69.

³¹ Ashley, "Untying the anarchy problematique", p.239.

ticularistic organisation in states,³² the idea of sovereignty has played a crucial role in bridging these thrifths. Born at the beginning of the modern-state system it offered and still offers both a spatial and temporal solution to reconcile universalism (as the aspirations of Medieval Christendom) and community particularism. The spatial and temporal solution is the sharp distinction between *political life* inside a *community*, where a *progress to future* is possible, and the *mere relations* outside the territorial boundaries that are the realm of repetition and where "the present is destined to return."³³

As with the heroic practice, sovereignty conceals specific points from view. This can be exemplified by the way Realist writers have reacted to the literature of transnationalism. Some have refused to speak about growing interdependence or pointed to the fact that sovereignty never meant autonomy in order to argue for an international system profoundly unchanged. Multinational Corporations were integrated as new actors into the analysis to the extent they affected state policies. But the external/internal division where community is only thought in terms of modern state-society relations actually blends out the possible emergence of *transnational communities* or international regulations done by actors, as much as impersonal structures like markets, that cut *across different state boundaries* and challenge sovereignty as the *sole* organising principle. If this transnationalism were accepted or if one accepts, as Kenneth Waltz³⁴ does, the need for a theory of the state, a Pandora's Box opens, because Realists must start thinking about the always particular and historical significance of boundaries and of state-society relations. In short, one does not conceive international relations as the anarchical articulation of different sovereignties, but as a global system in which *always contested* boundaries are just *one* of the ordering principles. These boundaries are not only contested in the spatial sense (*where*

³² Andrew Linklater, *Men and Citizens in the Theory of International Relations* (London: Macmillan, 1982).

³³ R.B.J. Walker, *State Sovereignty and the Articulation of Political Space/Time. Millennium* vol.20, 1991, pp.458/59.

³⁴ "A Response to my critics", p.331.

they are put), or physical sense (how permeable they are), but in what they actually represent. To expand on Marcel Merle's account, boundaries and thus sovereignty means theoretically and practically something different for lately decolonised countries that acquired it during a completely different period from the one in which it originated and which is the taken-for-granted meaning in much of IR-literature.³⁵ They are *not*, pace Waltz, like-units.

This rejoins the critique we advanced at the end of chapter 13. Although structural Realism does not claim to explain comprehensively outcomes, it does claim to understand constraints on the range of outcomes.³⁶ This means that even if one integrates a theory of the state, the structural level is logically prior. In the Neorealist division of labour, the structural approach establishes the range out of which the unit-level analysis can account for the actual behavior and the resulting outcomes. By allowing for always specific state-society relations and policy traditions, state behaviour is *not necessarily bound by the structural range*. Or to reuse Wolfers' argument: if politics is at the pole of indifference, then *more options* are available. The domestic and the international are then not the two sides of the same coin, but differing accounts. Only post hoc can Neorealism make sense of such divergent accounts and leave policy formulation untackled.

Thus, the discussion of sovereignty/anarchy opens up to the theory of the state. To avoid a wrong discussion: the question is *not* if the state is important anymore, but *what kind of state (-society)* is important for the understanding of today's international relations.

³⁵ See Marcel Merle, *Les acteurs dans les relations internationales* (Paris: Economica, 1986), pp.43-58. One should not, however, as Robert Jackson does, stay at the legal-formal level and criticise a situation where the new states (that remain a coherent bloc in the argument of the analysis) reversed the order: they got sovereign before they arrived at empirical statehood. After all, they did not choose to become part of an 'international society' that colonised (the largest part) of them. An assessment of the 'undue advantages' of the decolonised (through the international positive right of "incapacity and inequality", p.30) should at least try to see the benefits, (part of) the North derived and still derive from the institutional setting that is *not* codified, e.g. the market. See his *Quasi-states: sovereignty, international relations and the Third World* (Cambridge et al.: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

³⁶ Kenneth Waltz, "A Response to my critics", p.344.

2. *The state / society relations and world capitalism*

Once this basic thrust of Neorealist thinking is attacked, other concepts follow like in the cherished domino-theory. State/society relations are not any longer the implicit and constant foundations of an international society of states, but the very ground on which international relations take place. International relations are not somewhat on top of societal relations, but the transborder processes that embrace them.

It is probably not fortuitous that writers in IPE have been particularly sensitive to these issues: since it tried to integrate the working of the now global market (or capitalist) system into the analysis, the never innocent working of this transnational structure makes a view that encompasses *specific* state(-society)-market articulations all the more compelling. Traditionally, Realists were not much willing to do so. Yet, more recently, in an attempt to integrate domestic politics into the overall analysis, a small theory of the state has been presented. But it remains a *static* view of the domestic environment. Krasner, for instance, uses a *weak/strong* state distinction as one explanatory variable for development.³⁷ Yet, this takes for granted what should be explained: in the absence of an autarchic development in world politics today, how can we understand why some states are developing weak? Weak/strong states is no answer, but begs the question. By noting similarities of their argument with dependency writers, Mastanduno et al. overlook first, that for Evans, whom they mention, the actual articulation of local, state, and foreign capital is something that needs to be explained in the historical and societal setting and second, that the state is to be apprehended as something more than a top-down machinery for the mobilisation of foreign policy tools.³⁸

The French Regulation School similarly tries to research the articulation of political regimes under the stress of a specific phase of

³⁷ *Structural Conflict*, pp.40-45.

³⁸ M. Mastanduno, M., D.A. Lake & G.J. Ikenberry, *Toward a Realist Theory of State Action. International Studies Quarterly*, vol.33, 1989, pp.457-474.

capitalist development (as e.g. Post-Fordism). Even though initially derived from the study of developed economies, it has been expanded to the Third World, and can be expanded to study the state in a new way.³⁹

Finally, the study of *revolutions* as a specific interface of the internal/external articulation, has taken an international turn. Even though international factors were by no means absent in the analysis of comparative historical sociology, Skočpol makes out of the international factor her specific contribution.⁴⁰ Halliday takes her Weberian reconceptualisation of the state as a way to open up, here again, the study of IR for more enriching questions that problematise the origins and dynamics of statehood (and state-building) in the international political economy. Having referred to frameworks in historical sociology and IPE, Halliday glimpses through the study of revolutions and the theory of the state toward the elusive core of IR. It gives one way to approach the still unresolved question "of what constitutes the [international] system."⁴¹

3. Power: Agency and Impersonal Governance

Another field of study, power, has known an increased conceptual and analytical interest as a privileged access to the international unknown. This can be explained by the traditional central explanatory place power held in Realist and Neorealist theory. After all, since anarchy does not change, it is the shifting balance and configuration of power that makes the analysis dynamic and allows for the qualification of the anarchic international power structure; the aggregation of national powers explain specific forms of rule under anarchy. As

³⁹ Carlos Ominami, *Le tiers-monde dans la crise* (Paris: La Découverte, 1986); and Bob Jessop, Regulation theories in retrospect and prospect. *Economy and Society*, vol.19, 1990, pp.153-216.

⁴⁰ See here *States and Social Revolutions*. For another integration of international factors, see Perry Anderson, *Lineages of the Absolutist State*.

⁴¹ See for his discussion of the state concept: State and Society in International Relations: A second agenda. *Millenium*, vol.16, 1987. The quote is taken from his study on revolutions: 'The sixth great power', p.221.

long as the basic logic of anarchy/sovereignty and the fundamental state-based agency rest unchallenged, this works. Once both are contested, international theory must start again to account for the locus of *agency* in international affairs, and the exact link between *actor's capabilities* and *international rule*: anarchy and the right of might, international society, regimes, governance, world capitalist system, ecology; all these are indices of an 'international' that somewhat rules, orders, shapes, may be acts, but that appears not reducible to the balance of capabilities. The *structural* move from the end of the 70s is not only the result of some theorists methodological preference, but, and maybe more correctly, an indicator of the impression of a diminished agent (=state) impact on world affairs, certainly in the U.S. Maybe it was also a way to diminish the uneasy responsibilities of super-powers. Yet, in the traditionally agent-based concept of power we can analyse a counter-move to integrate institutional features into a different locus of agency. Since agency outside the state was neglected, these moves, nearly all in IPE, try to dynamise the static environment *reintegrating it into agency* differently conceived.

All these writers oppose the traditional concept of direct, strategic, also called behavioral or relational power.⁴² Stephen Krasner derived from an approach that allows for regime's autonomous causal relation to outcomes a concept of *Meta-Power* that after analysis appears to be still a strategic, yet indirect power using institutional channels.⁴³ Susan Strange, by criticising the undue apology of U.S. policies through the argument of power decline, dismisses the small base for the measurement of power and argues for a concept of structural power, that accounts for non-intentional effects.⁴⁴ Finally, in order to account for the systematic bias of international affairs that favors certain agents, or that provides their very *empowering*, truly imper-

⁴² For the following section, see in more detail: Stefano Guzzini. *Structural Power. The limits of Neorealist Power Analysis* (Manuscript under review).

⁴³ *Structural Conflict*, p.14.

⁴⁴ See her *The Persistent Myth of Lost Hegemony. International Organization*, vol.41, 1987, pp.551-574; and as an application: *Finance, Information, and Power. Review of International Studies*, 1990, vol.16, pp.259-274.

sonal effects are integrated into concepts of structural power, or hegemony, or governance.⁴⁵ This critique thereby meets the demise of the anarchy concept as a heuristically sufficient background on which to conceptualise the international system. By the same token, it also pushes power analysis outside the Neorealist straightjacket: concepts of *structural power* and *hegemony* need a meta-theoretical underpinning that allows for the apprehension of communicative *empowering*: an intersubjective methodology is needed.⁴⁶

Unfortunately, many of these concepts still do not sufficiently problematise this link between agent-power and system-rule, but, instead, conceal this duality within one overall concept, as in the traditional Realist power concept. Instead, power can be usefully restricted to an agent-concept if it is integrated into a wider *dyadic power analysis* which problematises exactly the relationship between impersonal governance and agent power. Yet, if a dyadic concept that inquires the link between power and rule can overcome some of the shortcomings, it cannot provide a general theory and resolve the basic puzzle that pushes people to redirect their attention to power: the very understanding of the 'international'.

4. The emerging agenda

After the appearance of competing approaches, that have been unduly canonised into generally three paradigms, today's international theorising starts from putting some boundaries from which to approach the elusive core, the very subject-matter: the *international*.

⁴⁵ See for the first: James Caporaso, Introduction to the special issue on dependence and dependency in the global system (and) Dependence, dependency, and power in the global system: a structural and behavioral analysis. *International Organization*, vol.32, 1979, p.2-43. For structural power and hegemony, see Stephen Gill and David Law, Global Hegemony and the Structural Power of Capital. *International Studies Quarterly* vol.33, 1989, pp.475-499. Ashley reintroduces governance in "Imposing International Purpose: Notes on a Problematic of Governance." In Ernst-Otto Czempiel and James Rosenau, eds., *Global Changes and Theoretical Challenges. Approaches to World Politics for the 1990s* (Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books), pp.251-290.

⁴⁶ Friedrich Kratochwil, Regimes, Interpretation and the 'Science' of Politics. *Millenium* vol.17, 1988, p.272.

Even though there is a 'post-positivist' rapprochement of writers in Critical Theory, IPE and historical sociology that have conceptually and theoretically undermined traditional theorising, only vague contours of the emerging research programme can be delineated. The meta-theoretical matrix tries to capture part of the present debate's dynamic that is spelled out more substantially in the reconceptualisation of central concepts in international theory. It is a constant move of *searching* and *transgressing* borders of thought in the discipline.

Therefore, I would like to synthesise the major new dynamics. The most basic point is the refusal to divide theory into a national and international branch.⁴⁷ This has, however, different effects once the anarchy/sovereignty paradigm is left. There is no question of a universal state comparable to the national, nor any other use of the "domestic analogy". These moves are still part of an a priori dualistic conception of external and internal relations and of a universalising project, exporting the domestic system abroad.⁴⁸ Instead, the Realist insights in the plurality of claims and their potential irreducibility are *not* limited to the international realm alone.⁴⁹

The most important substantial insight seems to spring from a major historicisation (and for some: genealogy) of the present international system in its different aspects: it emerged at the interface of the modern state, the first real international polity, the first major market extension and the beginning of capitalism, and finally rationalism (Enlightenment) and democratic theory. Today's theory in a nutshell is a critical reflection of or a move beyond modernity's heritage in changing circumstances.

Two major offshoots derive from it. The first is the meeting point of Critical theory with normative theory, where the loosening references to territories and communities, or in other words, the transnational

⁴⁷ The logical possibility to accomplish this by reducing the role of the state within a nation - whereby the Welfare State becomes a kind of abnormality - is indeed realised now by Michael Donelan, *Elements of International Political Theory* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990).

⁴⁸ R.B.J.Walker, *State Sovereignty and the Articulation of Political Space/Time*, p.457.

⁴⁹ Richard Ashley, "The Geopolitics of Geopolitical Space...."

identities and actors, as well as structures, seem to undermine the national base on which liberal theory *de facto* has been pursued: major decision of a national polity elude national decision bodies, and, in turn, major actions *here* can affect, even non-intentionally, state-society relations *elsewhere*. By the same token, the globalisation with its communicational integration poses the challenge of a political theory whose universalist aspirations often stop arbitrarily at national borders, but that, as well, provides with its impetus on rights (human rights including possibly also ecology and development) one of the new major driving forces in international affairs. Generally speaking, there seems a move away from the traditional Realist, and also specific liberal solution: since world government was unlike to develop out of cooperation, it would be a form of 'nationalist universalism' (Morgenthau), i.e. a kind of authoritarianism on a world scale imposed by one nation, that a classical private/public distinction should avoid. International (public) politics is build on loose shared principles that, however, never entangle with the national (private) and 'sovereign' realm. It is a realm of moderation. In that sense, Bull's argument against the domestic analogy is truly liberal. Yet, Bull himself seemed to have come closer to a position where the *individual* is not only object, but also subject of international affairs. Topics like humanitarian intervention emerge as *legitimate* on the agenda.

The second is the historicist Realist and Dependency rapprochement within a truly transnational IPE which articulates global and domestic structures. The historicisation of processes of nation-building that are pursued to the present; the rearrangement of international regulatory processes that are not reducible to either leadership, hegemonic rivalries, or the invisible hand; the comparative analysis of actor responses to an "accelerating" environment;⁵⁰ these are some of the issues that are taken up.

Both strands meet in subjects like migration where ideally human rights and materially wealth distribution are at stake; or the

⁵⁰ James Der Derian, The (S)pace of international relations: simulation, surveillance, and speed. *International Studies Quarterly*, 1990, vol.34, pp.295-310.

possibility of international Keynesianism as a way to accommodate political ideals and economic policies. Or to put it differently again: the question of the democratisation of global capitalism that is organised in national and transnational communities. It is this context in which the study of traditional topics will be *differently* pursued. To state, for instance, that state power is important does not automatically entail anymore that Realism is right.⁵¹ Finally, the disciplines' major topic, war, looks quite distinct, if one extends it from the strategic interaction approach and connects it to societal and developmental processes: no 'reason of state' provides anymore a sufficient image for the study of war, nor, obviously, for its justification.

16.5. Conclusion: What is left of Realism?

As noted above, Realism is part of the Mainstream research programme, in at least one form of Hegemonic Stability Theory, in regime theory and in some rational approaches to strategic or foreign policy analysis. It is even more present as a general structural approach which is supposed to underly any more historical and empirical research. This, Waltz' reaction has the paradigmatic advantage of providing the discipline with definable boundaries that do not only allow for the focus of research, but also for the self-justification of the discipline. It is highly unlikely that it will completely falter, before another school can be found that fulfills these functions.

But Realism is also part of the IPE-Critical theory research agenda. True, it is a more historical or sociological Realism that derives from the history of states-systems *and* of diplomatic cultures. It is a Realism that is not stressing the fundamental difference between domestic and international affairs, indeed, in this sense it might be no Realism anymore. This demarcation foregone, the research agenda cannot argue for a discipline which has a particular contribution not

⁵¹ See for such a mistaken argument, e.g. Michael P. Sullivan, *Power in contemporary international politics* (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1990).

available to others. Even though it is certainly more narrow, than Burton's claim to study all forms of conflict, it is wider than Mainstream IR: it consists mainly in the contextualisation (or reflection) of the origin and dynamics of today's system, that is a system of transborder actors in a world capitalist system whose ideological underpinnings and dynamics must be analysed to understand the nature of this more and more global *society*. Realists aware of the normative and historical context of contemporary international relations have made contributions in this respect.

Here we move Realism as an analytical tool to Realism as an ideology. Its major puzzle will be to manage the breaking up of the different thrifths that are concealed in *liberalism*. Liberalism in political thought is driven by three deep tensions. First, the tension between a political versus an economic version of liberalism that do not, despite some Anglo-American dogma, coincide. Second, there is the debate between those that prone republican ideals (liberals of the public virtue tradition) versus those with a more cosmopolitan conception of polis. Finally, liberalism has known since Rawls a major debate between the rights-based versus the consequentialist approach to liberal social choice. Thereby, the concept of *liberalism* conceals major thrifths in today's political thought that are breaking up in a world where the West has lost confidence in the universality of its political programme, and its applicability in the new realms of its society, yet, without renouncing to it. Since Realism is the approach to world politics pursued today by liberal democrats, this issue will be one of the most difficult for Realists to solve.

The crisis of Realist thought is certainly linked to this development of new actors in the South (the *quasi*-states) and allover (transnational actors) that are in the same time part of the realist agenda and outside it; the major political and ideological contest today is about the international reciprocal system of sovereignty that was the traditional moderator of imperialist tendencies, and of its *laissez-faire* of major international actors (be their so-called *hegemon*s or Multinationals) that seem more and more to clash with the very ideals the

West proposes.⁵² If the management of change⁵³ is the basic item of long-term Realist policy, Hegemonic Stability Theory looks very much at odds with it. There is a basic contradiction in Northern politics that all ideological attempts will not be able to hide. In the new global agenda (at the individual and ecological level), the management of change means the bargained giving up of privileges in the North for the general interest of all. It is *not* because of the immutable anarchical structure that this cannot somewhat *realistically* happen, but for the short-term vested interests of the main players in the game, this time both North and South. After all, the US is not structurally obliged to give up its engagement in IO's, as little as the emerging European Union might be constrained to build a 'fortress Europe'. Human Rights could constitute the most challenging way to undermine the present sovereign system, but not if one does not add to it a powerful body of something recalling traditional collective security organizations. It should be more than this old-fashioned tale of the instrumentalisation of norms.

Now, this could be a Realist argument against Realism, because it is a (wider concept of) power-based ideological critique of a Realism that happens to be the *main foreign policy ideology*. Yet, to conclude, it is in that latter sense, that Structural Realism as both an ideology and a way to see the world, will certainly be most present. First, as long as international politics is conceived as mainly done by politicians, and insofar as the international economic competition can be modelled along Neorealist lines (indeed *it is the model*) as a power struggle for market shares, the main decision-makers' (and their

⁵² This in two senses. First, the very notion of reciprocity is contested because it is considered more and more formal and de facto misleading. Yet, it becomes used by the South in an attempt to protect their interests (see for Latin America, the treaty on the exploitation of the Amazonian forest), because the international system starts to infringe it officially for reasons mainly decided by the West (which does not mean that Human Rights are not an issue where sovereignty should be undermined. Reciprocity would, however, seem to imply to think about the rights of future generations in those places that pollute most.)

⁵³ See e.g. Kissinger's admiration for Bismark's 'White Revolution', allowing for the ascendancy of Germany as a central power without disrupting the security system.

ideology) will largely embrace it.⁵⁴ Realist policies might not happen because there are structurally necessary, but because we want to believe them to be. That strange formula is used on purpose, because any ideology is based on values, here of the main actors. And second, as long as these actors and the academic communities of superpowers⁵⁵ will be mainly responsible for the outlook of the policies and the discipline, there is no great hope to believe that some of the most salient conservative features of Realism will altogether disappear. Therefore, the academic debate and the political agenda of the 90s will be mainly organized in a way comparable to the last decades. In this context, tackling Realism may not be *realistically* able to replace Realism as such, but just influence *the kind of* Realism. Old Realism is dying and we hope for a more suitable version to face the present international challenges. Yet, one cannot foresee, if Realism, too, will stay in the hands of the international Realist actors one of those ideologies for which Italians use the concept of *trasformismo*: it has to change to remain the same.

⁵⁴ This also means that analytically Realism is still important because it informs the knowledge base of main decision-makers. But one cannot derive from it any *necessary* political programme, as Krasner or Waltz do. This also implies that we do not have to wait for the withering away of the objectified anarchical structure to account for change, which would be anyway the politicians' job. Quite the contrary, scholars, by undermining the taken-for-granted grid of Realist reasoning in the heads of the actors can actually implement change. The end of the cold war cannot be reduced to pure power politics. The long-term effect of détente has certainly affected the political map of Eastern decision-makers.

⁵⁵ It is an open question if the changed environment will affect this statement. To have passed from a bipolar military and multipolar economic to a unipolar military and multipolar economic system, where competition is mainly economic in the North and also military in North-South, might bring different actors and political cultures to the forefront that are not so imbued by Realism, yet. This does not mean automatically more stability or less war. But neither the contrary, as the Realists would argue.

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